

## Notice of Exemption

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**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Rm. 113  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**From:** California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Habitat Conservation Planning Branch  
Native Plant Program  
P.O. Box 944209  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

**Project Title:** Tiburon Paintbrush (*Castilleja affinis* ssp. *neglecta*) Recovery Research (Project)

**Project Location:** The Tiburon Paintbrush (*Castilleja affinis* ssp. *neglecta*) Recovery Research project (Project) will take place at the "Paintbrush Canyon" population of Tiburon paintbrush (California Natural Diversity Database Element Occurrence 9, 37.19043, -121.67366) in the Coyote Ridge area of Santa Clara County (see Map 2 in the Research Proposal, dated February 5, 2024 (Attachment 1)). Propagation will take place at the Creekside Science Conservation Nursery in Morgan Hill, Santa Clara County.

**Project Description:** The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a California Endangered Species Act scientific, educational, or management permit (Permit No. 2081(a)-24-004-RP) pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081(a) to Creekside Center for Earth Observation for a project to collect and propagate Tiburon paintbrush to produce seed for outplanting in Paintbrush Canyon. Objectives include increasing Tiburon paintbrush in Paintbrush Canyon to over two thousand self-sustaining individuals, improving propagation and seeding techniques through experimental trials, and continuing annual monitoring to improve species demographic information. Tiburon paintbrush nursery stock plants will be used to develop additional seed material for outplanting. Wild seed will be collected from Paintbrush Canyon annually to supplement outplanting material. Less than 5% of seeds present will be collected each year. The Project will conduct a seed germination pilot to test combinations of gibberellic acid, leaching, cold stratification, and summer heat treatments on germination success and survivorship. The Permittee will also investigate new methods of retaining water in the field by deploying wet seeds with gel-like substrate. Seeding protocols will be used to inform recovery of other populations of this taxon, future introductions of Tiburon paintbrush, and may be useful in the recovery of other *Castilleja* or hemi-parasitic species. A combination of treated and untreated seeds will be deployed in Paintbrush Canyon annually in December following the onset of rains. Plots will be monitored annually in May. All previously established macroplots containing the wild population and plots seeded under the Permittee's previous permits will also be monitored annually.

**California Public Agency Approving Project:** California Department of Fish and Wildlife

**Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Christal Niederer, Creekside Center for Earth Observation

**Exempt Status:**

- Ministerial;
- Declared Emergency;
- Emergency Project;
- Categorical Exemption. Type and section number: Section 15306, Class 6

**Reasons why project is exempt:** The Project consists of basic data collection and research that will inform recovery and adaptive management of *Castilleja affinis* ssp. *neglecta*. The permit issued by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for the Project includes measures to ensure that existing populations of *Castilleja affinis* ssp. *neglecta* are not detrimentally impacted by research activities.

**Lead Agency Contact Person:** Joanne Heraty

Area Code/Telephone/ Extension: (916) 594-4574

**Signature:**

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Isabel Baer, Native Plant Program Manager

**Date:** 3/28/2024

Signed by Lead Agency

Date Received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_