

# Notice of Exemption

# Appendix E

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**From: (Public Agency):** California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife  
Ontario Office 3602 Inland Empire Boulevard, Suite C-220 Ontario, CA 91764

County Clerk  
County of: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)

Project Title: Oasis Springs Vegetation Management Project

Project Applicant: California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)

Project Location - Specific:  
**Township 8 S, Range 12 E, Section 19 and 30**

Project Location - City: Mecca (20 miles to the NE of Project Location) Project Location - County: Riverside

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:  
CDFW will conduct vegetation management activities on CDFW lands at the Oasis Springs Ecological Reserve for the purposes of wildfire fuel reduction and invasive plant control.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)

**Exempt Status: (check one):**

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: 14 CCR, Section 15307 and 15308
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons why project is exempt:  
See Attachment.

Lead Agency  
Contact Person: Colton Johnson Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (760) 872-1171

**If filed by applicant:**

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

DocuSigned by:  
Signature: *Richard Kim* Date: 11/21/2024 Title: Senior Environmental Scientist  
9DA5602712C84C1...  
Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Date Received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.



State of California – Natural Resources Agency  
 DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
 Ontario Office  
 3602 Inland Empire Boulevard, Suite C-220  
 Ontario, CA 91764

**GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor**  
**CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director**  
[wildlife.ca.gov](http://wildlife.ca.gov)



## **ATTACHMENT TO NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

### **Oasis Springs Vegetation Management Project**

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) will conduct vegetation management activities at Oasis Springs Ecological Reserve (CDFW Land). The project is located in the greater Salton Sea area of Riverside County. The project will include the utilization of hand tools as well as a skid steer. The project activities will avoid ground disturbance. The project will remove invasive plants such as salt cedar (*tamarix spp.*) and other excess fuels to decrease the risk of ignition and decrease the intensity and speed of transmission of a potential fire in this sensitive habitat. The project will enhance essential habitat for the desert pupfish and other sensitive wildlife species. CDFW approved the Project relying on the Class 7 and 8 Categorical Exemptions, respectively. (CEQA Guidelines, §§§ 15304, 15307, 150308.)<sup>1</sup> Each exemption as relevant to the Project is discussed below.

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#### Class 7 Categorical Exemption

The project is Class 7, §15307 (Actions by regulatory agencies for protection of natural resources) exempt; the Project includes actions taken by CDFW for the protection of natural resources on designated wildlife areas and ecological reserves. The Project falls within the class because it involves the “maintenance, restoration, or enhancement of a natural resource”. Specifically, the removal of invasive species that increase fuel density and potential ignition sources for fire and displacement native species. A fire at these locations would drastically impact the local ecosystem and the oasis with significant impacts to vegetation composition and water quality.

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#### Class 8 Categorical Exemption

The project is Class 8, §15308 (Actions by regulatory agencies for protection of the environment) exempt; the Project includes actions taken by CDFW for the protection of the environment on designated ecological reserves to improve wildlife habitat and reduce the potential for future high severity wildfire impacts. The Project falls within the class because it involves the “maintenance, restoration, or enhancement of the environment”. Specifically, the Project will restore and enhance the current ecosystem and habitat for the desert pupfish and other species that rely upon the desert oasis.

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<sup>1</sup> The “CEQA Guidelines” are found in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, commencing with section 15000