

## 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:** Sonoma Sunshine (*Blennosperma bakeri*) Seed Amplification and Vernal Pool Restoration Project (Project)

**Project Location:** The Project will take place in Sonoma County at the Fox Hollow West Preserve located near 1615 Fulton Road in the City of Santa Rosa (38.45786, -122.77500). Seed amplification will take place at the Laguna Foundation plant nursery located at 900 Sanford Road in the City of Santa Rosa (38.42620, -122.82075).

**Project Description:** The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a California Endangered Species Act permit pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081(a) to Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation (Permit No. 2081(a)-25-003-RP) for a project to expand the Sonoma sunshine population at Fox Hollow West Preserve and to implement thatch control and invasive species management to improve habitat conditions. Fox Hollow West Preserve was established as a vernal pool mitigation site in 2020 in relation to development of the Fox Hollow Subdivision (CESA incidental take permit (ITP) No. 2081-2016-008-03). Lack of beneficial disturbance at Fox Hollow West Preserve has since caused the accumulation of thatch in the vernal pools threatening the decline of the existing Sonoma sunshine population on site. The following activities are independent of any mitigation for current or future impacts to Sonoma sunshine. Up to five percent of the Sonoma sunshine seed output on-site will be collected in the spring of 2025 to be germinated and amplified at the Laguna Foundation plant nursery in the winter/spring of 2025/2026. All seed produced from nursery grown plants will be collected once mature and outplanted to suitable wetland habitat on the preserve. Thatch and invasive species will be managed each year during the vernal pool dormancy period. Thatch management will be carried out using grazing, mowing, baling, and/or hand raking. Invasive species management may include mowing, herbicide application, or manual removal. A certified Pesticide Control Advisor recommendation will be obtained if herbicide application is deemed necessary to treat invasive perennial harding grass (*Phalaris aquatica*), and application will be overseen by a qualified applicator. Monitoring will include mapping the distribution of all Sonoma sunshine donor and outplanted populations and counting or estimating population numbers each spring.

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

**Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Sarah Gordon, Conservation Science Program Director, Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation

**Exempt Status:**

- Ministerial;
- Declared Emergency;
- Emergency Project;
- Categorical Exemption. Type and section number: Section 15306, Class 6, and 15307, Class 7

**Reasons why project is exempt:** The Project consists of experimental management, and resource evaluation activities to enhance existing populations of the California endangered Sonoma sunshine. The permit issued by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for the Project includes measures to ensure the existing populations of Sonoma sunshine are not impacted, and that the restored populations are adequately protected.

**Lead Agency Contact Person:** Joanne Heraty

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

**Signature:**  \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** 4/25/2025  
36A908313DB6442  
Isabel Baer, Native Plant Program Manager

Signed by Lead Agency      Date Received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_