Notice of Exemption

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

From: California Department of Transportation, District 8
464 W. 4th Street, 6th Floor (MS 827)
San Bernardino, CA 92401-1400

Project Title: I-15 Roadside Rehabilitation by Repairing/Replacing Highway Planting and Irrigation Systems; EA 08-1R750/PN 0825000108

Project Applicant: California Department of Transportation, District 8

Project Location – Specific: The project is located in Temecula, California.

Project Location – City: Temecula

Project Location – County: Riverside

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:
The project proposes to provide roadside rehabilitation by repairing/replacing highway planting and irrigation systems damaged by weather or deterioration, installing a maintenance access path, and replacing the damaged maintenance access gate. If any dead or diseased trees are encountered, they will be removed. Replacement planting will consist of strategies that enhance traveler and worker safety by reducing the frequency and duration of maintenance workers' exposure to traffic, utilizing recycled water where available, and providing suitable erosion control along I-15. All the work will be done within Caltrans/Public Right of Way. Construction of access roads, ground disturbance, and vegetation removal will occur. There will also be no need for equipment staging areas, and no utility relocations or connections to new infrastructure are anticipated. This project is funded by State-only funding. Purpose: The purpose of this project is to rehabilitate highway planting and irrigation, create corridor continuity, and maintain the "landscaped freeway" classification, which is part of a strategy aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, replacing landscape facilities and installing a maintenance access path will help improve workers' safety by reducing the exposure of maintenance workers to traffic. Need: The need of this project is to rehabilitate the roadside along I-15. Current landscape facilities have exceeded their expected lifespan; as a result, existing plantings have either died or created bare areas that will exacerbate the erosion problem. The existing irrigation manifold locations, combined with the lack of maintenance access paths, pose a threat to workers' safety.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Department of Transportation, District 8

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: N/A

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: Class (1)(h)
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:
Covered exemption, maintenance of existing landscaping, previously disturbed areas and habitat, no impacts are anticipated.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Kourtney Graves Phone number: (909) 472-1362

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

Signature: Kourtney Graves Date: 11/26/2025

Title: (Acting) Environmental Branch Chief

☒ Signed by Lead Agency ☐ Signed by Applicant

Date Received for filing at OPR:

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.