

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
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: Nevin's Barberrry (*Berberis nevinii*) Restoration Within Los Angeles Zoo (Project)

Project Location: The Project will take place entirely within the Los Angeles Zoo located at 5333 Zoo Drive, Los Angeles, CA.

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a California Endangered Species Act scientific, educational, or management permit pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081, subdivision (a) to the Los Angeles Zoo (Permit No. 2081(a)-26-003-RP) for a project to collect Nevin's barberry seed and cuttings to propagate plant material for a six-acre restoration project on Los Angeles Zoo property. The restoration project will convert an area dominated by invasive species into high quality, climate resilient oak woodland habitat. Project activities are expected to enhance the existing population of Nevin's barberry within the Los Angeles Zoo by establishing a new managed subpopulation with the goal of increasing the number of individuals by fifty or more over the course of three years.

Currently there are 23 Nevin's barberry plants that occupy Los Angeles Zoo grounds from which plant material will be collected from. The origins and genetics of this population are unknown, and no California Natural Diversity Database Element Occurrence is currently designated for this site. The population likely represents a "neo-population" established via wildlife dispersal or human transplant. No more than five percent of viable seed and no more than five percent of cuttings will be taken from any individual annually. Seeds will be collected when mature seed becomes available, typically in June or July of 2026 and may continue annually for the term of the permit. Seeds will be placed on agar and cold stratified for approximately two months. Following stratification, seeds will then be seeded into two inch pots with potting soil. Cuttings of Nevin's barberry may be collected in 2026 and 2027 from new stem growth and will be rooted in perlite. Collected material will be propagated under controlled conditions in the zoo's Oak Woodland Restoration Project nursery.

Propagules will be planted beginning in fall of 2026 and will continue until July 31, 2028, within the boundaries of the Oak Woodland Restoration Site. Data collected will include: (1) propagation success rates by type (seed vs. cutting); (2) survival rate of propagated individuals post-planting; and (3) growth metrics (height, canopy spread).

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

Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Dr. Jake Owens, Director of Conservation, Los Angeles Zoo

Exempt Status:

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

Reasons why project is exempt: The Project consists of basic data collection, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities that will facilitate the recovery of California endangered Nevin's barberry within its historic range. The permit issued by CDFW for the Project includes measures to ensure that existing populations of Nevin's barberry are adequately protected.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Joanne Heraty

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

Signature:  Signed by:
Ponce, Kevin M

Date: 5/5/2026

Kevin Ponce, Native Plant Program Manager

Signed by Lead Agency

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____