

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: California State University East Bay Rare Plant Research Garden (Project)

Project Location: The Project will occur in El Dorado County within the Pine Hill Ecological Preserve, which is owned and managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Additional collections may take place at three locations along Pine Hill Road, near Pineoakyo Court in the town of Rescue, and along El Dorado Highway. These collection areas correspond to California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) Element Occurrence (EO) 1 for Pine Hill flannelbush (*Fremontodendron decumbens*) and CNDDB EO 4 for Pine Hill ceanothus (*Ceanothus roderickii*). Propagation and outplanting activities will occur in Alameda County at the California State University East Bay (CSUEB) campus, located at 25800 Carlos Bee Boulevard in Hayward, California.

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a California Endangered Species Act and Native Plant Protection Act permit pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081(a) to Green Biome Institute (Permit No. 2081(a)-25-008-RP) for a project that will take cuttings of Pine Hill flannelbush and Pine Hill ceanothus to propagate plants for installation in a rare plant research garden at CSUEB. The garden will serve as an educational demonstration garden of California rare plants, and as an ex-situ research garden to provide plant tissue donor material for ongoing genomic sequencing and molecular biology studies. Collection of plant material for the Project is expected to occur in 2026 or 2027. Approximately four to five leaf stem cuttings will be collected from Pine Hill flannelbush and Pine Hill ceanothus wild populations and transferred to GBI laboratory facilities for propagation. All cuttings will be treated with rooting hormone and planted into sterile pots, placed in the campus greenhouse facilities, and watered regularly. Propagules will be monitored routinely for health and growth. Once the plants reach approximately eight to ten inches in height, they will be transplanted into one-gallon containers. After the one-gallon containers are well established, plants will be outplanted into the research garden. Long term maintenance of the garden will be managed by GBI and campus gardening staff.

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

Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Joanna Garaventa, Staff Scientist, California State University East Bay Green Biome Institute

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 basic research and management activities that will provide education and research opportunities for rare plant conservation and genetic studies. The permit issued by CDFW for the Project includes measures to ensure that existing populations of Pine Hill flannelbush and Pine Hill ceanothus are adequately protected.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Joanne Heraty

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

Signed by:

Signature: _____

Kevin Ponce, Native Plant Program Manager

Date: 5/13/2026

☐ Signed by Lead Agency

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____