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, San Bernardino County
464 W. 4th St.
San Bernardino CA, 92401

Project Title: Caltrans District 8 – Vegetation Management Program – Contract 3 Fuels Management

Project Applicant: California Department of Transportation District 8, San Bernardino County

Project Location - Specific: Interstate 15 (I-15), State Route 18 (SR-18) and State Route138 (SR-138).

Project Location - City: Various Project Location - County: San Bernardino

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:
Caltrans District 8 proposes to conduct vegetation management activities within State right-way areas to reduce wildfire ignition risk, establish and maintain roadside fuel breaks, and ensure safe and reliable access for the traveling public and emergency responders. Proposed activities include clearing vegetation within designated management strips, removing invasive species and other flash fuels, and selectively thinning vegetation. These activities are intended to reduce the potential for wildfire ignition and spread, improve roadside fuel conditions, and promote the resilience, health, and conservation of native plant communities.

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

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: California Department of Transportation District 8, San Bernardino County

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: _____
- ☒ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: PRC 21080 (b)(4); CEQA Guidelines 15269(c); and Government Code 8571)

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project is Statutorily Exempt from CEQA pursuant to Governor Newsom's wildfire State of Emergency Proclamation (March 1, 2025) and the suspension of applicable requirements under the California Emergency Services Act, the Government Code §8571 which suspends regulatory requirements that would hinder emergency mitigation efforts; PRC 21080(b)(4) which involves action necessary to prevent or Form adapted from Appendix E of the CEQA Guidelines August 2024 mitigate an emergency; and Public Resource Code 15269(c) which also allows specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency.

The project's primary purpose is wildfire-risk reduction through vegetation management and fuel-treatment activities; and includes the following activities that quality for CEQA exemption pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Proclamation; (a) removal of hazardous, dead, and/or dying trees; and (d) removal of vegetation along roadways, highways, and freeways for the creation of safer ingress and egress routes for the public and responders and to reduce roadside ignitions.

The proposed project purpose and action have been approved by the appropriate Agency Secretary, or their designee, as being eligible to be conducted under the suspension; and will be conducted in accordance with the State Environmental Protection Plan (EPP). The action is therefore exempt from CEQA.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Michael Grimes Phone number: 909-472-1081

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: _____ Date: 10/16/2026 Title: Acting Environmental Program Manager I
Michael Grimes

☒ 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.