Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044
1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street, MS-48
Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Applicant: Paulsson, Inc.

Project Title: All Optical Multi-Sensor Well Monitoring System to Secure Gas Storage Operations

Project Location – Specific: PG&E McDonald Island 2121 N Zuckerman Rd.

Project Location – City: Stockton 95219 Project Location – County: San Joaquin

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

This project will develop, in a laboratory, and demonstrate, at an existing natural gas storage facility, a downhole multi-sensor array based on fiber optic sensing technologies to monitor natural gas storage reservoirs. This multi-sensor array will include all-optical pressure, acoustic, strain and temperature sensors to provide real-time monitoring. The purpose of this project is to detect pre-failure micro-seismic noise, excessive strain, and any small leaks. The beneficiaries of this project include

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Paulsson, Inc.

Exempt Status: (check one)

☐ Ministerial Exemption (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(1); Cal. Code Regs., tit 14, § 15268);
☐ Declared Emergency (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(3); Cal. Code Regs., tit 14, § 15269(a));
☐ Emergency Project (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(4); Cal. Code Regs., tit 14, § 15269(b)(c));
☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number
  Cal. Code Regs., tit 14, § 15301 ; Cal. Code Regs., tit 14, § 15306
☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number.
☐ Common Sense Exemption. (Cal. Code Regs., tit 14, §15061(b)(3))

Reasons why project is exempt:

California. Code Regs., tit 14, section 15301 provides that projects which consist of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, and which involve negligible or no expansion of existing or former use, are categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act. This project will consist of laboratory testing and field testing of fiber optic sensors to monitor natural gas storage reservoirs. The laboratory testing will be conducted in an existing laboratory, using existing equipment in the laboratory. The field testing will be conducted at an existing borehole at an existing PG&E's natural gas storage facility, where the fiber optic sensors will be placed inside a 2 3/8” tube within the 5,300-foot-deep borehole. In addition, a 160 square-foot, partially air-conditioned instrument storage container will be placed next to the wellhead. These modifications will not result in expanding the capacity or use of the facility.
This project is also exempt under California Code Regs., tit 14, section 15306 which provides that projects which consist of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource are categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act. This project will collect data within the natural gas storage well in real-time, for approximately 6 months. The fiber optic sensors include pressure, acoustic, distributed strain, and distributed pressure sensors. They will detect pre-failure micro-seismic noise, excessive strain, and any small leaks. The instruments will be accessed remotely to obtain the data recorded. These activities will not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource.

For these reasons, the proposed work will not have any significant effect on the environment and falls under sections 15301 and 15306.

Responsible Agency
Contact Person: Reta Ortiz Area code/Telephone/Ext: 916-327-1494

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: Reta Ortiz Date: 06/17/2020 Title: ECS I

Signed by Responsible Agency
Signed by Lead Agency
Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: 06/17/2020

Governor’s Office of Planning & Research
Jun 18 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE