

State of California
Natural Resources Agency / Department of Conservation
GEOLOGIC ENERGY MANAGEMENT DIVISION

California Environmental Quality Act
Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning & Research
State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: Department of Conservation
Geologic Energy Management Division
801 K Street, MS 18-05
Sacramento, CA 95814

Contact: Larry Kleinecke, (916) 445-9686

Project Title: PAL SPR 45403022

Project Applicant: Sentinel Peak Resources California LLC

Project Location: McKittrick Oil Field

County: Kern

Section: 19

Township: 29S

Range/Baseline: 21E / MD B&M

Latitude/Longitude: 35.45454500, -119.706852001

Project Description: The proposed project is an amendment to an UIC project originally approved on November 10, 2008 to dispose up to 10,000 barrels of wastewater per day in to the Olig/Reef Ridge zone, a formation which is not an underground source of drinking water. The amendment (UIC project #45403022) will allow Sentinel Peak Resources California LLC (SPR) to inject up to 70,000 barrels of waste water per day into the Olig/Reef Ridge zone. The increase in injection volume is justified in that the zones are EPA exempt for UIC Class II injection. The Olig/Reef Ridge zone character of high permeability to water, significant thickness, and low pressure due to production depletion make this zone suitable for long-term water disposal.

CalGEM approved this water disposal project to eliminate the use of surface ponds. The ponds now in use (Valley Water Management Ponds 1 and 1-3) are the subject of a cease-and-desist order by the State Water Resources Control Board, an order which establishes a compliance deadline of September 1, 2020. In a letter dated October 7, 2020 the CVRWQCB stated they have completed their review of the proposed project, which includes expanding the existing UIC operations by adding two additional water disposal wells and increasing the permitted injection rate. Based on the information provided and the conditions contained in CalGEM's 16 September 2020 draft Project Approval Letter, CVRWQCB Staff do not object to the project provided that the final PAL includes equivalent conditions.

The UIC injection area, parcel 19Z, is a densely developed 40-acre lot that includes 66 active wells, 25 abandoned wells or pilot holes, cyclic steam injection facilities and equipment, and gas injection facilities and equipment. Three of the five UIC project injection wells have been drilled and the remaining two proposed injection wells have been permitted by CalGEM as oil and gas wells. No additional potential environmental impacts have been identified as part of well activities.

Kern County approved the UIC pumps, tankage, and wastewater pipelines, and the operator provided Job Cards to CalGEM to document the approvals. These Job Cards are valid and require county cost recovery and inspections and compliance with mitigation measures, the issued Oil and Gas Conformity Review, and all other applicable standards and conditions outlined in the permit. No additional potential environmental impacts have been identified as part of UIC pumps, tankage, and wastewater pipeline construction.

Details on Underground Injection Control can be found on CalGEM's website at:

<http://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/Pages/Undergroundinjectioncontrol.aspx>

Exempt Status: As the Lead Agency, the Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) determined that the proposed project is exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to the specified exemptions marked in the section below. The proposed project would not result in a significant adverse impact to the environment, or that any of the exceptions to the exemptions apply (14 CCR 15300.2).

Exemption Type	Statute (PRC)	Regulation (14 CCR)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Statutory Exemption: <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing Project (<i>pre-CEQA. Approval prior to April 5, 1973</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> Ministerial <input type="checkbox"/> Declared Emergency <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Projects	21169 21080 (b)(1) 21080 (b)(3) 21080 (b)(4)	15261 (b) 15268 15269 (a) 15269 (b) or (c)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Categorical Exemption: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class 1: Existing Facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Class 3: New Construction/Conversion of Small Structures <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class 4: Minor Alterations to Land <input type="checkbox"/> Class 6: Information Collection <input type="checkbox"/> Class 7: Protection of Natural Resources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class 8: Protection of the Environment <input type="checkbox"/> Class 11: Accessory Structures <input type="checkbox"/> Class 21: Enforcement Actions to revoke a permit <input type="checkbox"/> Class 30: Minor Actions to Prevent, Minimize, Stabilize, Mitigate, or Eliminate a Release (Actual or Threat) of Hazardous Substances (Waste or Material) <input type="checkbox"/> Class 33: Small Habitat Restoration Projects	21084	15301 15303 15304 15306 15307 15308 15311 15321 15330 15333	1684.1 1684.2
<input type="checkbox"/> General Exemption ("common sense")		15061 (b)(3)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Not a "Project" subject to CEQA		15378 (b)(2)	

