

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

California Environmental Quality Act  
Notice of Determination

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

**From:** Department of Conservation  
Geologic Energy Management Division  
715 P Street, MS 1803  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Contact:** CEQA@conservation.ca.gov

**Lead Agency:** County of Santa Barbara – Planning and Development  
123 E. Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 884-8050

**State Clearinghouse #:** 2023090412

**Lead Agency Project Title:** Hidden Canyon Test Well Production Plan Mitigated Negative Declaration

**CalGEM Project Title:** 550669\_West Bay\_OG

**Project Applicant:** West Bay Exploration Co.

**Project Location:** 7400 Highway 166 in Cuyama, approximately 10 miles west of the town of New Cuyama and 1.8 miles east of the Russell Ranch Oil Field

**County:** Santa Barbara County

**Project Description:** The proposed permitting activity is to drill one new test well for oil and gas exploration off of School House Canyon Road in New Cuyama, Santa Barbara County. The permitting activity includes grading for a new well pad, drilling the test well, testing the well, plugging and abandonment of the test well, and removal of all production and appurtenant equipment, including pipelines. The well pad would be returned to the pre-project condition of a flat area with non-native grasslands. No permanent equipment is proposed except for the single wellhead. The installation of the new test well is addressed in the Hidden Canyon Test Well Production Plan Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). The MND was written specifically for the proposed activity of the new test well drill.

The project activity being permitted by the California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) is within the scope of the Hidden Canyon Test Well Production Plan MND.

CalGEM, as the CEQA Responsible Agency, approved a permit for West Bay Exploration Co. to drill the well listed below, in Cuyama in Santa Barbara County.

API #	Well Name	Latitude	Longitude
0408322998	Hidden Canyon 1 New Drill	34.99058228	-119.84485869

CalGEM, as the Responsible Agency under CEQA, conducts an environmental review limited to those project impacts, which are required to be carried out or approved by CalGEM, or which will be subject to the exercise of powers by CalGEM. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002.1; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15096). This review includes considering the Lead Agency's environmental document(s) and determining whether the permitting activity falls within the scope of the document and whether and how to approve the project involved.

CalGEM completed its review of the proposed permitting activity and determined that CalGEM will rely on the Lead Agency's environmental document(s), as it pertains to the proposed permitting activity.

This Notice of Determination (NOD) is to advise that CalGEM, as the **Responsible Agency** under CEQA, approved the above permitting activity on 1/10/2025.

1. **Environmental Impacts** from the project will
  - Have a significant effect on the environment
  - Not have a significant effect on the environment
2. **Environmental Document** prepared for this project, pursuant to the provisions of CEQA:
  - Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
  - Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)
  - Negative Declaration (ND)
3. **Mitigation Measures** were
  - Made a condition of approval of the project
  - Not made a condition of approval of the project
4. **Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan** (MMRP) was
  - Adopted for this project
  - Not adopted for this project
5. **Statement of Overriding Considerations** was
  - Adopted for this project
  - Not adopted for this project
6. **Findings** were
  - Made for this project, pursuant to the provisions of CEQA (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15091)
  - Not made for this project, pursuant to the provisions of CEQA (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15091)

A copy of the Hidden Canyon Test Well Production Plan MND and associated documents prepared by County of Santa Barbara - Planning and Development, including the MND, MMRP, and all other related documents, can be made available to the public by contacting County of Santa Barbara – Planning and Development, located at 123 E. Anapamu Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101; or an electronic copy of these documents may be accessed online at:

<https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/Project/2023090412>. A copy of this NOD may also be accessed online at the State Clearinghouse: <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov>.

**Certified:**

*Dean Dusette*

**Date:**

1/10/2025

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CEQA Program Contractor  
Geologic Energy Management Division  
CEQA Program