

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
 715 P Street, MS 1803
 Sacramento, CA 95814
Contact: CEQA@conservation.ca.gov

Project Title: Berry 022024-002

Project Applicant: Berry Petroleum Company, LLC

Project Location: Kern County; Belridge, South Oil Field; 19/28S/21E/MD; 35.48442459/-119.75281525

Project Description: The originally approved project consists of reworking an existing oil and gas production well by cleaning out the well to total depth, perforating the liner, placing a cased hole gravel pack, and cementing the casing if it should fail testing. The proposed project is estimated to take an estimated 5 days once work has begun. The project will utilize a workover rig, and various temporary support equipment that include delivery trucks, backhoes, and pickup trucks. The well pad will be able to accommodate all associated equipment and operations, including personnel parking.

CalGEM has approved permits for Berry Petroleum Company, LLC to rework the oil and gas well listed below, in the Belridge, South oil field.

API #	Well Name
0402966751	Hill 40

Exempt Status: As the Lead Agency, CalGEM has determined that the proposed project is exempt from full environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to the specified exemptions marked in the section below. CalGEM further finds that the proposed project would not result in a significant adverse impact to the environment, or that any of the exceptions to the application of 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 on 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)

Exemption Type		Statute (PRC)	Regulation (14 CCR)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Categorical Exemption:	21084		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class 1: Existing Facilities		15301	1684.1
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class 2: Replacement or Reconstruction			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Class 3: New Construction/Conversion of Small Structures		15303	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class 4: Minor Alterations to Land		15304	1684.2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Class 7: Protection of Natural Resources		15307	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Class 8: Protection of the Environment		15308	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Class 11: Accessory Structures		15311	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Class 21: Enforcement Actions to revoke a permit		15321	
	<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)		15330	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Class 33: Small Habitat Restoration Projects		15333	
<input type="checkbox"/>	General Exemption (“common sense”)		15061 (b)(3)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not a “Project” subject to CEQA		15378 (b)(2)	
<p>CEQA Exceptions to the Exemptions (14 CCR § 15300.2): where project is located (e.g., sensitive environment); Cumulative Impact; Significant Effect due to Unusual Circumstances; Scenic Highways; Hazardous Waste Sites; Historical Resources.</p>				

Reasons Why Project is Exempt: The basis for CalGEM’s determination that the project is exempt from the requirements of CEQA is provided in the brief explanation below.

Class 1, Existing Facilities (14 CCR §§ 15301, 1684.1): Class 1, Existing Facilities consists of the “operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alterations” of existing structures involving “negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing previously.” The project would rework an existing production well by cleaning out the well to total depth, perforating the liner, placing a cased hole gravel pack, and cementing the casing if it should fail testing. This maintenance, or in other words the cleaning and perforation, of the existing structure would bring the well back to its approved production capacity and would not expand use beyond that existing previously. The well is and would remain a production well.

Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction (14 CCR § 15302): Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction applies to the “replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced” (14 CCR § 15302). The project would reconstruct an existing production well located on an existing well pad that can accommodate necessary equipment and can be accessed by existing roads. This reconstruction involves perforating the liner of the well to bring the well back to its approved production capacity and would not expand use beyond that existing previously. The well is and would remain a production well.

Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land (14 CCR §§ 15304, 1684.2): Class 4 applies to “drilling operations that result only in minor alterations with negligible or no permanent effects to the

existing condition of the land, water, air, and/or vegetation” (§1684.2). The proposed project involves rework to an existing production well by cleaning out the well to total depth, perforating the liner, placing a cased hose gravel pack, and cementing the casing, and does not involve any temporary or permanent surface disturbance related activities that could potentially impact the existing condition of the land, water, air, or vegetation. All activities would take place on an existing well pad in a developed oil field that can be accessed by existing roads, and no new infrastructure is proposed. The activity’s impacts would be consistent or a continuation of the baseline conditions.

Exceptions to Exemptions:

CalGEM further finds that there are no exceptions to the application of the categorical exemptions (PRC § 21084; 14 CCR § 15300.2 (c)) referenced above. There is no substantial evidence that there are any “unusual circumstances” associated with the proposed project that create a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment, and that there are no significant “cumulative impacts” resulting from successive projects of the same type in the same place. Therefore, reliance on the exemption(s) is appropriate.

Consistent with the purposes of PRC § 3250 et seq and the documentation available for the preliminary review, the proposed project will benefit the environment. In addition, the work under the contracts and any resulting impacts will be temporary in duration. Therefore, the project can be considered exempt from the need for full CEQA review.

A copy of this NOE (as required by 14 CCR § 15062(a)) and all other related materials are available for public inspection at CalGEM’s CEQA Program, located at 715 P Street, 18th floor, Sacramento, CA 95814; or an electronic copy of these documents may also be accessed online at the State Clearinghouse: <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov>

Certified: Mikayla Vaba **Date:** _____
Department of Conservation,
Geologic Energy Management Division
CEQA Program