

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: 486691_Group_Berry_OG_UIC

Project Applicant: Berry Petroleum Company, LLC

Project Location: Kern County, Poso Creek Oil Field; 14/27S/27E/MD;
 Latitude 35.58205414, Longitude -119.03936768

Project Description: The approved project consists of adding perforations to two oil and gas production wells and repairing failed casing on the wells by running and cementing a tie back casing string. The proposed project is estimated to take a total of 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. The rig will then conduct day-light operations until work is completed. The rig operations and equipment will then be demobilized and removed from the site.

The proposed project consists of CalGEM approving two permits for Berry Petroleum Company, LLC to rework the oil and gas production wells listed below, in the Poso Creek oilfield.

API #	Well Name
0403031868	USL 14-12CR
0403031867	USL 14-8CR

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>)	21169	15261 (b)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Ministerial	21080 (b)(1)	15268	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Declared Emergency	21080 (b)(3)	15269 (a)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Emergency Projects	21080 (b)(4)	15269 (b) or (c)	
<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)	

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.

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): The project is exempt under the Class 1, Existing Facilities exemption because the project involves repair and maintenance of existing wells that would not change the existing use of the wells. Class 1 consists of "the operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration" of existing facilities "involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing previously" (§ 1684.1). The proposed project would perforate and repair the casing of two existing oil and gas wells. This work is done to maintain the condition of the wells and would not expand the existing use of the wells. Additionally, a CalGEM engineer has confirmed that the proposed work is within the scope of UIC project 56606008 and would be a continuation of the baseline operations as permitted by the PAL. Therefore, the proposed work would not change the use of the wells, as the wells would remain oil and gas production wells with substantially the same production capacity.

Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction (14 CCR § 15302): The project is exempt under the Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction exemption because the project involves the reconstruction of the casing on two existing wells that would not change the purpose or capacity of the wells. Class 2 consists of "replacement or reconstruction" of existing 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 proposed project would alter the casing of two oil and gas wells by perforating and adding tie back casing string. The work would take place on existing oil and gas wells located on existing well pads. This work is done to maintain the condition of the wells and would not expand the existing use of the wells. Additionally, a CalGEM engineer has confirmed that the proposed work is within the scope of UIC project 56606008 and would be a continuation of the baseline operations as permitted by the PAL. Therefore, the proposed work would not change the use of the wells, as the wells would remain oil and gas production wells with substantially the same production capacity.

Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land (14 CCR §§ 15304, 1684.2): The project is exempt under the Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land exemption because the project involves operations that will not have a significant impact on the surrounding environment. Class 4 consists of "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 would repair the casing on two existing oil and gas production wells in order to maintain the wells and continue resource production. The wells are located on existing well pads that are large enough to accommodate the necessary equipment and can be accessed by existing roads. As such, the proposed work will not disturb the surrounding environment by constructing new facilities or expanding existing facilities.

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 can be made available to the public by contacting the CalGEM CEQA Program, located at 715 P Street, MS 1803, Sacramento, CA 95814-3530; by calling (916) 445-9686; or an electronic copy of these documents may be requested by contacting CEQA@conservation.ca.gov. A copy of this NOE may also be accessed online at the State Clearinghouse: <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov>

Certified: Mikayla Vaba

Date: 9/30/2024

Department of Conservation,
Geologic Energy Management Division
CEQA Program