

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: 630693_Chevron_Deepen_UIC

Project Applicant: Chevron U.S.A. Inc. (C5640)

Project Location: Kern, Kern River; 05/29S/28E/MD 35.43471527 / -118.99629211

Project Description: The rework of the existing two cyclic steam wells involves deepening them to a new bottom hole target while utilizing the current wellbores and installing new slot liners. The project is expected to last approximately four days and will require temporary equipment, including a rework rig.

API #	Well Name
0403014215	Monte Cristo No. 1 3583
0403014214	Monte Cristo No. 1 3574

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	

Exemption Type	Statute (PRC)	Regulation (14 CCR)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class 1: Existing Facilities		15301	1684.1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class 2: Replacement or Reconstruction		15302	
<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 applies to the "operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration" of existing facilities involving "negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing previously" (§ 1684.1). The project involves the maintenance of oil production wells and does not include modifications or changes to an existing use. The wells are and will remain oil production wells and will generally have the same production capacity. The proposal involves the deepening of two existing cyclic steam wells to a new bottom hole target within the same formation while utilizing the current wellbores and installing new slot liners. The operator indicates that no permanent facilities would be constructed, and the project would not involve any new ground surface disturbance, including no new roads or other corridors. CalGEM engineer has confirmed that the proposed work is within the scope of the UIC project code 340-00-013. Therefore, there is no expansion of use beyond that previously existing.

Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction (14 CCR § 15302): Class 2 applies because the rework of the wells could be considered "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." The reconstruction activity consists of deepening and installation of slotted liners to restore functionally for two existing cyclic steam wells. The NOIs do not propose changes to the well structures (the wellbores). For each well, this will maintain the well's existing level of service and operations and return it to its historical operations. A CalGEM engineer has reviewed the existing permits for UIC project code 340-00-013 and confirmed that the proposed work is within the scope of the UIC project, and the use of the wells and their capacity are limited by the existing permits.

Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land (14 CCR §§ 15304, 1684.2): Class 4 applies because the rework "consists of drilling operations that result in only minor alterations with negligible or no permanent effects to the existing condition of the land, water, air, and/or vegetation." The drilling operations, deepening of the two existing cyclic steam wells, are intended to maintain the current level of service and will not involve expanding the facility. The proposed activities and temporary equipment will be contained within the existing well pads. There will be no new grading and no construction of additional facilities. Operator indicated there will be no permanent and temporary habitat disturbances. There are no expected impacts on biological resources as the project will not disturb undisturbed areas.

Exceptions to Exemptions: CalGEM further finds that there are no exceptions to the application of the categorical exemptions (PRC § 21084; 14 CCR § 15300.2) referenced above. For example, 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 exemptions 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; by calling (916) 445-9686; or an electronic copy of these documents may be requested by contacting CEQA@conservation.ca.gov. The notice filed with the State Clearinghouse may be accessed online at: <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov>

Certified:

CharMane Robinson

Department of Conservation,
Geologic Energy Management Division

Date

: 01/16/2025