

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

California Environmental Quality Act Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
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: 657809_Group_Chevron_UIC

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

Project Location: Kern County, Kern River Oil Field; Sec. 31/T28S/R28E/MD;
35.44747318/-119.00775760

Project Description: Chevron proposes to rework 4 existing wells in the existing and heavily developed Kern River Oil field to continue oil and gas resource development. Due to the proximity of wells to each other in an already disturbed densely developed and active Kern River Oilfield they are grouped in this application. Work will include conducting a casing integrity test followed by potentially setting a bridge plug, testing of the blowout prevention unit, changing out the wellhead, adding perforations, and/or setting and/or removing a retrievable bridge plug. All perforations will be within the existing completion zone. Water used during the rework operations will be metered, reclaimed produced water, approximately 400 barrels for each well. The work will not increase the depth of any well.

Temporary equipment such as pumps and return bins may be utilized. Various mobile, temporary equipment will also be used including, but not limited to, backhoe, crane and rework rig, and vehicles to transport personnel and material to/from the site. No new production facilities or new ground disturbance will take place. All equipment will be staged within the project boundary on existing well pads and access roads. Any waste materials will be properly disposed of in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. The well is located within an active oil field.

UIC Project #34000013 is a steamflood project in the Kern River Reservoir, Kern River Oil Field, Kern County, California. It includes continuous steam injection and cyclic steam wells. The most recent Project Approval Letter (PAL) was issued on 11/05/2002, and the most recent non-expansion infill package was approved on 07/25/2023. There are no proposed changes to UIC Project #34000013.

The proposed project consists of the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) approving 4 permit(s) for Chevron U.S.A. Inc. (C5640) to rework the well(s) listed below, in the Kern River Oil Field.

API #	Well Name
0402973304	Green & Whittier 556
0403052684	Junction 135
0403057208	Junction 146
0403057421	Junction 147

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		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)	

Exemption Type	Statute (PRC)	Regulation (14 CCR)
<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 explanations below.

Class 1, Existing Facilities (14 CCR §§ 15301, 1684.1): The project is categorically exempt from CEQA under the "Class 1" (14 CCR § 15301) exemption per the CEQA Guidelines because the proposed project is a repair or minor alteration of existing facilities and will not involve an expansion of use of the oil field, and therefore is exempt from the need for full CEQA review. Additionally, in accordance with 14 CCR § 1684.1 the Class 1 exemption consists of operation repair, maintenance, minor alternation of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing previously. The proposed work consists of altering the existing casings, specifically adding perforations, of existing wellbores in order to restore productivity. Additionally, a CalGEM engineer has confirmed that the proposed work would be a continuation of operations within UIC Project #34000013, as permitted by the PAL.

Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction (14 CCR § 15302): Class 2 applies because it consists of "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[.]" The proposed work will be conducted on existing wellbores, located on existing well pads. The new perforations will be added to an existing completion zone. Additionally, a CalGEM engineer has confirmed that the proposed work would be a continuation of operations within UIC Project #34000013, as permitted by the PAL.

Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land (14 CCR §§ 15304, 1684.2): Class 4 exemption applies. Class 4 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 proposed project would be conducted entirely on existing pads with enough space to contain all equipment. The project would not disturb any undisturbed areas. The proposed project is located within an active oil field would not expand any 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) 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.

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:  **Date:** 2/24/2025

Department of Conservation,
Geologic Energy Management Division