

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: 619556_Group_Berry_UIC

Project Applicant: Berry Petroleum Company, LLC

Project Location: Kern County, Midway-Sunset Oil Field; 02/31S/22E/MD; Latitude 35.25920868, Longitude -119.58497620

Project Description: The proposed project consists of sidetracking eleven existing cyclic steam injection wells in the Midway-Sunset oil field. Work includes drilling into the existing wellbores, cleaning out the wellbores, sidetracking, setting and cementing casing, and completion of tiered wellbores targeting the same formation. There will be no expansion of the existing well pads, roads, staging area, or pipelines. No new grading would occur in any undisturbed areas. No new road construction or improvements would be required for the proposed project. Routine maintenance activities at the site would include removal of weeds and other ruderal vegetation for fire control and road maintenance.

The proposed project consists of the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) approving 11 permits for Berry Petroleum to sidetrack the wells listed below, in the Midway-Sunset Oil Field.

API #	Well Name
0403066613	SW 56-61
0403066614	SW 57-60
0403066620	SW 57-62
0403066612	SW 58-61
0403066618	SW 58-63
0403045146	SW 59-61
0403066621	SW 60-61
0403066622	SW 60-63
0403066623	SW 61-62
0403066535	SW 61-64
0403064893	SW 58-47

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)	
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 proposed project was identified by CalGEM district engineers as involving sidetrack activities associated with existing oil and gas operations. The proposed project and related permit approval is consistent with the laws that govern the operations, including statutory and regulatory

provisions that protect public health, safety, and the environment. Upon consideration of the proposed project file and applicable laws, CalGEM determined that the proposed project is exempt from CEQA review under Class 1, Existing Facilities, Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §§ 15301, 1684.1, and no exceptions to the exemptions apply. The proposed project would result in minor alterations to existing wells involving negligible change in use. The proposed project would sidetrack eleven existing cyclic steam injection wells. The wells would be recompleted in the same zone and remain cyclic steam wells. A CalGEM engineer has confirmed that the proposed work is within the scope of UIC project 46400390 and the project would be a continuation of operations as permitted by the Project Approval Letter. Therefore, any modifications to the existing use would be negligible.

Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction (14 CCR § 15302): The proposed project was identified by CalGEM district engineers as involving sidetrack activities associated with existing oil and gas operations. The proposed project and related permit approval is consistent with the laws that govern the operations, including statutory and regulatory provisions that protect public health, safety, and the environment. Upon consideration of the proposed project file and applicable laws, CalGEM determined that the proposed project is exempt from CEQA review under Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction, Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15302, and no exceptions to the exemptions apply. The proposed project would reconstruct existing wellbores of existing cyclic steam wells in order to sidetrack. The wells would recomplete in the same zone and would remain cyclic steam wells. A CalGEM engineer has confirmed that the proposed work is within the scope of UIC project 46400390 and the project would be a continuation of operations as permitted by the Project Approval Letter.

Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land (14 CCR §§ 15304, 1684.2): The proposed project was identified by CalGEM district engineers as involving sidetrack activities associated with existing oil and gas operations. The proposed project and related permit approval is consistent with the laws that govern the operations, including statutory and regulatory provisions that protect public health, safety, and the environment. Upon consideration of the proposed project file and applicable laws, CalGEM determined that the proposed project is exempt from CEQA review under Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land, Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §§ 15304, 1684.2, and no exceptions to the exemptions apply. The project would take place on existing well pads which are large enough to accommodate all the necessary equipment and can be accessed by existing roads. The project would not require the expansion of existing wells pads, roads, staging areas, or pipelines. No new grading would occur in any undisturbed areas. No new road construction or improvements would be required for the proposed project.

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. In addition, CalGEM further finds 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.

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: *Daisy Duenas* **Date:** 04/03/2025
Department of Conservation,
Geologic Energy Management Division