

Department of Conservation

Notice of Exemption

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
11000 River Run Blvd
Bakersfield, CA 93311

Contact: CalGEMCentral@conservation.ca.gov

Project Title: 698076_Macpherson_UIC

Project Applicant: Macpherson Oil Company (Macpherson)

Project Location: Kern County, Round Mountain; Sec. 18, Twn. 28S, Rng. 29E, Base MD;
Latitude: 35.4858029, Longitude: -118.891011

Project Description:

Macpherson proposes to rework/workover 1 well(s) in the existing and heavily developed Round Mountain oil field to continue resource development. The entire proposed project will result in a modification of existing wells, consistent with CCR 1684.1. In addition, because the project will be a minor alteration of existing wells, there will be a negligible effect on the environment, consistent with CCR 1684.2. There will be no expansion of the previously approved use of the wells or deepening of wells

The following work is proposed for USL 18 636R:

Convert well type to pressure observation well. No casing alterations are required for this work.

The proposed project is estimated to take an estimated 5 days per well 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. No production facilities and no new ground surface disturbance will be associated with the reworks.

The total project footprint for each well in this project is estimated to be less than 0.5 acres. The majority of this project is in areas of existing disturbance. There are no sensitive receptors within 3,200 of the project area.

Workover operations will require the use of up to 8,400 gals of water per well site. The water will be purchased from West Kern Water District and stored on site in temporary tanks. Any unused water will be transported to the next project site.

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Macpherson's workover operations typically don't generate a waste stream, however there is a minor potential for non-hazardous cement waste from washout, drill cuttings, drilling fluid, and mud. This project will discharge into permitted surface impoundments (sumps) on the well site. Soli-bond is applied to the three waste streams to dry and encapsulate prior to disposal.

Transportation of personnel and materials to this site will be over oil field roads which are accessed from Round Mountain Rd. The rig company will conduct a journey management evaluation of the route prior

to mobilizing equipment to the site, and this will include the height of powerlines and other overhead equipment. The speed limit while driving on unpaved roads is no faster than 10 mph or as otherwise posted. Dust is controlled via water trucks scheduled throughout the day, or by special request. Please see the attached map for further details.

Project Location:

County: Kern

City: N/A

Field Name: Round Mountain

This project is in the densely developed USL lease within the Round Mountain oil field. There is no historical data available for this area. Much of the oil and gas development in the Round Mountain oil field was conducted prior to Macpherson ownership, which began in 2017.

Environmental Setting:

The topography for the project area is rolling hills. The surrounding land use within three miles of this project consists of densely developed oil and gas fields. Workover operations will be conducted in well-developed and heavily traveled areas whose primary use is oil and gas extraction. Potential habitat includes Valley Salt Bush Scrub, and annual grasses. There is potential habitat for sensitive animal species in the project area that includes San Joaquin Antelope Squirrel and San Joaquin Kit Fox. No waterways were noted within the project boundaries. A third-party biological monitor is on contract, and available for support if necessary.

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The proposed project consists of the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) approving 1 permit for Macpherson Oil Company to rework the well(s) listed below, in the Round Mountain Oil Field, to address well integrity issues.

API #	Well Name
0403039380	USL 18 636R

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).

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Exemption Type		Statute (PRC)	Regulation (14 CCR)	
☐	Statutory Exemption:			
☐	Ongoing Project (<i>pre-CEQA approval on April 5, 1973</i>)	21169	15261 (b)	
☐	Ministerial	21080 (b)(1)	15268	
☐	Declared Emergency	21080 (b)(3)	15269 (a)	
☐	Emergency Projects	21080 (b)(4)	15269 (b) or (c)	
☒	Categorical Exemption:	21084		
☒	Class 1: Existing Facilities		15301	1684.1
☒	Class 2: Replacement or Reconstruction		15302	
☐	Class 3: New Construction/Conversion of Small Structures		15303	
☒	Class 4: Minor Alterations to Land		15304	1684.2
☐	Class 7: Protection of Natural Resources		15307	
☐	Class 8: Protection of the Environment		15308	
☐	Class 11: Accessory Structures		15311	
☐	Class 21: Enforcement Actions to revoke a permit		15321	
☐	Class 30: Minor Actions to Prevent, Minimize, Stabilize, Mitigate, or Eliminate a Release (Actual or Threat) of Hazardous Substances (Waste or Material)		15330	
☐	Class 33: Small Habitat Restoration Projects		15333	
☐	General Exemption ("common sense")		15061 (b)(3)	
☐	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):

Class 1 consists of the "operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing previously." This includes "remedial, maintenance, conversion, and abandonment work on oil, gas, injection, and geothermal wells involving the alteration of well casing, such as perforating and casing repair, removal, or replacement; installation or removal of downhole production or injection equipment, cement plugs, bridge plugs, and packers set to isolate production or injection intervals." (14 CCR § 1684.1.) The proposed project would make minor alterations to the well(s), resulting in negligible expansion of use beyond that existing previously. The proposed project and related permit approval is consistent with the laws

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that govern the operations, including statutory and regulatory provisions that protect public health, safety, and the environment.

Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction (14 CCR § 15302):

Class 2 consists of 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 proposed project would reconstruct the casing and wellbore(s) of existing wells. The work would take place on the existing wellbore(s) and well pads. The proposed work involves negligible change in use of the wells. 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.

Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land (14 CCR §§ 15304, 1684.2):

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." (14 CCR § 1684.2; see also 14 CCR § 15304.) The proposed project involves negligible or no vegetation removal, expansion of the existing well pads, and ground disturbance. Therefore, there would be no surface disturbance related activities that would significantly disturb the surrounding environment. 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.

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 District office, located at District office address here; by calling District phone number here; or an electronic copy of these documents may be requested by contacting District email address here. The notice filed with the State Clearinghouse may be accessed online at: <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov>

5/16/2025

Certified:**Date:**

Department of Conservation,
Geologic Energy Management Division