

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, Room 113
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Responsible Agency:
California Energy Commission
Fuels and Transportation Division
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Title: San Joaquin – Critical Hydrogen Infrastructure in Lodi & Ripon (SJ-CHILR)

Project Applicant: Pilot Travel Centers LLC

Project Location - Specific:

1501 Jack Tone Rd, Ripon, CA 95366
15100 Thornton Rd, Lodi, CA 95242

Project Location - City: Ripon & Lodi

Project Location - County: San Joaquin County

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The project involves the installation of two public hydrogen refueling stations located at Lodi and Ripon. Each site will include three rapid H70 hydrogen dispensers, as well as one 25,000-gallon liquid hydrogen storage tank. Totalling six rapid H70 hydrogen dispensers and two 25,000-gallon liquid hydrogen storage tanks for this project. Both sites are located at an existing refueling hub. Included in this project at both sites is an fueling hub, which includes pumps, tanks, and hydrogen refueling equipment (totaling 1,971 sq. ft.) and a shade structure (1,881 sq. ft).

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Pilot Travel Centers LLC

Exempt Status: (check one)

- ☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- ☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- ☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: CCR section 15301, CCR section 15303, CCR section 15304
-
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____
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Reasons why project is exempt:

C Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, sect. 15301 provides that projects which consist of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, and which involve negligible or no expansion of existing or former use at the time of the lead agency's determination, are categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The project involves the installation of two publicly available hydrogen refueling stations located in Lodi and Ripon. Each site will include three rapid H70 hydrogen dispensers, as well as one 25,000-gallon liquid hydrogen storage tank, totaling six rapid H70 hydrogen dispensers and two 25,000-gallon liquid hydrogen storage tanks for this project. Both sites are located at an existing refueling hub owned by the Recipient. Included in this project at both sites is an fueling hub, which includes pumps, tanks, and hydrogen refueling equipment (totaling 1,971 sq. ft.) and a shade structure (1,881 sq. ft).

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The project will not affect any visual resources, such as protected trees or historic resources. The installation for the refueling stations will involve excavating for foundations and new piping, laying new piping and conduits, grading unpaved areas, and applying concrete and/or asphalt paving. Additionally, there will be minor trenching necessary for installing pipes and conduits for the dispenser system.

The proposed project will be built on an existing parking lot of an existing facility and will not expand the use beyond that already existing. Additionally, its structures do not exceed the dimensions mentioned in Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, sect. 15301(e). Therefore, the project falls within section 15301 and will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, sec. 15303 provides that projects which consist of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure, are categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA. The proposed project consists of three rapid H70 hydrogen dispensers, as well as one 25,000-gallon liquid hydrogen storage tank, at each site. Totaling six rapid H70 hydrogen dispensers and two 25,000-gallon liquid hydrogen storage tanks for this project. Both sites are located at an existing refueling hub owned by the Recipient. Included in this project at both sites is an fueling hub, which includes pumps, tanks, and hydrogen refueling equipment (totaling 1,971 sq. ft.) and a shade structure (1,881 sq. ft). Therefore, the project falls within section 15303 and will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, sec. 15304 provides that projects which consist of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes, are categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA. The proposed project consists of consists of three rapid H70 hydrogen dispensers, as well as one 25,000-gallon liquid hydrogen storage tank, at each site. Each site is used as a parking lot, which does not have vegetation. There will be no removal of healthy nature or scenic nature. Therefore, the project falls within section 15304 and will not have a significant effect on the environment.

The project does not involve impacts on any particularly sensitive environment; will not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies; does not involve any cumulative impacts of successive projects of the same type in the same place that might be considered significant; does not involve any unusual circumstances that might have a significant effect on the environment; will not result in damage to any scenic resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway, none of the sites are included on any list compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5, and the project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Therefore, none of the exceptions to exemptions listed in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 apply to this project and this project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Responsible Agency

Contact Person: Vivian Nguyen

Area

Code/Telephone/Extension: (916) 244-9673

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.

2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Signature:  Date: 6/16/25 Title: Associate Energy Specialist

☒ Signed by Responsible Agency ☐ Signed By Applicant

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Date Received for filing at OPR: _____