

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: 419148_32600007_HWOC_UIC

Project Applicant: Holmes Western Oil Corporation (HWOC)

Project Location: Fresno County, Jacalitos Oil Field; 8/21N/15E/MD; Latitude
36.11679840, Longitude -120.37732697

Project Description: HWOC would modify underground injection control (UIC) project 32600007 by converting 12 oil and gas production wells to waterflood injection. The project requires a modification to the project approval letter (PAL) to add these wells to the five existing waterflood injection wells in the project. The UIC project would consist of 17 total waterflood injection wells. The waterflood would inject into the historically productive and aquifer-exempted Miocene-aged Temblor Formation. This project will utilize existing roads, power lines, and production/injection facilities. Existing pipelines will also be utilized, with tie-ins to the proposed new wells. No new drills or surface additional surface disturbance are planned for this project.

The proposed project consists of the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) approving one PAL for HWOC to modify the UIC project 32600007, including the rework of the wells listed below, in the Jacalitos Oil Field.

API #	Well Name
0401925496	Sec 8 4-2
0401925351	Sec 8 4-6
0401924814	Sec 8 4-8R
0401926104	Sec 8 5-7i
0401926105	Sec 8 5-8i
0401924757	Sec 8 6-8
0401926111	Sec 8 7-7i
0401924069	Sec 8 8-3
0401925492	Sec 8 8-6
0401924434	Sec 8 17
0401924499	Sec 8 20

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):

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” (14 CCR §§ 15301, 1684.1). The proposed project would convert 12 existing oil and gas production wells to waterflood injection, which would be a negligible change in use. The work required to convert the wells to injection does not involve mechanical changes to the casing. A CalGEM engineer has confirmed that this is an administrative modification to UIC project 32600007 with negligible surface impacts and that the area of review (AOR) for the UIC project would be minimally expanded. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) reviewed the project for water quality impacts and does not object to the project. Therefore, any subsurface impacts would also be negligible.

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 12 existing oil and gas production wells by converting them to waterflood injection. These changes would take place on existing wells which are located on existing well pads. Conversion of the wells would be a negligible change in use and would not substantially expand the scope of UIC project 32600007.

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 §§ 15304, 1684.2). The proposed project would result in negligible changes to 12 existing wells to convert them to waterflood injection. The conversions would not require mechanical changes to the casing of the wells. The project would be located on existing well pads which can accommodate the necessary equipment, and would utilize existing roads, power lines, and pipelines. Therefore, there would be no new ground disturbance that could impact the surrounding 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 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:

Mikayla Vaba

Date:

7/14/2025

Department of Conservation,
Geologic Energy Management Division