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:** 666742_HWOC_OG_UIC

**Project Applicant:** Holmes Western Oil Corporation

**Project Location:** Kern County, Midway-Sunset; 21/11N/23W/SB; 35.03195190/-119.33733368.

**Project Description:** Rework existing well Santiago Creek Unit D-8R located in the Midway Sunset Oilfield. HWOC proposes to rework existing well Santiago Creek Unit D-8R by converting it from a producer to a steam injection well. Proposed intervention operations for this wellbore are consistent with UIC. This rework is within scope of UIC 46400393, same wellbore, defined area, and zone as stated and included in the PAL/UIC. The project is expected to take 2 days and will be completed during the Fall season.

Construction related activities are not required. All equipment will be contained within existing facilities and there will be no expansion of existing former use. Temporary equipment needed for the project includes a Production Rig, Rig Pump, Wireline Truck, and Bins. Vehicles needed to transport personnel, deliver supplies and materials, and transport waste will also visit the project site. This well will not require the use of any produced or fresh water. Therefore, no vacuum truck is necessary.

The proposed project is in Kern County on Section 21 T.11N.R23. The well is located inside of the Midway Sunset oilfield boundary established before April 5, 1973. The surrounding land use of the proposed project consists of developed oil and gas leases. There are no sensitive receptors within 3200 ft of the project site. The project is located on property operated by HWOC in Kern County. Kern County does not issue permits for oil and gas wells.

The proposed project consists of the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) approving 1 permit(s)-UIC 46400393 for Holmes Western Oil Corporation to rework the well(s) listed below, in the Midway-Sunset Oil Field.

| API # | Well Name |
|---|---|
| 0403046372 | Santiago Creek Unit D-8R |

**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) | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ **Statutory Exemption:** | | | |
| ☐ Ongoing Project (*pre-CEQA approval on April 5, 1973*) | 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):** 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. This Class includes but is not limited to 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. Additionally, a CalGEM engineer has confirmed that the proposed work would be a continuation of operations within UIC Project 46400393, 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[.]" No Construction related activities and there will be no expansion of existing former use. Additionally, a CalGEM engineer has confirmed that the proposed work would be a continuation of operations within UIC Project 46400393, as permitted by the PAL.

**Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land (14 CCR §§ 15304, 1684.2):** Class 4 exemption applies. The proposed project would be conducted entirely on an existing pad with enough space to contain all equipment. The project would not disturb any undisturbed areas. The proposed project is located within an industrial area. Therefore, the proposed project "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 rework/sidetrack would not expand the facility. No Construction related activities and there will be no expansion of existing former use.

**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:** Signed by: Mila Galevski 8B8D5FCAB65E45C... **Date:** 9/26/2025

Department of Conservation,
Geologic Energy Management Division