

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:** 261433\_464000020\_HWOC\_UIC

**Project Applicant:** Holmes Western Operating Company (HWOC)

**Project Location:** Kern County, Midway-Sunset Oil Field; 18/11N/23W/SB;  
35.04556274, -119.37000275

**Project Description:** The Operator proposes to initiate waterflood operations through conversion of one existing production well to injection on the Lincoln/Oakland Lease. The Operator would also install 230 feet of fiberspar pipeline to the well Lincoln-Oakland 7-18k. The waterflood well would inject into the historically productive Miocene-aged Antelope Sands of the USDW-exempt Monterey Formation. The conversion of the well requires no change to the casing of the wellbore. This proposed project will utilize existing roads, current production and injection facilities, with no new power lines anticipated. The State Water Resources Control Board reviewed the project and issued a No Objection letter on January 5, 2025.

The proposed project consists of the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) approving one project approval letter (PAL) for HWOC new UIC project 464000020, including to rework the well listed below, in the Midway-Sunset Oil Field.

API #	Well Name
0402979252	Lincoln 7-18K

**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"/>	<b>Statutory Exemption:</b>			
	<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"/>	<b>Categorical Exemption:</b>	21084		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Class 1:</b> Existing Facilities		15301	1684.1
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Class 2:</b> Replacement or Reconstruction		15302	
	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Class 3:</b> New Construction/Conversion of Small Structures		15303	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Class 4:</b> Minor Alterations to Land		15304	1684.2
	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Class 7:</b> Protection of Natural Resources		15307	
	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Class 8:</b> Protection of the Environment		15308	
	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Class 11:</b> Accessory Structures		15311	
	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Class 21:</b> Enforcement Actions to revoke a permit		15321	
	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Class 30:</b> Minor Actions to Prevent, Minimize, Stabilize, Mitigate, or Eliminate a Release (Actual or Threat) of Hazardous Substances (Waste or Material)		15330	
	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Class 33:</b> Small Habitat Restoration Projects		15333	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>General Exemption</b> ("common sense")		15061 (b)(3)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Not a "Project" subject to CEQA</b>		15378 (b)(2)	
<p><b>CEQA Exceptions to the Exemptions (14 CCR § 15300.2):</b> where project is located (e.g., sensitive environment); Cumulative Impact; Significant Effect due to Unusual Circumstances; Scenic Highways; Hazardous Waste Sites; Historical Resources.</p>				

**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 applies because the proposed project consists of the "minor alteration" of an existing well and pipeline involving "negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing previously" (14 CCR §§ 15301, 1684.1). The proposed project would convert one production well to waterflood injection well to establish a new UIC program and install 230ft of pipeline along the existing well pad. This is a negligible change in use that would result in negligible to no surface impacts. The proposed project will be located within an

area where existing injection activities are currently present. The State Water Resources Control Board reviewed the project and issued a No Objection letter on 1/5/23.

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

Class 2 applies because the proposed project consists of the “reconstruction” of an existing well and pipeline, which would have “substantially the same purpose and capacity” (14 CCR § 15302). An existing oil and gas well would be converted to waterflood injection and 230ft of pipeline would be installed to connect to the well to existing pipeline. This is a negligible change in use that would result in negligible to no surface impacts. The proposed project will be located within an area where existing injection activities are currently present. The State Water Resources Control Board reviewed the project and issued a No Objection letter on 1/5/23.

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

Class 4 applies because the proposed project consists of “minor alterations with negligible or no permanent effects to the existing condition of the land, water, air, and/or vegetation” (14 CCR § 1684.2). The proposed project involves the conversion of a production well into waterflood injection and installation of 230-foot pipeline. The well conversion involves no change to the casing of the wellbore. The pipeline will be placed within the previously disturbed existing well pad. Pipelines follow existing pipe corridors and roads to eliminate impacts to habitat. All necessary equipment will fit on the existing well pad and the Operator does not propose further expansion of existing facilities or construction of new facilities. Therefore, there would be negligible to no ground disturbance that could significantly impact biological resources or their habitat.

**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](mailto:CEQA@conservation.ca.gov). The notice filed with the State Clearinghouse may be accessed online at: <https://ceqanet.lci.ca.gov>

**Certified:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Mikayla Vaba*

Department of Conservation,  
Geologic Energy Management Division

**Date:** 10/17/2025