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: 347648_464-00-0025_HWOC_UIC

Project Applicant: Holmes Western Oil Company (HWOC)

Project Location: Kern County, Midway-Sunset Oil Field; Section 18, Township 11N, Range 23W, Base SB; 35.03563993, -119.35919608

Project Description: Holmes Western Oil Corporation (HWOC) proposes to initiate a new steamflood and cyclic steam Underground Injection Control (UIC) project through the conversion of 12 existing production wells to steam injection wells, 30 production wells to cyclic steam wells, and 4 existing production wells to temperature observation wells. These conversions require no change to the casing of the wellbores and will not require notices of intention (NOIs). Additionally, HWOC proposes to transfer 26 cyclic steam wells from placeholder UIC project No. 46400393. The proposed project is located in an area containing existing well pads, roadways, pipelines, and facilities in a densely developed existing oil field. Well pads and roadways are maintained with a 10-foot vegetation buffer for everyday operations and fire control. No new roadways are required. No new permanent facilities will be constructed, and no expansion of associated facilities will be required.

The proposed project consists of the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) issuing one new project approval letter (PAL) to HWOC for the new UIC project No. 464-00-0025, located within the Midway-Sunset Oil Field in Kern County. The list of injection wells that would be associated with the new UIC project are included in Attachment 1.

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 6**: Information Collection		15306	
	☐ **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 applies because the proposed project consists of "minor alteration" of existing wells involving "negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing previously" (14 CCR §§ 15301, 1684.1). The Operator proposes to initiate a new steamflood and cyclic steam UIC project through the conversion of 12 existing production wells to steam injection wells, 30 production wells to cyclic steam wells, and 4 existing production wells to temperature observation wells. These conversions result in no change to the casing

of the wellbores and will not require the submittal of NOIs. Additionally, the Operator proposes to transfer 26 cyclic steam wells from placeholder UIC project No. 46400393. Transferring the wells from the placeholder project is an administrative change that will not change the use of the wells. 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 5/23/2024.

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

Class 2 applies because the proposed project consists of the "reconstruction" of existing wells, which would be "located on the same site" and have "substantially the same purpose and capacity" (14 CCR § 15302). The proposed project would convert 12 existing production wells to steam injection wells, 30 production wells to cyclic steam wells, and 4 existing production wells to temperature observation wells. This reconstruction is a minor change that would take place on existing wells. The proposed project will be located within an area where existing injection activities are currently present and would not substantially change the purpose or capacity of the wells.

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 conversions will not change the casing of the wellbores and the transfer of wells from the placeholder project is an administrative change that will not have physical impacts. The proposed project is located in an area containing existing well pads, roadways, pipelines, and facilities in a densely developed existing oil field. Well pads and roadways are maintained with a 10-foot vegetation buffer for everyday operations and fire control. No new roadways are required. No new permanent facilities will be constructed, and no expansion of associated facilities will be required. Therefore, there would be no significant surface 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.lci.ca.gov

Certified: Mikayla Vaba **Date:** 10/30/2025

Department of Conservation,
Geologic Energy Management Division

Attachment 1

API #	Well Name
0402951315	Govt 106
0403069128	Govt 109
0403047047	Govt 130
0403069140	Govt 135
0403037266	Maricopa S 24
0403051580	Maricopa S 29
0403051581	Maricopa S 31
0403047050	Maricopa S 33
0403047051	Maricopa S 36
0403051585	Maricopa S 38
0403051587	Maricopa S 40
0403046599	WM NCT-2 157
0402952502	Govt 122
0402987999	Maricopa S 8
0403034060	WM NCT-2 6-2
0403034062	WM NCT-2 6-8
0403047048	Govt 132
0403037263	Maricopa S 21
0403047049	Maricopa S 30
0403051582	Maricopa S 32
0403051583	Maricopa S 35
0403051584	Maricopa S 37
0403051586	Maricopa S 38A
0403047052	Maricopa S 39
0403051588	Maricopa S 41
0403051589	Maricopa S 44
0402988000	Maricopa S 9
0402948551	WM NCT-2 111
0403024227	WM NCT-2 13ERA
0402985390	WM NCT-2 153T
0403046597	WM NCT-2 155
0403046598	WM NCT-2 156
0403046600	WM NCT-2 158
0403046601	WM NCT-2 159
0403031773	WM NCT-2 16ERA
0403031552	WM NCT-2 19ERA
0403031772	WM NCT-2 1ERA
0403029210	WM NCT-2 22ERA
0403025608	WM NCT-2 25ERA
0403034061	WM NCT-2 4-6
0403031553	WM NCT-2 4ERA

0403031554	WM NCT-2 7ERA
0403069125	Govt 112
0403069124	Govt 129
0403069127	Govt 131
0403069130	Govt 137
0403069126	Govt 139
0403069141	Govt 141
0403069123	Govt 145
0403069122	Govt 99
0403068926	Havenstrite 10
0403069114	Maricopa S 13
0403069112	Maricopa S 14
0403069113	Maricopa S 15
0403069115	Maricopa S 17
0403069131	Maricopa S 18
0403069118	Maricopa S 3A
04030-69143	Maricopa S 42
0403069137	Maricopa S 45
0403069136	Maricopa S 47
0403069139	Maricopa S 49
0403069129	Maricopa S 5A
0403069133	Maricopa S 7A
0403069132	Maricopa S 9A
0402946741	WM NCT-2 104
0402947367	WM NCT-2 106
0402947368	WM NCT-2 107
0402948549	WM NCT-2 109
0403023929	WM NCT-2 10ERA
0402948553	WM NCT-2 113
0402981122	WM NCT-2 144
0402985986	WM NCT-2 204T