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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
11000 River Run Boulevard
Bakersfield CA 93311
Contact: CalGEMCentral@conservation.ca.gov

Project Title: 747023_Aera_OG

Project Applicant: Aera Energy LLC (Aera)

Project Location: Kern County, Belridge, South; Sec. 33, Twn. 28S, Rng. 21E, Base MD;
Latitude: 35.4480934, Longitude: -119.7075500

Project Description: The project description is for a sidetrack for, Aera, in developed South Belridge field, existing dirt pad, well type remains production well.

The proposed project consists of the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) approving one permit for Aera to sidetrack the well listed below, in the South Belridge Oil Field.

API #	Well Name
0403024398	585K2-33

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:**			

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Exemption Type		Statute (PRC)	Regulation (14 CCR)	
☐	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):
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 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." (14 CCR § 1684.1.) The proposed project would make minor alterations to the well(s), resulting in negligible expansion of use beyond that existing previously. The proposed project and related permit approval is consistent with the laws

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that govern the operations, including statutory and regulatory provisions that protect public health, safety, and the environment.

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 the casing and wellbore(s) of existing wells. The work would take place on the existing wellbore(s) and well pads. The proposed work involves negligible change in use of the wells. The proposed project and related permit approval is consistent with the laws that govern the operations, including statutory and regulatory provisions that protect public health, safety, and the environment.

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 § 1684.2; see also 14 CCR § 15304.) The proposed project involves negligible or no vegetation removal, expansion of the existing well pads, and ground disturbance. Therefore, there would be no surface disturbance related activities that would significantly disturb the surrounding environment. The proposed project and related permit approval is consistent with the laws that govern the operations, including statutory and regulatory provisions that protect public health, safety, and the 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 District office, located at 11000 River Run Boulevard, Bakersfield CA 93311; by calling (661) 322-4031; or an electronic copy of these documents may be requested by contacting District CalGEMCentral@conservation.ca.gov. The notice filed with the State Clearinghouse may be accessed online at: https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov

Certified: Ghebretinsae Seguar **Date:** 12/8/2025

Department of Conservation,
Geologic Energy Management Division