

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: State Abandonment of Orphan Wells Project – Phase 2

Project Applicant: Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM)

Project Location: Various Oil Fields (Two different fields)

Project Description: The proposed project consists of the plug and abandonment (P&A) of existing orphan wells in two Counties as part of CalGEM's State Abandonment Program. The proposed work involves well abandonment and decommissioning tanks and other production-related facilities attendant to the wells. For well abandonment, each well would be cleaned out and then plugged with cement and inert mud to surface. After abandonment, the well head would be removed, and any remaining well casings and surface conductors would be cut to just above the bay floor. Once the well bay is clean, it would have suitable fill placed and compacted. The well bay would be encapsulated with impermeable concrete to seal the bay area. These wells are generally situated within established oil fields in urban and rural settings. Some wells are not located in established oil fields.

More details on the wells to be abandoned are included in Attachment 1 – Well List.

CalGEM has approved a task order for its contractor to perform the proposed work on the wells listed at the end of this NOE. Notices of Intention will be issued to the contractor for administrative purposes only and do not constitute a discretionary approval.

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 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 6: Information Collection		15306	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class 7: Protection of Natural Resources		15307	
	<input checked="" 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)	
<p>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.</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 exemption applies as CalGEM's regulations state: "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. The Class includes, but is not limited to: remedial, maintenance, conversion, and abandonment work on oil, gas, injection, and geothermal wells...". These abandonments could be considered a minor alteration to the existing facilities because the existing wells would be permanently sealed. After abandonment, the wells would cease to be used for oil and gas activities. Therefore, there is no expansion of use beyond that previously existing.

ATTACHMENT 1
WELL LIST

API #	Field	Well Designation	Operator Name	Lat	Long	County
407720484	King Island Gas	Piacentine 1-27	Princeton Natural Gas	38.08238983	121.42196655	San Joaquin
407720511	East Islands Gas	Morais 16-1	Gold Coast Holdings	38.10381317	121.43343353	San Joaquin
409521322	Lindsey Slough Gas	McCormack Ranch 1-4	The Nahabedian Exploration Group	38.21966171	121.75231934	Solano