

State of California
Natural Resources Agency / Department of Conservation
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND GEOTHERMAL RESOURCES

California Environmental Quality Act
Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning & Research
State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: Department of Conservation
Division of Oil, Gas, & Geothermal Resources
801 K Street, MS 18-05
Sacramento, CA 95814

Contact: Larry Kleinecke, (916) 445-9686

Project Title: OG SLC 4 Wells 12182019

Project Applicant: California State Lands Commission

Project Location: South Elwood Oil Field – Platform Holly

County: Santa Barbara Section: 34
Township: 04N Range/Baseline: 29W / SB B&M
Latitude/Longitude: 34.39062881, -119.90670013

Project Description:

Former State Oil and Gas Leases Nos. PRC 421, PRC 3120, and PRC 3242 consist of offshore oil and gas operations that include an oil and gas platform (Platform Holly), onshore oil and gas piers (Ellwood Piers), and 32 oil and gas wells and their associated infrastructure. The California State Lands Commission (SLC) is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for a project that includes plug and abandonment of 30 oil and gas wells on Platform Holly and 2 wells situated on Ellwood Piers to support the plug and abandonment work. The SLC has filed a Notice of Exemption with the State Clearinghouse (SCH# 2018108286) for the project.

This proposed project activity consists of the Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (Division) approving permits for, and oversight of, the plugging & abandonment of 4 of the 32 wells in the South Elwood Oil Field – Platform Holly, located offshore of Santa Barbara County.

| API # | Well Name | API# | Well Name |
|------------|-------------|------------|--------------|
| 0428320055 | Ames 3120-6 | 0428320288 | Ames 3242-12 |
| 0428320002 | Ames 3242-4 | 0428320273 | Ames 3242-15 |

Details on well locations can be found on the Division's website at:
<http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dog/Pages/Wellfinder.aspx>

Exempt Status:

As a Responsible Agency, the Division has determined that the proposed project is exempt from further environmental review requirements of CEQA, pursuant to the specified exemptions marked in the section below. The Division further finds that the proposed project would not result in a significant adverse impact on the environment, or that any of the exceptions to the exemptions apply (14 CCR 15300.2).

| Exemption Type | | Statute (PRC) | Regulation (14 CCR) | |
|--|--|---------------|---------------------|--------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Statutory Exemption: | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing Project (pre-CEQA. Approval prior to April 5, 1973) | 21169 | 15261 (b) | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Ministerial | 21080 (b)(1) | 15268 | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Declared Emergency | 21080 (b)(3) | 15269 (a) | |
| | <input checked="" 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 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:

Upon considering the project, DOGGR determined that it is exempt for the following reasons:

Statutory Exemption – Emergency Project: The Division has determined that the project is statutorily exempt from CEQA under the emergency project (14 CCR 15269 (c)) exemption per the CEQA Guidelines, where the specific plugging & abandonment actions are necessary to address the hazard posed by the desertion of operable oil and gas facilities on and affecting public lands.

Class 1 – Existing Facility: The Division has determined that the project is categorically exempt from CEQA under the "Class 1" (14 CCR 15301) exemption per the CEQA Guidelines and per DOGGR's regulations (14 CCR 684.1) because the project involves abandonment of wells, resulting in no expansion of use beyond that existing previously.

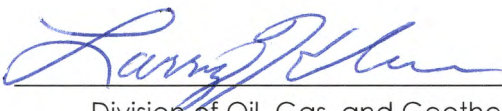
Class 4 – Minor Alterations to Land: The Division has determined that the project is categorically exempt from CEQA under the "Class 4" (14 CCR 15304) exemption per the CEQA Guidelines because the project involves minor alterations with negligible or no permanent effects to the condition of land, water, air, and or vegetation within a developed oil field.

Class 7 –Protection of Natural Resources: The Division has determined that the project is categorically exempt from CEQA under the "Class 7" (14 CCR 15307) exemption per the CEQA Guidelines because the project involves procedures for the protection of the environment. Offshore oil wells will be properly abandoned following DOGGR regulations to reduce the potential for future spills and/or releases to the environment.

Class 8 –Protection of the Environment: The Division has determined that the project is categorically exempt from CEQA under the "Class 8" (14 CCR 15308) exemption per the CEQA Guidelines because the project involves actions taken by a regulatory agency to assure protection of the environment. Offshore oil wells will be properly abandoned by the State Lands Commission, following DOGGR regulations, to reduce the potential for future spills and/or releases to the environment.

Exceptions to Exemptions: The Division further finds that there are no exceptions to the otherwise-applicable categorical exemptions (PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15300.2(c)). There is no substantial evidence that there are any "unusual circumstances" associated with the proposed project that creates 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, this project is not subject to CEQA.

A copy of this NOE (as required by 14 CCR 15062(a)) and all other related materials are available for public inspection at the Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources/CEQA Unit, located at 801 K Street, 14th floor, Sacramento, CA 95812; or an electronic copy of these documents may be accessed online at: <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dog/CEQA>.

Certified: 
Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources
CEQA Unit

Date: 12/18/2019