



NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A FONSI IN LIEU OF A NEGATIVE DECLARATION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the California Department of Conservation's Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM), as the lead state agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), intends to adopt a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) by the U.S. Department of the Interior/Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for the Holmes Western Oil Corporation, Midway-Sunset Oil Field (USL-17 Lease), CalGEM PFID 755250 project. In accordance with California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 14, § 15072 of the CEQA Guidelines, this Notice is to inform responsible agencies and other interested parties of the availability of the approved FONSI and solicit comments and concerns regarding the environmental issues associated with the proposed project. (14 CCR § 15105.)

The BLM prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA)/FONSI (DOI-BLM-CA-C060-2024-0060-EA), which identifies and evaluates the potential for significant environmental impacts from the proposed project. The BLM completed its review of the FONSI and signed a Record of Decision on December 18, 2024, approving the proposed action. The BLM found that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the environment.

In accordance with CEQA (PRC § 21000, et seq.), the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR § 15000, et seq.), and NEPA, CalGEM is the CEQA lead agency for the proposed project, while BLM is the NEPA lead agency. CalGEM reviewed the approved EA/FONSI and found that it meets a majority of the requirements of CEQA, except CEQA circulation and Tribal consultation requirements. CalGEM took actions to address identified issues, and therefore, deemed all CEQA requirements met, when analyzing the EA/FONSI in conjunction with the additional actions taken by CalGEM. The CEQA Guidelines direct state agencies to use a FONSI prepared pursuant to NEPA rather than preparing a new CEQA document if the FONSI has been or will be prepared before a Negative Declaration (ND) or Environmental Impact Report would otherwise be completed for the project and the FONSI complies with the Guidelines. (14 CCR § 15221.) Therefore, CalGEM intends to use the FONSI rather than preparing an ND for this project.

Project Description: Holmes Western Oil Corporation proposes to drill ten new oil & gas production wells in the Midway-Sunset Oil Field in Kern County. The proposed project would use existing well pads that are located on disturbed sites with existing access roads. The project area directly impacted by drilling each new well will occupy a temporary use area of approximately 100 x 200 feet (0.5 acres). Five existing well pads would be used for the ten new production wells. The project would take place on public lands containing BLM administered mineral estate, with a total project footprint equal to 2.82 acres.

Drilling is expected to take approximately four days per well. A production rig will be used to complete the wells. Temporary equipment such as pumps and return bins will be needed. No permanent facilities will be constructed, and no expansion of



associated facilities will be required. Waste materials will be properly disposed of as non-hazardous or hazardous waste, as appropriate, at a facility licensed to accept the waste.

Location: The proposed project is in Kern County, California, within the Midway-Sunset Oil Field, approximately three miles southeast of the City of Maricopa (Section 17, Township 11N, Range 23W, San Bernardino Base & Meridian). The proposed project is not located on a site included on a list of hazardous material sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 [14 CCR § 15072(g)(5)].

Environmental Effects: CalGEM reviewed BLM's analysis of environmental impacts. It was determined that impacts to all resource areas were adequately addressed in the EA/FONSI and that any impacts would be less than significant. Specific review areas that received additional review included air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, hydrology and water quality, and tribal-cultural resources. CalGEM determined that impacts to these review areas were adequately addressed, as discussed below.

Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, and Hydrology and Water Quality: CalGEM reviewed the analysis of air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and hydrology and water quality impacts and found that the EA/FONSI adequately evaluated these impacts and that any impacts would be less than significant.

Air Quality: CalGEM reviewed the air quality analysis provided in the EA and found that the document adequately addressed the following issues: implementation of the applicable air quality plan, cumulatively considerable net increase, exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, and odors/other emissions adversely affecting a substantial number of people. The EA determined that the implementation of existing and proposed regulatory requirements would offset the increase in potential emissions related to the proposed project.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG): CalGEM reviewed the GHG emissions analysis provided in the EA and found that the document adequately addressed the following issues: impact of GHGs on the environment and compliance with applicable plans, policies, and regulations. Compliance with local requirements would reduce the impact of GHGs.

Hydrology and Water Quality: CalGEM reviewed the hydrology and water quality analysis provided in the EA and found that the document adequately addressed the following issues: compliance with water quality standards, impact to groundwater supplies, impact to existing drainage pattern, risk of release of pollutants due to project inundation, and compliance with a water quality control plan and/or sustainable groundwater management plan. Compliance with local requirements and the design features of the project would reduce the impact to water quality.



Tribal-Cultural: CalGEM's analysis found that the EA/FONSI did not fully meet CEQA requirements of Tribal consultation. CalGEM took actions to meet CEQA requirements. CalGEM noticed Tribes about the EA/FONSI in order to address CEQA and AB 52 Tribal Consultation requirements. CalGEM found that the documents in conjunction with CalGEM's actions comply with the provisions of the CEQA Guidelines. (14 CCR § 15221.)

CEQA Document Circulation: CalGEM's analysis found that the EA/FONSI did not fully meet CEQA requirements for document circulation. NEPA documents must have been noticed at the same level at which the equivalent CEQA document would be noticed in order for an agency to use a NEPA document in lieu of CEQA (14 CCR § 15225). CalGEM is circulating the EA/FONSI in order to address CEQA requirements for public notice.

California's Senate Bill 1137 (SB 1137): CalGEM has reviewed the operator's statement and all other relevant information and whether each feature identified is a sensitive receptor. CalGEM verified that the subject location of the NOIs is not within a Health Protection Zone (HPZ).

California's Senate Bill 237 (SB 237): CalGEM has reviewed the operator's statement and all other relevant information and whether the project would be eligible for Kern County's oil and gas streamlined permitting process. CalGEM verified the project location and determined that SB 237 is not applicable. CalGEM's analysis found that the project is within BLM's surface and mineral ownership, which falls outside of the scope of Kern County's Second Supplemental Recirculated Environmental Impact Report (SSREIR).

Public Review Period: The EA/FONSI is being circulated for public review and comment for a period of 30 days, beginning **June 29, 2026**, and ending **July 28, 2026**, pursuant to 14 CCR § 15105. No public meetings are planned for the proposed project. Written comments should be submitted and received by **July 28, 2026**. Written comments should be sent to: California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM), CEQA Program, 715 P Street, MS 1803, Sacramento, CA 95814; or email comments to CEQA@conservation.ca.gov.

Availability of Environmental Documentation: The EA/FONSI is now available for public review at the following location during normal business hours: CalGEM Central District Office, 11000 River Run Boulevard, Bakersfield, CA 93311. Per the CEQA Guidelines, CEQA Notices and Documents are submitted to the State Clearinghouse and are available for inspection on CEQAnet at the following link: <https://ceqanet.lci.ca.gov>. An electronic copy is also posted on the CalGEM website at: <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/CEQA/Pages/CEQANotices.aspx>.

For any questions or for distribution of a hard copy of the EA/FONSI, please contact the CEQA Program at CEQA@conservation.ca.gov, or (916) 445-9686, using Attn: [755250_Group_HWOC_OG_UIC].



California
Department of Conservation
Geologic Energy Management Division

Gavin Newsom, Governor
Jennifer Lucchesi, Director

Nicole Trezza

Nicole Trezza
Project Manager
CalGEM CEQA Program
Department of Conservation