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State Agencies Announce Appointments to the SB 83 Independent Review Panel for the Department of Conservation's Underground Injection Control Program

Sacramento, CA – Pursuant to Senate Bill 83 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 24, Statutes of 2015), the Secretaries of the California Natural Resources Agency and the California Environmental Protection Agency today announced the appointees to the Independent Review Panel for the Department of Conservation's Underground Injection Control Program.

This action comes at a time when the State of California is implementing extensive reforms to its regulation and oversight of oil and gas production in order to increase protections for fresh water aquifers, public health, and safety. Production from California's oil fields is largely dependent upon enhanced oil recovery techniques such as the injection of steam or water to induce production from oil reservoirs, which are regulated by the Department of Conservation's Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources' Underground Injection Control Program. Through public processes and legislative actions, the Department has been working over the course of several years to strengthen both the regulatory structure of the program and the staffing resources available to review oil production activity.

Following the requirements of the legislation, the newly-appointed panel is comprised of a diverse group of individuals with expertise and scientific background in geology, toxics, oil and gas industry, public health, and the environment, as well as representatives from agricultural and environmental justice perspectives. This panel will evaluate the regulatory performance of the administration of the Underground Injection Control Program and make recommendations on how to improve its effectiveness by evaluating resource needs, statutory or regulatory changes, as well as program organization.

In addition to drawing on their own expertise, the SB 83 Panel will also seek input from a broad range of stakeholders with a diverse range of interests affected by state policies and the general public.

What the Panel will do

- Observe, comment on, and review a Peer Review conducted by the Ground Water Protection Council (GWPC), a nonprofit organization whose members consist of state ground water and UIC regulatory agencies.
- Seek input on the findings of the Peer Review from a broad range of stakeholders and the public.

- Issue an independent final evaluation and recommendations to improve the regulatory program.

The Panel's discussions and process will be facilitated by the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.

For more information on the SB 83 Independent Review Panel, as well as the names and biographies of the panelists, visit the Natural Resources Agency's [website](#).

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