

## SUMMARY OF BOARD ITEM

**ITEM # 00-10-1:** Public Meeting to Present the Final Assessment of the Air Resources Board's Atmospheric Acidity Protection Program.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The Air Resources Board staff recommends that the Board approve the report, *Atmospheric Acidity Protection Program: Final Assessment, September 2000*.

**DISCUSSION:** Health and Safety Code sections 39900-39905, adopted by the Legislature in 1988, require the Board to conduct a comprehensive program of research and monitoring concerning the causes and effects, and possible solutions to, the acidic deposition problem in California. At the October 26, 2000, public meeting, the Board will review the draft final assessment of this program, make revisions if required, and consider for approval the final assessment.

**SUMMARY AND IMPACTS:** The draft final assessment outlines the findings in the following subject areas: (1) atmospheric processes, (2) effects on human health, (3) aquatic ecosystems, (4) forest ecosystems, (5) agricultural crops, and (6) man-made materials. The main findings are (1) in human health, an association between nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and nitric acid and decreased rates of lung growth in children living in the most polluted cities, (2) in forest ecosystems, soil nitrogen saturation in the San Bernardino Mountains, and potential impacts to forests in the San Gabriel Mountains and Southern Sierra Nevada in future decades, and (3) in aquatic ecosystems a potential risk of nitrogen deposition in high-elevation lakes and streams in the Sierra Nevada. There does not appear to be a need for setting an acidic air pollutant standard, as atmospheric acidity levels have declined in response to control measures adopted to reduce ambient ozone and particulate matter.

