



Terry Tamminen
Agency Secretary

Air Resources Board

Alan C. Lloyd, Ph.D.
Chairman

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Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

February 11, 2004

Mr. Wayne Nastri
Regional Administrator
Region 9
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, California 94105-3901

Dear Mr. Nastri:

We are transmitting our recommendations for area designations under the federal air quality standards for particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter (PM_{2.5}). On behalf of the State of California, the Air Resources Board (ARB) is responding to your June 3, 2003 letter to the Governor requesting these recommendations by February 15, 2004.

Four PM_{2.5} Nonattainment Areas. We base our initial recommendations on ambient PM_{2.5} concentrations measured from 2000 through 2002 by 110 monitors located at 81 stations across California. Pending complete data for 2003, ARB's preliminary recommendation is that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) designate four areas as nonattainment for the PM_{2.5} standards:

- South Coast Air Basin,
- San Joaquin Valley Air Basin,
- San Diego County, and
- City of Calexico (on the California-Mexico border in Imperial County).

Eight areas should be designated attainment, where air quality data are sufficient to determine that they meet the federal standards. Finally, 22 areas should be deemed unclassifiable, where air quality data are insufficient to make a determination yet.

Updated Monitoring Data. We understand that U.S. EPA intends to promulgate PM_{2.5} area designations by December 2004, based on monitoring data from 2001 through 2003. Preliminary 2003 information indicates that Calexico and several of the currently unclassifiable areas may now attain the PM_{2.5} standards. Before your final action, ARB will transmit PM_{2.5} monitoring data for 2003 and any appropriate changes to our initial recommendations for area designations.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our Website: <http://www.arb.ca.gov>.

California Environmental Protection Agency

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Nonattainment Area Boundaries. The geographic scope of the federal PM2.5 nonattainment areas for the South Coast, San Joaquin Valley, and San Diego County should be consistent with the air basin boundary for each region. These coincide with the existing federal one-hour ozone nonattainment areas and ARB's recommended eight-hour ozone nonattainment areas as well.

ARB staff believes that violation of the annual PM2.5 standard in Calexico in 2000-2002 results from emissions in the densely populated international Calexico/Mexicali border region. The level of urban activity and PM2.5 pollution in the Calexico/Mexicali area are distinct and not representative of the rest of Imperial County. As a result, if Calexico violates the federal PM2.5 standard after consideration of 2003 data, we recommend that the U.S. nonattainment area be limited to the City of Calexico.

Enclosures. We include the following materials in this package:

- Recommended nonattainment/attainment/unclassifiable areas (Enclosure 1).
- Information supporting recommendations for nonattainment areas (Enclosure 2).
- Legal descriptions for nonattainment area boundaries (Enclosure 3).
- 2000-2002 data for all of California's PM2.5 monitoring sites (Enclosure 4).

To facilitate public access, we have posted this transmittal and related materials on our website at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/planning/sip/sip.htm>.

If you have any questions, please call Ms. Lynn Terry, Deputy Executive Officer, at (916) 322-2739, or have your staff contact Ms. Cynthia Marvin, Chief, Air Quality and Transportation Planning Branch, at (916) 322-7236.

Sincerely,

/s/

Catherine Witherspoon
Executive Officer

Enclosures

cc: See next page.

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cc: (with Enclosure 1)

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