



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION IX  
75 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

OFFICE OF THE  
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.  
State Capitol Building, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, California 95814

AUG 19 2014

Dear Governor Brown:

Thank you for your recommendations, dated November 25, 2013 and July 2, 2014, of air quality designations for the 2012 annual fine particle National Ambient Air Quality Standard (2012 annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS) throughout California. This letter is to notify you of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) preliminary response to California's recommendations and to inform you of our approach for completing the initial area designations for the 2012 annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS.

The EPA agrees with your November 25, 2013 and July 2, 2014 recommendations. After considering California's annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> designation recommendations and other relevant technical information, including 2011–2013 air quality data, the EPA agrees with California's recommended designations and boundaries and intends to designate the Portola Valley portion of Plumas County, the San Joaquin Valley, Los Angeles-South Coast, and a portion of Imperial County as nonattainment. A Technical Support Document, which provides a detailed analysis to support our preliminary decisions, is enclosed and is available on the EPA's website at: <http://www.epa.gov/pmdesignations/2012standards/state.htm>.

The EPA intends to designate all other areas of the state as unclassifiable/attainment, except for the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Mission Indians, who recommended "unclassifiable" for their portion of Indian country, which the EPA intends to designate as "unclassifiable." The EPA will continue to work with both state and tribal officials regarding the appropriate boundaries for the areas in California. If California has additional information for the EPA to consider, please submit it to us by October 29, 2014.

The EPA will make its preliminary designation decisions and supporting documentation available to the general public for review and comment. We will be announcing a 30-day public comment period shortly in the *Federal Register*. After considering the additional information we receive, the EPA plans to promulgate final annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> designations in December of 2014.

As background, on December 14, 2012, the EPA promulgated a revised primary annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS (78 FR 3086, January 15, 2013). In that action, the EPA revised the primary annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard, strengthening it from 15.0 micrograms per cubic meter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) to 12.0  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ; retained the existing 24-hour PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard at 35  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ; retained the existing 24-hour PM<sub>10</sub> (coarse particle) standard at 150  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ; and retained the current suite of secondary PM standards. The EPA revised the primary annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard based on an integrated assessment of an extensive body of new scientific evidence, which substantially strengthens our body of knowledge regarding PM<sub>2.5</sub>-related health effects. The revised primary annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard will provide increased protection for children, older adults, persons with pre-existing heart and lung disease, and other at-risk populations against an array of PM<sub>2.5</sub>-related

adverse health effects, including premature mortality, increased hospital admissions and emergency department visits, and development and exacerbation of chronic respiratory disease.

The EPA designates an area as “nonattainment” if it is violating the 2012 annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS or if it is contributing to a violation of the NAAQS in a nearby area. Consistent with designations for previous PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards, the EPA intends to use a designation category of “unclassifiable/attainment” for areas that are monitoring attainment or do not have monitors, and that the EPA has reason to believe are likely attainment and are not contributing to nearby violations. Additionally, the EPA intends to designate as “unclassifiable” those areas where the EPA cannot determine based on available information whether the area is meeting the NAAQS or where EPA has not determined that the area contributes to a nearby violation. At this time, the EPA is proceeding with intended initial area designations using quality-assured, certified air quality monitoring data from 2011 to 2013.

The EPA is committed to working with the states and tribes to share the responsibility of reducing PM<sub>2.5</sub> air pollution. Current and upcoming federal standards and safeguards – including pollution reduction rules for power plants, vehicles, and fuels – will ensure steady progress to reduce PM<sub>2.5</sub>-forming pollution and will protect public health in communities across the country. We look forward to a continued dialogue with you and your staff as we work together to implement the 2012 annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS. Should you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Deborah Jordan of my staff at 415-947-8715, or [jordan.deborah@epa.gov](mailto:jordan.deborah@epa.gov).

Sincerely,



Jared Blumenfeld

Enclosure

cc: Matthew Rodriguez, Secretary, California Environmental Protection Agency  
Mary Nichols, Chairman, California Air Resources Board  
Richard Corey, Executive Officer, California Air Resources Board  
Mark A. Macarro, Chairman, Pechanga Band of Luiseño Mission Indians

cc: (via email without enclosure)

Barry Wallerstein, D.Env., Executive Officer, South Coast Air Quality Management District  
Seyed Sadredin, Air Pollution Control Officer, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District  
Brad Poiriez, Air Pollution Control Officer, Imperial County Air Pollution Control District  
Gretchen Bennitt, Air Pollution Control Officer, Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District