

FACT SHEET

South Coast - Final Reclassification to “Serious” for the 2006 PM_{2.5} National Ambient Air Quality Standards

Summary of Action

- The EPA is reclassifying the South Coast nonattainment area to Serious for the 2006 PM_{2.5} NAAQS based on a determination that the area cannot practicably attain these NAAQS by the Moderate area attainment date of December 31, 2015.
- Within 18 months of this reclassification, the State must submit a Serious area plan to provide for attainment of the PM_{2.5} NAAQS in the South Coast as expeditiously as practicable and no later than December 31, 2019.
- This reclassification extends the statutory attainment date for the area by up to four years and requires the State to submit state implementation plan (SIP) revisions, including:
 - Best available controls measures (BACM) for the control of direct PM_{2.5} and PM_{2.5} precursor emissions in the area, including ammonia emissions, and
 - Lower “major stationary source” permitting thresholds (70 tons per year (tpy)) for sources of direct PM_{2.5} and PM_{2.5} precursors.
- Seven Indian tribes are geographically located within the South Coast PM_{2.5} nonattainment area. We invited these tribes to consult with the EPA on the consequences of this reclassification.

Background

- In 2006, the EPA revised the primary and secondary 24-hour PM_{2.5} NAAQS from 65 µg/m³ to 35 µg/m³. The South Coast was designated nonattainment for these NAAQS in December 2009 and continues to violate the 2006 PM_{2.5} NAAQS.
- PM_{2.5} can be emitted directly into the atmosphere or formed in the atmosphere as a result of various chemical reactions from emissions of nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, volatile organic compounds, and ammonia. These particles can reach the deepest regions of the lungs.
- Exposure to particle pollution is linked to a variety of significant health problems including damage to lung tissue, cancer and premature death.

For More Information:

<http://www.epa.gov/region9/air/actions/ca.html>