

U.S. EPA FACT SHEET

Proposed Approval of San Joaquin Valley (SJV) Air Quality Plan and Reclassification to “Serious” for the 2006 PM_{2.5} Standard

December 29, 2014

Summary of Action

- The EPA is proposing to approve elements of the SJV Air District’s air quality plan (Plan) to attain the 2006 PM_{2.5} National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and to reclassify the area from “moderate” to “serious” for this NAAQS.
- Specifically, EPA is proposing to approve the following elements of the SJV Plan:
 - The demonstration that the Plan provides for the implementation of reasonably available control measures;
 - The demonstration that even with these reasonably available control measures, the SJV cannot practicably attain the 2006 24-hour PM_{2.5} standard by the moderate area attainment date of December 31, 2015;
 - The emission inventories in the Plan;
 - The demonstration that the Plan provides for reasonable further progress; and
 - Transportation conformity budgets that are consistent with RFP.
- Based on the demonstration that the area cannot practicably attain by December 31, 2015, the EPA is proposing to reclassify the SJV area as serious nonattainment for the 2006 24-hour PM_{2.5} standard.
- Upon reclassification, California will be required to submit, within 18 months, provisions to assure that the best available controls measures (BACM) for the control of direct PM_{2.5} and PM_{2.5} precursors will be implemented in the SJV no later than 4 years after the area is reclassified.
- Additionally, the State will be required to submit a new attainment plan for the SJV that satisfies the Clean Air Act’s requirements for serious PM_{2.5} nonattainment areas, including:
 - A demonstration that the plan provides for attainment of the 2006 PM_{2.5} NAAQS by the applicable serious area attainment date, which is no later than December 31, 2019;
 - Quantitative milestones which demonstrate reasonable further progress toward attainment by the applicable attainment date; and
 - A revision to the nonattainment new source review program to lower the applicable “major stationary source” threshold from 100 tons per year (tpy) to 70 tpy.
- Today’s proposal will provide for a 45-day comment period following publication in the Federal Register.

U.S. EPA FACT SHEET

Background

- The EPA revised the 24-hour PM_{2.5} standard in 2006 from 65 µg/m³ to 35 µg/m³. Ambient PM_{2.5} levels recorded in the SJV are among the highest in the nation and exceed the 2006 PM_{2.5} NAAQS.
- California submitted the Plan in 2012 and supplemented it in 2014.
- 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.

Next Steps

- This proposed action will be published in the Federal Register and will include a 45-day public comment period from the date of publication. The EPA invites the public to submit comments relevant to this proposed action. Instructions on how to submit comments are included in the Federal Register notice. The proposal and a technical support document containing more detailed information on our proposed action can be found at the website address below.
- Because eight Tribal nations are located within the SJV nonattainment area, we have invited tribes located within SJV to consult with EPA on the potential effects on tribes of the proposed reclassification of the SJV nonattainment area to serious.

For More Information:

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