

U.S. EPA FACT SHEET

Proposed Approval of San Joaquin Valley Contingency Measures for the 1997 PM_{2.5} National Ambient Air Quality Standards and Interim Final Rule to Stay and Defer Sanctions

Summary

- The Clean Air Act (CAA) requires states to adopt and submit for EPA approval contingency measures that will be triggered in the event that an area fails to meet reasonable further progress (RFP) milestones or fails to attain the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) by the required date.
- EPA is proposing to approve fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) contingency measures for the San Joaquin Valley in California. These contingency measures – which include reductions from California’s clean car program, the San Joaquin Valley Air District’s residential woodburning rule, and incentive grant programs – will assure continued progress toward clean air should the San Joaquin Valley fail to meet the 1997 PM_{2.5} NAAQS in 2015.
- Together with its proposed approval of the contingency measures, EPA is also issuing an Interim Final Rule to stay emission off-set sanctions currently in place in the San Joaquin Valley and to defer future highway funding sanctions.

Background

- In 1997, EPA promulgated annual and 24-hour PM_{2.5} NAAQS of 15 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m³) and 65 µg/m³, respectively. In 2005, the San Joaquin Valley was designated “nonattainment” for the 1997 PM_{2.5} NAAQS.
- In 2008, the State of California submitted a PM_{2.5} State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the San Joaquin Valley and in November 2011 (effective January 9, 2012) EPA approved all elements of the this SIP except for the contingency measures, which EPA disapproved. EPA disapproved the contingency measures because they did not provide for sufficient emission reductions.
- EPA’s disapproval of the contingency measures started an 18-month off-set sanction clock and a 2-year highway sanction and FIP clock. The off-set sanctions began on July 9, 2013 and the highway funding sanctions would begin on January 9, 2014.
- In July 2013, the State submitted a contingency measure SIP to correct this disapproval. The contingency measure SIP contains a demonstration that the area has met its 2012 RFP milestone emissions targets and quantifies additional reductions from a number of adopted measures and from incentives funds. Under EPA policy, contingency measures should provide emission reductions approximately equal to one year’s worth of progress towards attainment.

Next Steps

- Today's proposed action will be published in the Federal Register and will include a 30-day public comment period from the date of publication. EPA's Federal Register notice and docket contain detailed information on our proposed action.
- While the Interim Final Rule deferring sanctions is effective upon publication in the Federal Register, EPA is also providing a 30-day comment period on this action. If comments submitted change our assessment, we intend to take a subsequent final action to re-impose the offset and the highway sanctions clocks. If no comments are submitted that change our current assessment, all sanctions and sanctions clocks will be permanently terminated on the effective date of a final approval.

For More Information: Please visit: <http://www.epa.gov/region9/air/actions/ca.html>