

Steven Lau

From: bstrsg@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, September 04, 2008 8:10 AM
To: sacsip
Subject: Federal attainment

Comment 1-01

As a stakeholder in the proposed regulations I have a couple of questions;
If the Federal Regulations set in 1997 have been since reviewed?
Did California ever contested the standard?

I understand that Federal funds are at stake, however that does not mean that the 10 year old regulation was not flawed from the start.

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Steven Lau

From: Scotty DuPriest [scotty@ottoconstruction.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 04, 2008 10:41 AM
To: sacsip
Subject: Comments

Comment 2-01

Steven,

My only comment is that at a time when the economy is not doing so well, when budgets are lean, and costs are high, this new industry that is being created by your organization on the backs of the Contractors is not a very well thought out concept. We all know that the main polluter of our waterways is the storm drains that are continuing to receive the run-off from people like you and me and our homes and city streets. New construction only disturbs only 6/10^{ths} of 1% of the entire states exposed soil areas and with the construction downturn will be much less for 2009 and on. You essentially left the lion's share of the contamination source alone and it will increase as long as people continue to water lawns and wash and drive cars. The plan you are proposing has no endgame or goals that are realistic or will show up in any significant way scientifically as working to solve the problem. Apparently from what I read and the backers of the plan (lawyers) who's only affect is a litigious feeding frenzy for non-compliance and the complexity of the plan in general seems very short sighted and difficult. You've all bought into this plan and your jobs will be secure as long as there continues to be contractors who can remain afloat during these tough economic times and are willing to shell out large sums of money to test the clarity of construction activity water while the average home owner will fertilize, water and wash all the driveways down without even a thought of the pollution created by the masses. Any way, thank you I've said my peace and appreciate your efforts to make the environment better.



Scotty DuPriest, Safety & Risk Manager
916.441.6870 TEL
916.447.2746 SECURE FAX
www.ottoconstruction.com

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Steven Lau

From: CHARLES ANDERSON
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2008 11:55 AM
To: Steven Lau
Subject: FW: Attainment Area...

Steven,

Here is a comment we need to document and prepare a response for.

Charles

From: Ed Welch [mailto:edwelch08@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2008 11:07 AM
To: CHARLES ANDERSON
Subject: Attainment Area...

Hello Charles,

Good to speak with you the other day.

We are currently reading the Attainment Draft Plan and will hopefully have a series of questions for you soon. Are you the appropriate person to respond? I'm just not sure if someone else is assigned to that task. When we draft the questions, I will then cc them to NSAQMD.

Comment 3-01

In the meantime, I would love to hear your opinion about whether it is good for Nevada County to be outside the Attainment Area. I have read a report concerning the issue, but it still seems questionable. In the report, it says that Nevada County will essentially maintain stronger autonomy to be outside the area. If we were in the area, our county would be subject to Sacramento AQMD oversight and regulations, and our county would likely be subject to Federal sanctions placed on the Sacramento area, loss of highway money, etc. I understand that, but Western Nevada County is not in attainment either and will likely stay out of attainment as long as the Sacramento area. So by being out of the attainment area, we lose our voice in the Ozone Plan, we still are susceptible to Federal sanctions, and we are not included in any number of programs within the attainment area. What gives? NSAQMD has more autonomy, but they only have three air pollution employees in Grass Valley and very tiny programs anyway.

As you said, it probably is a mixed bag of answers. Thanks for the response, if you have time. You can also just call if you would rather just chat about it.

All the best,

Ed
530 265-3683

10/8/2008

Steven Lau

From: Ed Welch [edwelch08@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 09, 2008 9:01 AM
To: sacsip
Subject: Questions concerning Sacramento Draft Ozone Plan

Dear Mr. Lau,

Below you will find a series of question concerning the Draft Report of the Sacramento Non-attainment Area Ozone Plan. Our organization, Save the Air in Nevada County (STAINC) would happily meet with you to discuss them.

Comment 4-01

1. Does the photochemical modeling account for the increased temperatures that are predicted for the region? If not, it is not factoring in increased ozone production from higher temperatures, as well as potentially increased biogenic VOCs from the higher temperatures.

Comment 4-02

2. The plan focuses on reductions to 84 ppb instead of the new 75 ppb standard. By 2017, when Western Nevada County is expected to be in compliance, the 75 ppb standard will have been in existence for 9 years. Why is this plan not accounting for reductions to the lower standard? (See p. 1-3 and 2-4)

Comment 4-03

3. Attainment in Sacramento (and therefore Nevada County) is predicated on attainment in the Bay Area and the San Joaquin Valley. (See p. 1-10 and 9-2) Are their State Implementation Plans (SIPs) showing sufficient reductions for Nevada County to achieve attainment by 2017?

Comment 4-04

4. What is the 2007 VOC emissions data for on-road vehicles? The drop from 2002 to 2011 in Table 5-2 seems precipitous. (See p. 5-6) Where does it stand now?

Comment 4-05

5. Recreational boats are the highest single source of VOCs in the nonattainment area from 2011-2018 (See Table 5-2 on p. 5-6). What is being done in the plan to address this emissions source?

Comment 4-06

6. On-road motor vehicle emission reductions are significant from 2002-2018, but the population over that same time frame increases by about a million people. (See table 5-9, p. 5-14) How is this possible?

Comment 4-07

7. Has the "modeled attainment test" (See p. 6-2) been conducted for the Grass Valley monitor?

The text reads that "...the State is responsible for other nearby counties or areas outside the nonattainment area to address downwind influence." If this test has not been conducted for Grass Valley, is the Air Resources Board responsible for ensuring that testing is conducted?

Comment 4-08

8. What are the funding mechanisms for the Further Study Measures outlined in Section 7.20 (p. 7-28)? The emissions reduction benefits from these measures, particularly Urban Heat Island and Energy Efficiency, could be substantial. Does the study of these measures have a dedicated funding source, and if so, what level of funding is being provided?

Comment 4-09

9. One page 9-3, the document states that "Ultimately, CARB is responsible for ensuring that Nevada County meets its federal attainment requirements." Please explain that statement more fully. Does it mean that the Sacramento Metropolitan AQMD has no legal or regulatory responsibility and/or authority for Nevada County's ozone attainment?

Thank you for your time and attention to these questions.

Sincerely,

Ed Welch

Save the Air in Nevada County

530 265-3683

Steven Lau

From: Rowe. Greg [RoweG@saccounty.net]
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2008 3:31 PM
To: sacsip
Subject: Workshop Power Points

Are any of the presentations at the 9-25 public meeting available? In particular, I am interested in the ARB presentation (especially slide #2) and the Ozone-RFP presentation (which on the first page lists the 6 preparer organizations); especially interested in slide #4 (bottom of page 2 of handout). Thanks. --Greg Rowe

Greg Rowe

Senior Environmental Analyst
Planning and Environment

Sacramento County Airport System (SCAS)

6900 Airport Boulevard
Sacramento, CA 95837
916.874.0698 (office)
916.874.0741 or 0764 (fax)
e-mail: roweg@saccounty.net
www.sacairports.org

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Steven Lau

From: Rowe. Greg [RoweG@saccounty.net]
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2008 4:00 PM
To: sacsip
Cc: Rickelton. Glen; Munson. George; Taylor. Bree; Pamela.Vanderbilt@CH2M.com; Jim.Humphries@CH2M.com
Subject: Comment Letter_Draft Ozone SIP-RFP-DEIR
Attachments: SCAS Comment Ltr_8-hr Ozone Plan-RFP-DEIR_101408.pdf

Mr. Lau: attached is a comment letter prepared by the Sacramento County Airport System, relative to the Sacramento Regional 8-Hour ozone SIP and Reasonable Further Progress Plan, and the associated Draft EIR. The "wet signature" original letter will be mailed to you. Please contact me if you have any questions. --Greg Rowe

<<SCAS Comment Ltr_8-hr Ozone Plan-RFP-DEIR_101408.pdf>>

Greg Rowe

Senior Environmental Analyst

Planning and Environment

Sacramento County Airport System (SCAS)

6900 Airport Boulevard

Sacramento, CA 95837

916.874.0698 (office)

916.874.0741 or 0764 (fax)

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County of Sacramento

October 14, 2008

Mr. Steven Lau
Air Quality Planner/Analyst
Program Coordination
Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD)
777 12th Street, 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Comments on Sacramento Regional 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Mr. Lau:

The Sacramento County Airport System (County Airport System) appreciates the opportunity to comment and provide input on the *Draft Sacramento Regional 8-hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan* (the Draft SIP), and the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) prepared in conjunction with the Draft SIP. The County Airport System is comprised of four airports and manages the aviation activities at McClellan Airport on behalf of another County agency, the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs and Economic Development (DEDIA). The County Airport System is tasked with serving the commercial aviation needs of the Sacramento region while conforming to the air quality attainment goals of the Sacramento Valley Air Basin (Air Basin). It is in this spirit that we provide the following comments.

Bump-up and General Conformity

Comment 5-01

Current general conformity regulations require that emission inventories used in conformity demonstrations be derived from an applicable, approved State Implementation Plan (SIP). With the pending redesignation of the Air Basin from Serious to Severe Ozone Nonattainment, the conformity *de minimis* thresholds for the ozone precursor pollutants, NO_x and VOC, would be lowered from the current 50 tons per year, to 25 tons per year.

The lowered threshold increases the burden for the County Airport System to limit emissions, while developing projects to meet public transportation needs and demands. The lowered conformity review threshold also lowers the level at which future emission increases would have to be fully offset. Consistent with our goal to minimize the air quality impacts of airport activities and aviation growth, the County Airport System is incorporating air quality improvements into development plans and projects it manages. Although the estimates contained in the Sacramento International Airport Master Plan Final EIR (July 2007) indicate that short-term potential growth will be below the lowered

de minimis thresholds, the emissions growth at all regional airports needs to be carefully considered, and assurance provided, so that near-term and long-term emission budgets will accommodate required future growth.

Comment 5-02

Aircraft Emissions Budget

The County Airport System appreciates that air quality planners have recognized the need to demonstrate conformity with growth in regional airport activities. As indicated in Table 12-1 of the Draft SIP document, the inventory accommodates the Sacramento County aircraft emissions expected in the Sacramento County Master Plan. However, we are unable to determine how the near-term and long-term aircraft emission budgets were assembled for the entire region. It is unclear if and how the growth of aircraft operations within other counties in the Air Basin was included. Thus, we remain concerned that growth at airports in the other counties might be inadvertently under-forecasted and that future air services at Sacramento County airports, especially Sacramento International Airport, may be constrained.

Ground Service Equipment (GSE) Emissions Budget

Comment 5-03

We are also concerned that the SIP emissions budgets shown in Table 12-1 for regional GSE may be incomplete. These budgets are expected to decline in the future, even as more GSE services will be required for additional future aircraft operations. Review of the Off-road Appendices to the Draft SIP shows that only 217 GSE items were included in the 2002 regional emission estimates. The number of GSE items in the entire air basin is expected to increase to 326 by 2018. Unfortunately, all the GSE are shown to be located only in Sacramento County, and no GSE emissions are estimated for El Dorado, Placer, Solano, Sutter, or Yolo counties. Therefore, the current and projected GSE emissions may be underestimated, because the equipment needed to provide aircraft ground services at other airports in these counties has not been included. Albeit small in number, airports such as Woodland and Yolo County, for example, do deploy GSE for towing aircraft.

Comment 5-04

In addition, future estimates for VOC and NO_x emissions from GSE activities at all airports in the entire Air Basin may not be sufficient unless aggressive assumptions about equipment replacement and regulatory enforcement are made. New regulations have been adopted by the California Air Resources Board (ARB) for off-road equipment, including airport GSE. The requirement to rapidly phase-in low emission off-road engines is an important goal of these regulations. The airlines and their contractors own and operate a variety of specialized GSE to service particular types of aircraft. Airport operators do not regulate or in any way otherwise dictate the types of equipment to be used. The local air districts and ARB will be responsible for enforcing the off-road regulations with the individual tenants at each of the regional airports.

Closing

Comment 5-05

To minimize air quality impacts of airport activities, the County Airport System has incorporated air quality improvements into airport development plans. As you know, the County Airport System has planned for additional passenger terminals, aircraft gates, taxiways, and high-speed runway turnouts to reduce emissions associated with SMF aircraft ground movements. We have also provided infrastructure to encourage the use of alternative fuels and electricity by our tenants. However, we cannot dictate the types of aircraft or other equipment that our tenants may choose to operate. Their decisions are based upon financial considerations, which become even more critically important during these difficult economic times.

Comment 5-06

We wish to clarify a statement in Section 12.5 of the Draft SIP, which was repeated in the Draft EIR. The first paragraph in this section states as follows: Sacramento County airports include: Sacramento International Airport (SMF), Mather, Executive, McClellan, Franklin, Rancho Murieta, Sunset, Natomas and Rio Linda." Readers could infer from this sentence that the County Airport System operates a total of nine airports, which is not the case. For clarity, we suggest this paragraph be revised as follows.

The Sacramento County Airport System is comprised of four airports: Sacramento International (SMF), Mather (MHR), Executive (SAC) and Franklin (F72). In addition, the County Airport System manages the aviation activities at McClellan Airport on behalf of another County agency. Four private airports also operate in Sacramento County: Natomas, Rancho Murieta, Rio Linda, and Sunset.

In summary, while current estimates indicate that potential growth of Sacramento County airports may be below the emission projections in the regional SIP budgets, the emissions growth at **all** regional airports needs to be carefully considered. We look forward to working with the SMAQMD and others to develop SIP emission budgets that accommodate the variability expected from future regional airport activities, and to streamline general conformity analyses for airport improvement projects.

Sincerely,



Greg Rowe

Senior Environmental Analyst – Planning and Environment

C: J. Glen Rickelton, Manager – Planning and Environment

George Munson, Airport Planner – Planning and Environment

Steven Lau

From: Rowe. Greg [RoweG@sacounty.net]
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2008 4:47 PM
To: sacsip
Cc: Pamela.Vanderbilt@CH2M.com
Subject: FW: Comment Letter_Draft Ozone SIP-RFP-DEIR

See comment below about Natomas Airport. --GR

Greg Rowe

Senior Environmental Analyst
Planning and Environment

Sacramento County Airport System (SCAS)

6900 Airport Boulevard
Sacramento, CA 95837
916.874.0698 (office)
916.874.0741 or 0764 (fax)
e-mail: roweg@sacounty.net
www.sacairports.org

From: Munson. George
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2008 4:44 PM
To: Rowe. Greg
Cc: Rickelton. Glen
Subject: RE: Comment Letter_Draft Ozone SIP-RFP-DEIR

Thanks Greg.

Comment 5-07

Natomas Airport was closed in 2000, is no longer, and should not be included in the SMAMQD inventory of county airports.

GEORGE E. MUNSON

Airport Planner/Project Manager
Planning and Environment

Sacramento County Airport System

(916) 874-0767 (Office)
(916) 747-8822 (Mobile)

(916) 874-0741 (Fax)

munsong@sacounty.net

From: Rowe. Greg
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2008 4:00 PM
To: 'sacsip@airquality.org'
Cc: Rickelton. Glen; Munson. George; Taylor. Bree; 'Pamela.Vanderbilt@CH2M.com'; 'Jim.Humphries@CH2M.com'
Subject: Comment Letter_Draft Ozone SIP-RFP-DEIR

Mr. Lau: attached is a comment letter prepared by the Sacramento County Airport System, relative to the Sacramento Regional 8-Hour ozone SIP and Reasonable Further Progress Plan, and the associated Draft EIR. The "wet signature" original letter will be mailed to you. Please contact me if you have any questions. --Greg Rowe

<< File: SCAS Comment Ltr_8-hr Ozone Plan-RFP-DEIR_101408.pdf >>

Greg Rowe

Senior Environmental Analyst
Planning and Environment

Sacramento County Airport System (SCAS)

6900 Airport Boulevard
Sacramento, CA 95837
916.874.0698 (office)
916.874.0741 or 0764 (fax)
e-mail: roweg@saccounty.net
www.sacairports.org

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Steven Lau

From: Camille Kustin [ckustin@edf.org]
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2008 8:20 PM
To: sacsip
Cc: BRIGETTE TOLLSTRUP; ALETA KENNARD; JOSEPH CARLE
Subject: Ozone Plan Letter: ISR Support
Attachments: SacAQMD_ISR_Support_Letter_10_20_08.pdf

Hello Steven,

Please find the attached coalition letter in support for proposed rules IS-1 and IS-2 (the ISR).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input and we look forward to continuing to work with the District on this. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Camille Kustin

Policy Analyst
Environmental Defense Fund
1107 9th Street, Suite 540
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916-492-4682
Cell: 916-752-2834
Fax: 916-441-3142
ckustin@edf.org

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October 20, 2008

Steven Lau
Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District
777 12th Street
3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Comments on the Sacramento Regional 8-Hour Ozone Attainment Draft Plan Proposed Control Measures IS-1: Construction Mitigation Rule and IS-2: Operational Indirect Source Rule

Dear Mr. Lau:

The undersigned organizations write to you in support of the Sacramento Regional 8-Hour Ozone Attainment Draft Plan's proposed control measures IS-1: Construction Mitigation Rule and IS-2: Operational Indirect Source Rule (collectively, ISR). The ISR is a critical regulatory mechanism that will reduce emissions from construction equipment and operational elements of new developments and will help the AQMD meet and maintain its clean air goals.

While we applaud the inclusion of the construction and operational ISRs in the Draft Plan and are optimistic the Board will vote to include them in the Plan, we strongly urge the Sacramento AQMD to recognize the opportunities the ISR can bring to the region and consider the following recommendations:

Comment 6-01

- **Achieve additional emissions reductions.** Currently, the Plan estimates that both the construction and operational ISRs will each contribute reductions of less than 0.1 tons per day of NO_x and VOCs by 2018. These reductions are modest and we believe that the ISR has the potential of achieving greater reductions.

As modeling technologies improve and the region continues to grow, the ISR will prove itself to be a critical element of the ozone plan. URBEMIS is the popular modeling tool for estimating development project emissions, but it does not adequately reflect the costs and benefits of project location within a specific region, which may result in an increased number of vehicle trips and longer travel distances. As the AQMD looks to other

models, including the parameters listed above will more accurately represent the environmental impacts of site selection and land use patterns that directly affect air quality across the region. This will allow the air district to more accurately predict the emissions impacts and reduction needs.

Comment 6-02

- **Follow the San Joaquin Valley’s ISR Framework.** While we recognize that details of the rule will be addressed during the rulemaking process, as AQMD staff begins to consider rule design, we recommend they follow the general framework used in the San Joaquin Valley. This will help provide uniformity throughout the state and ease implementation and compliance. The San Joaquin Valley rule has also proven to be effective.

In just two years, ISR implementation in the San Joaquin Valley has reduced and prevented more than 6000 tons of NOx and particulate matter emissions. Developers who have embraced the rule have come up with innovative compliance solutions: construction equipment retrofits, siting close to public transportation and existing job centers, signing contracts to maintain cleaner vehicle fleets, and increasing building energy efficiency.

Specifically, we support a framework that quantifies emissions, before and after mitigation measures have been included, sets emissions tonnage thresholds, project size thresholds, and emission reduction requirements, and includes a fee option to achieve offsite emissions reductions when onsite reduction strategies are unavailable. We also recognize that a one-size-fits-all approach may not work, and that specific requirements may have to be tailored to meet certain needs throughout the Sacramento region. Even though some specifics may need adjusting, the framework used in the San Joaquin Valley rule can be similarly applied in Sacramento to allow projects to move forward while improving air quality.

Comment 6-03

- **Design an ISR that is complementary to existing policies and legislation.** As the AQMD moves forward with ISR rule development, the District should attempt to integrate its air quality regulations with evolving land use policies. SACOG’s regional Blueprint, California’s Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32), and now the Sustainable Communities Act (SB 375) can work together to encourage development that meets 21st Century demands..

Comment 6-04

- **Evaluate the real costs of action versus inaction.** Experience with the ISR in the San Joaquin Valley has indicated that additional development costs of mitigation are minimal. A 2007 survey of 9 housing developments estimated a per-unit cost increase of just \$420. In return, prospective homeowners and tenants get improved air quality and safer, more walkable communities to live and work.

Many Sacramento area developers who build “smart” projects that also take into account ways to reduce indirect source pollution—e.g. locating near transit, jobs and services and in walkable communities—are still selling houses and commercial space. Developments

located far outside the urban core, and that produce a heavier burden in indirect source pollution, face unprecedented foreclosures and even bankruptcy.

California is undergoing a fundamental shift in the way it does business and is beginning to incorporate the environmental costs of land conversion and air pollution. An effective indirect source rule that incentivizes smart development is an essential step to ensure air quality and adequate housing. It is a tool that can influence building practices, decrease VMT to reduce emissions, and be used to meet clean air requirements, while not stifling business.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on the District's Plan and look forward to continuing to work with you and taking part in the rule development process. Please let us know if we can provide any other information regarding the indirect source rule or land use control measures.

Sincerely,

Tim Carmichael
Coalition for Clean Air

Jonathan Ellison
Environmental Council of Sacramento

Bonnie Holmes-Gen
American Lung Association of California

Camille Kustin
Environmental Defense Fund

Kathryn Phillips
Environmental Defense Fund

Annemarie Vincent
Breathe California

Cc: Brigette Tollstrup, Aleta Kennard, Joe Carle

Steven Lau

From: Jason Crow [JCrow@sacog.org]
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2008 3:14 PM
To: BRIGETTE TOLLSTRUP; CHARLES ANDERSON; Steven Lau
Subject: SIP Comments

I was reviewing the TCM appendix A1/D and noticed a couple of changes. I thought I'd better confirm that these were correct.

Comment 7-01

On page D-41, the emissions reductions shown for the SECAT program are 0.91 tpd NO_x and 0.06 tpd ROG. My earlier version had shown 0.92 tpd NO_x and 0.12 tpd ROG.

On page D-73, under "Implementation Date," the two dates shown are 2018 and 2017. I had shown 2019 and 2018 in an earlier version, so I wanted to confirm that 2018 and 2017 are correct.

On page D-74, under Economic Feasibility and Cost Effectiveness," I had a range of \$2,000-\$38,000 per ton. I see that the current draft shows a range of \$2,000-\$34,000. Not a big change (and probably not a significant one either), but I thought I should ask about it anyway.

Those are the only discrepancies I found. Let me know if you have any follow-up questions about this.

Thanks!

Jason

Jason Crow
Senior Planner
Sacramento Area Council of Governments
1415 L Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel (916) 340-6219
Fax (916) 321-9551
jcrow@sacog.org

Steven Lau

From: Sam Longmire [sam@myairdistrict.com]
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2008 12:45 PM
To: Steven Lau
Cc: gretchen@myairdistrict.com
Subject: Comments on Draft 8-Hr Ozone Attainment Plan

Attachments: Comments on Sacramento SIP draft.doc



Comments on
Sacramento SIP dra.

Dear Mr. Lau:

Please find attached the NSAQMD's comments on the Sacramento Regional 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan, Draft Report.

A signed copy is being mailed.

Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Sam Longmire, APCS

Samuel F. Longmire,
Air Pollution Control Specialist III
Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District
(530) 274-9360 x106

NSAQMD
P.O. Box 2509
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Steven Lau
SMAQMD
777 12th Street, 3rd Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

October 24, 2008

Re: Sacramento Regional 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan, Draft Report

Dear Mr. Lau:

The Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District (NSAQMD) has reviewed the Sacramento Regional 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan, Draft Report (Plan). The NSAQMD applauds the quality of the document and sincerely appreciates the great amount of work that has gone into the preparation of the Plan.

Introduction

The Western Nevada County (WNC) portion of the NSAQMD is overwhelmingly impacted by ozone transported from the Sacramento Federal Non-Attainment Area (SFNA). As a consequence, western Nevada County has been designated Nonattainment for the 1997 federal 8-hour ozone standard as well as the State ozone standards. According to the provisions and modeling contained in the Plan, WNC is not expected to reach attainment until approximately 2017. This would mean that WNC would have to bump up to a Severe classification in order to accommodate the 2017 attainment date. WNC was originally classified as a Basic federal Nonattainment area.

Pursuant to Section 110 of the federal Clean Air Act, each state is responsible for ensuring that all areas of the state attain and maintain federal air quality standards. Nonattainment areas must reach attainment as expeditiously as practicable. California Health and Safety Code (H&SC) Section 39610(b) requires CARB to “assess the relative contribution of upwind emissions to downwind ozone ambient air pollutant levels” and to “establish mitigation requirements commensurate with the level of contribution.” CARB has determined that air pollutant transport is the sole reason for WNC’s federal and State Nonattainment designation. Further, HS&C Section 40912 specifies, “The plans for districts responsible for or affected by air pollutant transport shall provide for attainment and maintenance of the state and federal standards in both the upwind and downwind district.”

WNC is the least populous non-attainment area in California (aside from the mountaintop special transitional non-attainment area known as the Sutter Buttes), and possibly in the entire nation. There are approximately 75,000 people in WNC, with a density of 0.14 persons per acre (6.9 acres per person) and a growth rate below the state average (California Department of Finance). WNC’s ozone precursor emissions are miniscule,

*NSAQMD MAIN OFFICE (530) 274-9360 / FAX: (530) 274-7546
200 Litton Dr., Suite 320, Grass Valley, CA 95945 (Shipping Only)
P.O. Box 2509, Grass Valley, CA 95945 (Mail Only)
email: office@myairdistrict.com or www.myairdistrict.com*

*TRUCKEE FIELD OFFICE (530) 550-7872 / FAX: (530) 587-2623
13450 Donner Pass Rd., Suite B, Truckee, CA 96161 (Shipping Only)
P.O. Box 9766, Truckee, CA 96162 (Mail Only)
email: ryan@myairdistrict.com*

*QUINCY FIELD OFFICE (530) 283-4654 / FAX: (530) 283-0699
270 County Hospital Rd., Suite 127, Quincy, CA 95971 (Shipping Only)
P.O. Box 3981, Quincy, CA 95971 (Mail Only)
email: george@myairdistrict.com*

with biogenic VOCs dwarfing anthropogenic VOCs and mobile sources vastly dominating the NOx inventory. On western Nevada County's highest ozone days, the wind is almost invariably from the southwest (from the SFNA), where elevated ozone concentrations are typically observed a few hours before elevated concentrations are observed in WNC.

Comment 8-01

Ozone Trends

Ozone concentrations in WNC have unfortunately not declined concurrently with those measured in the SFNA, even though WNC's ozone precursor emissions have decreased. Further, for the 2008 federal ozone standard, WNC actually has more nonattainment days in recent years than the SFNA (which could be mentioned in the Plan, perhaps where the new standard is discussed in Section 2.5, in order to assist the public in understanding the situation). There have been many theories for why this discrepancy in trends occurs, but no definite cause has been identified.

Recommendation 1: Trend Discussion

While the Plan does say that reductions in the SFNA will benefit WNC's efforts to reach attainment, there is no discussion of the fact that WNC's 8-hour ozone values are not following the downward trend observed in the SFNA. The NSAQMD recommends that the Plan include a discussion of this apparent anomaly. Rapid growth in the northeastern part of the SFNA (particularly in Placer County) has been implicated in public forums as a factor. Placer is the fastest-growing county in the State (according to Department of Finance data), experiencing a population growth rate between April 1, 2000 and January 1, 2006 of 27.4% (compared to 8.8% for Nevada County). The City of Lincoln grew by 200% during the same period and has many residents who commute to Sacramento to work. There is a large swath of land north of I-80 and west of Auburn with no ozone monitor, so there is no data for tracking ozone development and transport to WNC through this rapidly growing area.

Comment 8-02

Emission Reduction Credits

Emission Reduction Credits (ERCs) represent allowable increases in emissions. ERCs are required under federal NSR rules for new and modified major sources of air pollution, pursuant to the Clean Air Act. The Plan proposes to retain pre-2002 ERCs of 2.6 tons per day, or tpd (949 tons per year, or tpy) of VOCs and 1.4 tpd (511 tpy) of NOx. In addition, it proposes 0.9 tpd of VOC credits and 1.0 tpd NOx credits from reductions in rice field burning to be bankable in the future. Some of these anticipated ERCs are proposed to be derived from reductions in rice field burning that occurred prior to the base year of 2002 under an ERC rule that is currently being developed.

Comment 8-02a

The NSAQMD is concerned that generating ERCs from reductions in rice field burning could have the unwanted effect of moving precursor emissions from the fall and spring rice-burning seasons into the peak of the ozone season (July and August). If ERCs from reductions in the burning of rice fields are used by a source that operates throughout the summer, then the net result is an increase in ozone precursor emissions during the time of year when it is most crucial to reduce emissions.

Section 173(c)(2) of the federal Clean Air Act, relating to ERCs, specifies, “Emission reductions otherwise required by this Act shall not be creditable as emissions reductions for purposes of any such offset requirement.” The Act requires the entire State to reach attainment as expeditiously as practicable, so a question arises of whether or not reductions in the SFNA are “otherwise required by the Act” in order to bring WNC and other transport-impacted areas into attainment as expeditiously as practicable. The NSAQMD mentions this as a point of consideration that could play into execution of the following recommendation.

Recommendation 2: Explore ERC Options

The NSAQMD recommends consideration of the following reasonably available measures, or similar measures, relating to ERC redemption. This would involve discussion with EPA and with CARB, and presumably include considerations relating to California’s “All Feasible Measures” requirement. It may be possible to fold one or more of the following recommendations into the ERC rule that is under development. The primary focus should be on NOX credits, since modeling indicates that ozone concentrations in the SFNA and, especially, in downwind rural areas including WNC, are more responsive to NOx reductions than VOC reductions.

- 1) Commit all or some of the ERCs to non-summer activities (such as controlled burning for fire safety or agricultural purposes) or restrict their actual use by purchasers during ozone season via operating permit conditions.
- 2) Stipulate that ERCs cannot be redeemed until transport-impacted areas reach attainment (except for the possible exception of necessary power generation projects).
- 3) Buy up the ERCs from the credit holders (using mitigation funds or other funding sources) and retire them permanently.
- 4) Designate the ERCs (or a portion thereof) for use in the downwind mountain counties rather than inside the SFNA, in accordance with the offset ratio requirements of the Clean Air Act.

As an explanation of the logic behind the last recommendation above, the mountain county nonattainment areas are facing an unusual situation in which they are likely to become Serious or Severe nonattainment areas within a year (with major source thresholds of 50 and 25 tons respectively), but they have minimal opportunities for generating ERCs to offset the establishment or modification of major sources under NSR. Thus, downwind rural areas are suffering in more than one way from ozone generated in the SFNA – not just from the high ozone itself but also from regulatory constraints that apply simply due to the presence of the transported ozone. The Clean Air Act’s ERC requirements indirectly limit economic development in transport-impacted rural areas by limiting the potential for industrial growth and power generation. The point of including offset requirements in the Clean Air Act was to place emission constraints on an area that fails to attain the NAAQS in order to force the area toward attainment. However, since

the 8-hour average captures transport-impacted areas more than the 1-hour standard did but the Clean Air Act has not changed, the development constraints end up affecting rural areas that have never even had the opportunity to develop a large emissions base from which ERCs could flow. Earmarking the ERCs for use in the transport-impacted mountain counties would both assist the SFNA in their precursor reduction efforts (thereby reducing ozone concentrations and assisting with future Reasonable Further Progress demonstrations) and increase economic opportunities in areas that are affected by SFNA's transported ozone.

Comment 8-03

Modeling Episodes

The selection of episodes used for modeling is obviously very important, as they are key components of demonstrating attainment in both the SFNA and in downwind, ozone-impacted areas.

During the planning stages for SIP modeling, six episodes were considered upon which to base the modeling. Three of these simply did not exhibit substantial ground-level ozone formation, presumably due in part to favorable weather conditions, so the data's usefulness for modeling is limited. Of the other three episodes (7 days in 1999, 7 days in 2000 and 10 days in 2002), the first two were selected for the attainment demonstration, while the 2002 episode was not included. Ozone concentrations in WNC during the 2002 episode were much higher than during the 1999 episode and slightly higher (by approximately 7%) overall than during the 2000 episode.

The year 1999 episode that was chosen for attainment modeling included the following 8-hour values for WNC (in ppm).

7/7	.069 ("spin-up" period – not included in model performance evaluation)
7/8	.089 ("spin-up" period – not included in model performance evaluation)
7/9	.092 (model performance passed)
7/10	.089 (model performance failed)
7/11	.099 (model performance failed)
7/12	.081 (model performance passed)
7/13	.077 (model performance passed)

On July 10-13, the wind was primarily blowing from the Sacramento area to the east. WNC typically has its highest ozone days when the wind is blowing from the Sacramento area to the northeast. In other words, the highest ozone went farther south on those days, as indicated by the data.

On July 8, WNC had the only exceedance in the mountain counties, but that day was discarded from the model performance evaluation as a "spin-up period" (Draft Modeling Appendix A, Section 2.2.1). Also, for the 1999 episode, the originally considered period was July 8-12, but ultimately a period of July 9-13 was chosen for the attainment demonstration (the 13th being a relatively low ozone day for WNC).

Regarding the model performance evaluation for WNC, the model failed to perform within the 15% normalized bias and the 35% paired gross error that were used to gauge performance on 2 of the 5 days (40%) that were selected for the evaluation.

It is not clear why the longer August 8-17, 2002 episode was not chosen for Sacramento's attainment demonstration. It seems that using a larger data set would be the conservative approach, leading to more reliable modeling, and that a more recent year would have an emission profile more similar to current conditions – two factors that favor its use over the use of the shorter 1999 period (when the wind carried more of the ozone farther south). On August 13, 15 and 17 of 2002, WNC had higher 8-hour ozone concentrations than any other area in the mountain counties or the SFNA.

Note that the NSAQMD is not insinuating that the episodes chosen for the attainment demonstration were chosen in order to make the modeled attainment date unrealistically early or ease the burden on the SFNA to demonstrate attainment for WNC. Rather, the NSAQMD is attempting to ensure that the modeling decisions do not inadvertently underestimate the effect of ozone transport to western Nevada County.

Recommendation 3: Episode Selection Discussion

The NSAQMD recommends that the main body of the Plan include more details on the episode selection criteria (perhaps in Section 6.6), on the episodes dismissed from consideration, and on the process used to determine that the episodes chosen are characteristic of the actual ozone transport situation. At least a qualitative summary of the other episodes that were under consideration and how they differ from the ones selected would be useful in assisting the public in evaluating the appropriateness of the episode selection. The NSAQMD further recommends that the Plan include a clear, mathematically and scientifically sound discussion of what would be expected if the 2002 episode were chosen for the SFNA's attainment demonstration modeling, and an explanation of why the 1999 episode is a superior choice.

Thousands of children are growing up in portions of the mountain counties that fail to attain federal, health-based air quality standards due to pollution from the Sacramento area. Because ozone is a serious health concern, affecting children and other sensitive segments of the population the most, it is extremely important (and legally required) for the Sacramento region to do everything reasonably within its power to reach attainment as soon as possible. The NSAQMD submits these comments with the hope that they will be closely and genuinely held under consideration.

Sincerely,

Samuel F. Longmire, MSES,
Air Pollution Control Specialist