



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

**REGION IX**

**75 Hawthorne Street**

**San Francisco, CA 94105-3901**

**DEC 09 2011**

**OFFICE OF THE  
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR**

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

Dear Governor Brown:

Thank you for your recommendations dated March 11, 2009 and October 12, 2011 on air quality designations for the revised 2008 National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone throughout California. I appreciate the information California shared with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as we move forward to improve ozone air quality. The purpose of this letter is to notify you of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's preliminary decision to designate 16 areas of California as nonattainment for the revised 2008 ozone NAAQS, to inform you that we intend to modify several of your recommendations (as noted in Enclosure 1) and to inform you of our approach for completing the designations for the revised ozone NAAQS.

On March 12, 2008, the EPA revised its NAAQS for ground-level ozone to provide increased protection of public health and the environment. The EPA lowered the primary 8-hour ozone standard from 0.08 parts per million (ppm) to 0.075 ppm to protect against health effects associated with ozone exposure, including a range of serious respiratory illnesses and increased premature death from heart or lung disease. The EPA revised the secondary 8-hour ozone standard, making it identical to the primary standard, to protect against welfare effects, including impacts on sensitive vegetation and forested ecosystems.

History shows us that better health and cleaner air go hand-in-hand with economic growth. Working closely with the states and tribes, the EPA is implementing the standards using a common sense approach that improves air quality and minimizes the burden on state and local governments. As part of this routine process, EPA is working with the states to identify areas in the country that meet the standards and those that need to take steps to reduce ozone pollution. Within one year after a new or revised air quality standard is established, the Clean Air Act requires the Governor of each state to submit to the EPA a list of all areas in the state, with recommendations for whether each area meets the standard.

As a first step in implementing the 2008 ozone standards, the EPA asked states to submit their designation recommendations, including appropriate area boundaries, by March 12, 2009. In September 2009, the EPA announced it was reconsidering the 2008 ozone standards. The EPA later took steps to delay the designation process for the 2008 ozone standards pending outcome of the reconsideration. However, in September 2011, the Office of Management and Budget returned to EPA the draft final rule addressing the reconsideration of the 2008 standards. On September 22, 2011, the EPA restarted the implementation effort by issuing a memorandum to clarify for state and local agencies the status of the 2008 ozone standards and to outline plans for moving forward to implement them. The EPA

indicated that it would proceed with initial area designations for the 2008 standards, and planned to use the recommendations states made in 2009 as updated by the most current, certified air quality data from 2008-2010. While the EPA did not request that states submit updated designation recommendations, the EPA provided the opportunity for states to do so. Thank you for the October 12, 2011 updated designation recommendation from California based on the assessment of 2008-2010 and preliminary 2009-2011 air quality data.

As required by the Clean Air Act, the EPA will designate an area as nonattainment if it is violating the 2008 ozone standards or contributing to a violation of the standards in a nearby area. Consistent with designations for previous ozone standards, the EPA intends to designate an area as unclassifiable/attainment if there are certified, quality-assured air quality monitoring data showing the area is meeting the ozone standards or there are no monitoring data for the area, and the EPA has not made a determination that the area is contributing to a violation in a nearby area.

After considering California's October 12, 2011 ozone designation recommendations, which were based on both 2008-2010 as well as preliminary 2009-2011 air quality data, as well as other relevant technical information, the EPA intends to designate the areas listed in Enclosure 1 as nonattainment. The enclosed Technical Support Document provides a detailed analysis to support our preliminary decisions. The EPA intends to designate all other areas of the state as unclassifiable/attainment. In order for the EPA to consider 2009-2011 air quality data in the final designation decisions for any area, California must submit certified, quality-assured 2009-2011 air quality monitoring data for the area to the EPA by February 29, 2012.

The EPA will continue to work with state officials regarding the appropriate boundaries for the nonattainment areas in California. If California has additional information that you would like the EPA to consider, please submit it to us by February 29, 2012. The EPA will also 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 additional information we receive, the EPA plans to promulgate final ozone designations in the spring of 2012.

The EPA is committed to working with the states and tribes to share the responsibility of reducing ozone air pollution. Current and upcoming federal standards and safeguards, including pollution reduction rules for power plants, vehicles and fuels, will assure steady progress to reduce ozone-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 2008 ozone standards. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Amy Zimpfer, Associate Director, Air Division, of my staff at 415-947-4146 or [zimpfer.amy@epa.gov](mailto:zimpfer.amy@epa.gov).

Sincerely,



Jared Blumenfeld

Enclosures

**cc: (with full enclosures)**

**Matthew Rodriguez, Secretary, California Environmental Protection Agency  
Mary Nichols, Chairman, California Air Resources Board  
James Goldstene, Executive Officer, California Air Resources Board  
Lynn Terry, Deputy Executive Officer, California Air Resources Board**

**cc: (with area-specific enclosures)**

**Affected Air Pollution Control Officers**

**cc: (enclosure 1 only)**

**Affected Tribal Leaders and Tribal Environmental Coordinators**

**cc: (via electronic correspondence)**

**Gina McCarthy, Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation  
Stephen D. Page, Director, Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards**



**ENCLOSURE 1**

**Intended Nonattainment Areas in California**

Area	California's Recommended Nonattainment Counties	EPA's Intended Nonattainment Counties
Amador and Calaveras Counties (Central Mountain Counties)*	Calaveras County	Amador County and Calaveras County
Chico (Butte County)*	Butte County	Butte County
Imperial County*	Imperial County	Imperial County
Kern County (Eastern Kern, excluding Indian Wells Valley)	Kern County (Eastern Kern, excluding Indian Wells Valley)	Kern County (Eastern Kern, excluding Indian Wells Valley)
Los Angeles-San Bernardino (West Mojave Desert)*	San Bernardino County (Mojave Desert Air Basin portion) as a separate nonattainment area from Los Angeles County (Antelope Valley portion or Mojave Desert Air Basin portion) nonattainment area	San Bernardino County (Mojave Desert Air Basin portion), and Los Angeles County (Antelope Valley portion or Mojave Desert Air Basin portion)
Los Angeles-South Coast Air Basin*	Los Angeles County (South Coast Air Basin portion which includes Santa Catalina and San Clemente Islands), Orange County, San Bernardino County (South Coast Air Basin portion), Riverside County (South Coast Air Basin portion)	Los Angeles County (South Coast Air Basin portion which includes Santa Catalina and San Clemente Islands), Orange County, San Bernardino County (South Coast Air Basin portion), Riverside County (South Coast Air Basin portion)
Mariposa and Tuolumne Counties (Southern Mountain Counties)*	Mariposa County	Mariposa County and Tuolumne County
Nevada County (Western part)	Nevada County (Western part)	Nevada County (Western part)
Tuscan Buttes	Tehama County (Tuscan Buttes portion, above 1,800 feet elevation)	Tehama County (Tuscan Buttes portion, above 1,800 feet elevation)
Riverside County (Coachella Valley)*	Riverside County (Salton Sea Air Basin portion)	Riverside County (Salton Sea Air Basin portion)
Sacramento Metro*	Sacramento County, Yolo County, Solano County (Sacramento Valley Air Basin portion), Sutter County (southern portion), El Dorado County (Sacramento Valley Air Basin portion), Placer County (Sacramento Valley Air Basin portion)	Sacramento County, Yolo County, Solano County (Sacramento Valley Air Basin portion), Sutter County (southern portion), El Dorado County (Sacramento Valley Air Basin portion), Placer County (Sacramento Valley Air Basin portion)
San Diego County*	San Diego County	San Diego County
San Francisco Bay Area*	San Francisco County, Marin County,	San Francisco County, Marin County,

	southern Sonoma County (San Francisco Bay Air Basin portion), Napa County, western Solano County (San Francisco Bay Air Basin portion), Contra Costa County, Alameda County, Santa Clara County, San Mateo County	southern Sonoma County (San Francisco Bay Air Basin portion), Napa County, western Solano County (San Francisco Bay Air Basin portion), Contra Costa County, Alameda County, Santa Clara County, San Mateo County
San Joaquin Valley*	San Joaquin County, Stanislaus County, Merced County, Madera County, Fresno County, Kings County, Tulare County, Kern County (San Joaquin Air Basin portion)	San Joaquin County, Stanislaus County, Merced County, Madera County, Fresno County, Kings County, Tulare County, Kern County (San Joaquin Air Basin portion)
San Luis Obispo (Eastern San Luis Obispo)	San Luis Obispo County (Eastern San Luis Obispo)	San Luis Obispo County (Eastern San Luis Obispo)
Ventura County (continental portion)	Continental portion of Ventura County (excludes Anacapa and San Nicolas islands)	Continental portion of Ventura County (excludes Anacapa and San Nicolas islands)

EPA intended modifications to state recommendations are shown in **bold**.

\*Indicates multi-jurisdictional nonattainment area or areas that include tribal lands. Table 1, contained in the Technical Analysis section of each nonattainment area discussion in the enclosed Technical Support Document, identifies the tribal lands that EPA intends to designate as part of the nonattainment area.

**ENCLOSURE 2**

**Technical Support Document**

