

May 14, 2021

Elizabeth Adams, Director, Air and Radiation Division, Region 9  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
75 Hawthorne Street, AIR-7  
San Francisco, California 94105  
[Elizabeth.Adams@epa.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Adams@epa.gov)

Dear Director Adams:

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) is submitting final documentation for 2020 exceptional events that occurred in the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (District). CARB requests that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) concur that the document accompanying this request supports the flagging of PM<sub>2.5</sub> exceedances in the District as natural or exceptional events due to wildfire smoke impacts from numerous fires in the State of California.

Unusually high PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations, exceeding the 1997 24-hour national ambient air quality standard of 65 µg/m<sup>3</sup> (Standard), were recorded at several monitoring sites in the District from August 20 to August 24, 2020. The analyses and data presented in the accompanying document demonstrate that without the impacts from the wildfire smoke, concentrations measured at the monitoring sites would have been below the Standard.

The 30-day public comment period required by 40 CFR 50.14(c)(3)(v) will begin on May 14, 2021 and will be completed by June 15, 2021. CARB is requesting parallel processing under U.S. EPA's procedure cited in 40 CFR 51, appendix V, section 2.3. Parallel processing is needed to expedite U.S. EPA action on the San Joaquin Valley request for a clean data determination of the Standard. Any comments received during the public comment period, as well as responses by the District, will be submitted to U.S. EPA at the earliest possible date.

On October 3, 2016, U.S. EPA revised the *Treatment of Data Influenced by Exceptional Events* rule that allows data to be flagged and excluded from consideration by U.S. EPA when making decisions related to the attainment status of an area (81 FR 68216). This rule requires that states submit documentation to support the initial flagging to the appropriate U.S. EPA Regional Office.

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If you have any questions regarding the enclosed documentation, please contact Sylvia Vanderspek, Chief, Air Quality Planning Branch, at (916) 324-7163 or via email at [sylvia.vanderspek@arb.ca.gov](mailto:sylvia.vanderspek@arb.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Benjamin". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Michael Benjamin, D. Env., Division Chief, Air Quality Planning and Science Division

Enclosure

cc: (Without enclosure)

Sheraz Gill, Deputy Air Pollution Control Officer, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District  
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