

U.S. EPA FACT SHEET

San Joaquin Valley – Proposed action on 1997 PM_{2.5} Standard Plan and Extension Request

January 28, 2016

Summary

- EPA is proposing to approve most of California's plan to attain the 1997 fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) in the San Joaquin Valley and proposing to grant the State's request to extend the deadline for attaining these standards. Specifically, the EPA is proposing the following:
 - to approve the plan's best available control measures, attainment, and reasonable further progress demonstrations,
 - to conditionally approve the plan's quantitative milestones based on the State's commitment to submit a SIP revision by December 31, 2016, and
 - to approve an extension of the attainment deadline from December 31, 2015 to December 31, 2018 for the 1997 24-hour PM_{2.5} standards, and to December 31, 2020 for the 1997 annual PM_{2.5} standards.
- EPA is also proposing to disapprove the contingency measures. If the disapproval is finalized, it will trigger clocks for sanctions and a federal implementation plan for PM_{2.5} contingency measures in the San Joaquin Valley.

Background

- The San Joaquin Valley is located in the southern half of California's central valley and includes eight counties: San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kings, and the San Joaquin Valley portion of Kern.
- 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.
- In April 2005, the EPA designated the San Joaquin Valley as nonattainment for the 1997 PM_{2.5} NAAQS, which include 24-hour standards of 65 µg/m³ and annual standards of 15.0 µg/m³.
- In 2008, California submitted a PM_{2.5} Plan to meet the 1997 PM_{2.5} standards, and EPA approved most elements of the plan in November 2011.

- A 2013 D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals decision required the EPA to regulate PM_{2.5} under “subpart 4” of part D, title I of the Clean Air Act. In April 2014, EPA classified the San Joaquin Valley as a moderate PM_{2.5} area, and in March 2015, the EPA reclassified the area as a serious PM_{2.5} area with an attainment deadline of December 31, 2015.
- California submitted the 2015 PM_{2.5} Plan in June and August 2015 to address the Clean Air Act’s requirements for serious PM_{2.5} nonattainment areas and the requirements for extension of the attainment date under section 188(e).

Next steps

- EPA’s proposed action provides a public comment period of 30 days from the date of publication in the Federal Register.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www3.epa.gov/region9/air/sjv-pm25/index.html>