

Work Group: Air Quality
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Quarter: 3rd 2008
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Description of Activity by Goal and Objective

Goal 1: Achieve U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards for 8-hour ozone and PM2.5 by the current attainment date, or as soon as practicable thereafter

Fast Track Task Force (FTTF)

The Air Quality Work Group (AQWG) of the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley (Partnership) participated in meetings of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's (Air District) Fast Track Task Force (FTTF) on July 29 and Sept. 16. This group is responsible for progressing initiatives to help bring the San Joaquin Valley into attainment as quickly as possible.

On-Road Heavy-Duty Diesel Vehicles Regulation (Truck Rule)

The California Air Resources Board (ARB) is proposing a new rule to reduce emissions from existing diesel-fueled trucks, buses, and other vehicles operating in the state. The regulation would apply to nearly all in-use on-road heavy-duty diesel vehicles regardless of where the vehicle is registered. AQWG participated in the workshop held by ARB on Aug. 5 in Fresno. In addition, AQWG continues to work with local trucking owner-operators to determine the fiscal impact on local fleets. The regulation is expected to come before the ARB in December.

Goal 2: Encourage EPA adoption of tighter federal emission control standards
No action taken.

Goal 3: Implement incentive mechanisms to accelerate adoption of air quality mitigation technologies

Diesel Incentives Exploration Working Group

AQWG participated in a second meeting with business and environmental representatives on Oct. 1 in an effort to pursue additional programs/funding for incentives to reduce diesel emissions in the greater Central Valley.

S 3496, the Air & Health Quality Empowerment Zone Designation Act

As a result of dialogue between Senator Boxer and representatives from AQWG and the Air District, Senator Boxer introduced S 3496, Air and Health Quality Empowerment Zone Designation Act of 2008, which would allow the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to designate areas within the San Joaquin Valley as Air and Health Quality Empowerment Zones that would be eligible for grants to fund replacement or retrofit of vehicles and engines to reduce air pollution. The bill was passed by a Senate subcommittee and is awaiting action by the full senate. Appropriations under this bill will be initiated after authorization is received. On Oct. 14, AQWG passed a resolution in support of the bill.

AB 2522

This bill, passed by the legislature and signed by the governor, was the top legislative priority for AQWG in 2008. It authorizes the Air District to raise Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) fees by \$23, with proceeds to be dedicated to air quality mitigation. When fully implemented, this will yield approximately \$60 million each year for the San Joaquin Valley.

Goal 4: Promote clean energy projects (with Energy Work Group)

San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization (CEO)

AQWG continues to participate in meetings of the established San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization (SJVCEO) and provide input as necessary. Staff has provided government affairs support regarding federal legislation on clean energy, and state bill AB 2176, signed into law on Aug. 1, which would establish the criteria for a portion of the federal Energy Efficient Block Grant funds that flow through state agencies.

Goal 5: Improve transportation mobility and goods movement (with Transportation Work Group)

AQWG consultants remain engaged in activities of the Transportation Work Group and the Councils of Government (COG) Regional Policy Council regarding goods movement plans and high-speed rail.

High-Speed Rail

The Partnership has been participating in a working group to pursue construction of a higher-speed Altamont route connecting the Valley.

The governor signed AB 3034, introduced by Assemblymember Cathleen Galgiani, to modify the high-speed rail bond, Proposition 1A. AQWG successfully sought amendments to include Altamont as a segment of construction in the bond and prioritize the construction through the Valley.

Goal 6: Encourage "green" local government policies and sustainable communities
No action taken

Goal 7: Accelerate research on emission-reduction strategies and clean-air technologies, establishing the San Joaquin Valley as a leader in innovation
No action taken

Goal 8: Improve public understanding of air quality issues and solutions

Seed Grant Award for Air Quality Education in Environmental Justice Areas

The Maddy Institute was awarded \$250,000 to team with The Project Team of Community Focus and Valley Clean Air Now (CAN), to implement a pilot project aimed at reducing air pollution in the Valley in three communities: Arvin, Avenal, and Parlier. *Please review separate seed grant report for updated outreach information.*

"The Maddy Forum" KFSR 90.7/Podcast

The Maddy Institute created a new public affairs radio program called "The Maddy Forum" on 90.7 KFSR. The weekly program features conversations about the important public policy issues facing the San Joaquin Valley and interviews with local leaders and elected officials. The first of the series highlighted the air quality challenges in the Valley and steps that are being taken by the Valley and the state to clean the air, featuring an interview with Pete Weber, AQWG Convener, and DeeDee D'Adamo, ARB Member. Subsequent shows highlighted related issues such as clean energy and transportation.

Energy & Clean Air Exposition

Representatives from AQWG and the Energy Work Group gave a presentation on "Regional Clean Air & Energy Efforts Impacting Your Business" at the Energy & Clean Air Business Exposition in Fresno on Sept. 25.

Planned Activities by Goal and Objective (for next 3-6 months)

Continue to work with the High-Speed Rail Altamont Working Group on efforts to build high-speed rail systems connecting the Valley.

Continue to monitor progress on ARB's Heavy-Duty In-Use Diesel Regulation and analyze it for impacts on the Valley. ARB will consider adoption of the rule in December 2008.

Continue to monitor progress on ARB's AB 32/Greenhouse Gas Regulations and analyze it for impacts on the Valley. ARB will consider approval of the Scoping Plan in November 2008. The measures in the Plan will be developed over the next three years and be in place by 2012.

Continue to pursue a "dual path" to clean air by seeking the commercialization of new technologies as well as incentive mechanisms that will assist the Valley in accelerating the attainment of Clean Air standards to achieve by 2017.

Work with members in the state legislature and Congress as well as a new Presidential Administration to bring focus on assisting the Valley address its air quality challenges.

Complete the seed grant and issuing a final a report.

Challenges/Problems/Bottlenecks/Feedback

None to report at this time

If you have coordinated any outreach, please describe briefly

AQWG remains directly involved with legislators and their staff, conducting consistent legislative outreach. The Partnership and Interagency Task Force convene Valley district office staffers from both the Congressional and State delegations monthly in which AQWG attends and fully participates.