

REPORT:

California Air Resources Board

SYNOPSIS:

The California Air Resources Board met on December 18, 2014 in Sacramento. The following is a summary of this meeting.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Receive and File.

Judy Mitchell, SCAQMD Board Member

The Air Resources Board's (ARB or Board) December meeting was held on December 18 in Sacramento at the California Environmental Protection Agency Headquarters Building. Key items presented are summarized below.

1. Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Research Plan

The Board approved the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Research Plan, which allocates \$6.5 million toward 17 project concepts that support ARB program needs in health and exposure assessment, air quality improvement, and climate change programs. Health and exposure studies will evaluate women's cardiovascular risk from particulate matter exposure and whether health effects from air pollution exposure can be passed from mother to child. Air quality projects will study air pollution episodes in the San Joaquin Valley, and provide additional data about in-use heavy duty vehicle emissions. Climate change projects include studies that track the benefits of sustainable land use planning, evaluate emissions reduction strategies for short-lived climate pollutants and nitrous oxide, and analyze climate pollutant reductions from passenger cars.

2. Imperial County 24-hour PM_{2.5} State Implementation Plan

The Board approved the proposed Imperial County 2013 State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the 35 µg/m³ 24-hour PM_{2.5} standard. The Imperial PM_{2.5} SIP was developed under a provision of the Clean Air Act that allows states to take into consideration the contribution of cross-border transport of pollutants. Staff presented the technical demonstration that Imperial County would have attained the PM_{2.5} standard absent the impacts of international emissions from Mexicali Mexico. The SIP complies with all the other Clean Air Act requirements to demonstrate appropriate local and State actions have been taken to reduce emissions. Staff also discussed the collaborative efforts ARB and Mexico are pursuing to improve air quality in the border region.

3. Update on International Coordination

The Board heard an update on ARB's work as a world leader on climate policy and air pollution. Drawing on its experience in developing programs to lower greenhouse gases ARB has formed collaborations with more than a dozen national, sub-national and other U.S. state governments on cap-and-trade programs, increased penetration of electric vehicles and decreased deforestation. The update also covered how countries such as India and China are looking to ARB for guidance on addressing their air quality issues. For example, ARB is working with India on their air monitoring system and with several Mexican states on developing smog-check programs. These collaborations on climate change and air quality provide benefits to California in its effort to address global warming and to create markets for the technology needed for California to meet our air quality goals.

4. Amendments to the Cap and Trade Regulation and Market-Based Compliance Mechanisms

The Board was briefed on the development of amendments to the forest management offset protocol and development of a new rice cultivation offset protocol. The amendments to the forest management offset protocol will expand project eligibility to parts of Alaska, and the rice cultivation offset protocol will promote farming practices that reduce methane emissions from rice cultivation. Offsets developed under the protocols can be used by regulated entities for compliance with the cap and trade program. The Board will consider final approval of the amendments and the accompanying environmental analysis in 2015.

5. Technology and Fuels Assessment

The Board heard an update on Staff's assessment of heavy duty Technology and Fuels (Assessment). The Assessment results will inform many of the Board's upcoming planning efforts and policy decisions, including the Sustainable Freight Strategy, State Implementation Plan, Scoping Plan update, incentive funding plans, and the Governor's ZEV Action Plan.

The Assessment considers both tailpipe and upstream emissions, and examines available and emerging technologies, including zero emission battery and fuel cell technologies, hybrid engines and technologies that reduce main engine use, technologies that maximize efficiency from combustion engines, and low carbon fuels.

Public testimony focused on the need for technology transformation within the freight movement industry. The Board expressed its desire for staff to develop policy concepts for addressing freight emissions as part of the Sustainable Freight Initiative.

6. Assembly Bill 8 Carl Moyer Program Evaluation

The Board heard an update from ARB staff and CAPCOA president Alan Abbs on the joint ARB/CAPCOA Incentive Program Advisory Group (IPAG) report with recommendations on changes to the Carl Moyer Memorial Air Quality Standards Attainment Program. The IPAG concluded that there were five areas that could be improved to help the program better achieve State and local air quality and climate goals, referred to as the five pillars for change. These dealt with raising outdated cost-effectiveness limits, recognizing projects with GHG

co-benefits, allowing greater leveraging from other funding sources, expanding approvable project types (such as infrastructure), and increasing the efficiency of the program.