

Working Group Meeting #3

Cumulative Impacts from Air Toxics for CEQA Projects



Tuesday, January 24, 2023

10:00 AM (PST)

**South Coast Air Quality
Management District**

REMOTE MEETING INFORMATION

Join Zoom Webinar Link:

<https://scaqmd.zoom.us/j/94556369595>

Webinar ID: 945 5636 9595

Dial In: (669) 900 6833



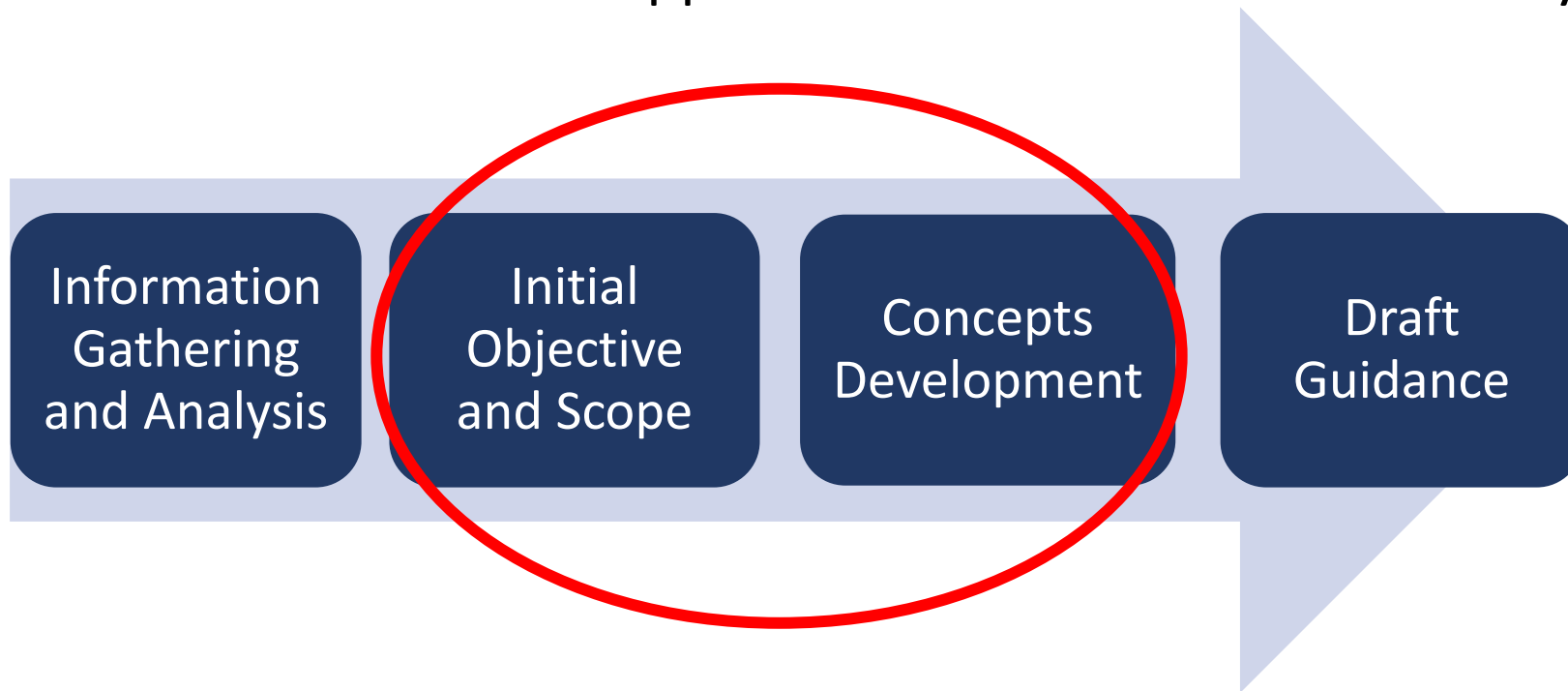
Agenda

- I. Overview and Objective
- II. Recap of Previous Working Group Meetings
- III. Individual Stakeholder Meetings and Feedback
- IV. Concepts and Tiered Approach for Discussion
- V. Feedback and Questions
- VI. Staff Contacts

Overview and Objective of Working Group Meeting (WGM) #3

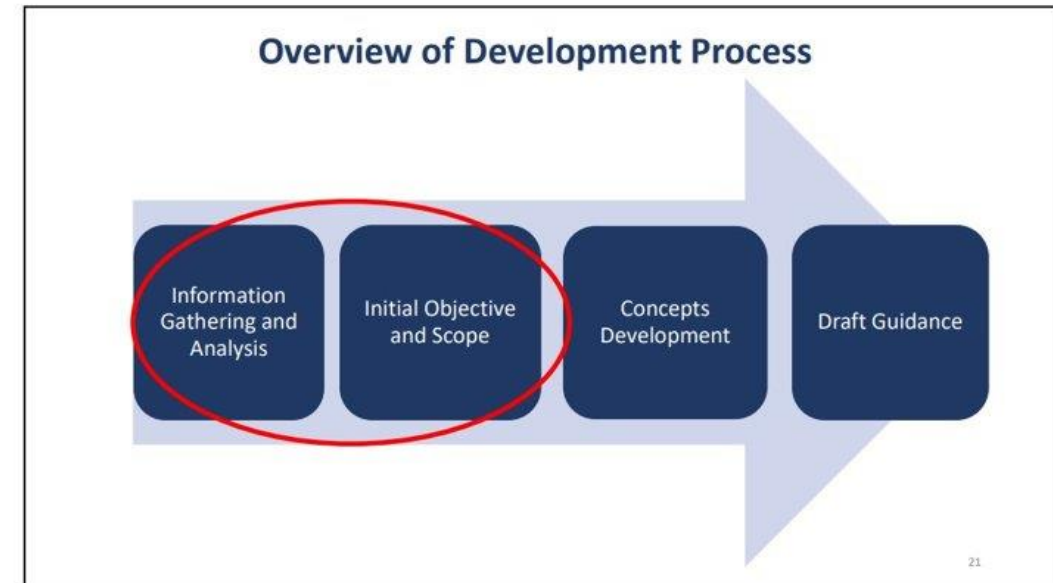
Overview: Discuss potential concepts and tiered approach for conducting an enhanced qualitative and quantitative cumulative impact analysis for air toxics

Objective: Seek feedback on approaches that will be shared today



Recap of Previous Working Group Meetings

- **WGM #1:** Identified need for updated cumulative impact analysis guidance, introduced phased approach for an enhanced cumulative impact analysis for toxic air contaminants (TACs), reviewed the development process
- **WGM #2:** Staff shared stakeholder feedback since WGM #1, presented research findings, mapping tools, and shared high-level concepts for the cumulative impact analysis such as
 - Use a range of distances to define a geographic scope
 - Utilize MATES (Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study), our in-house cancer-risk (CR) mapping tool

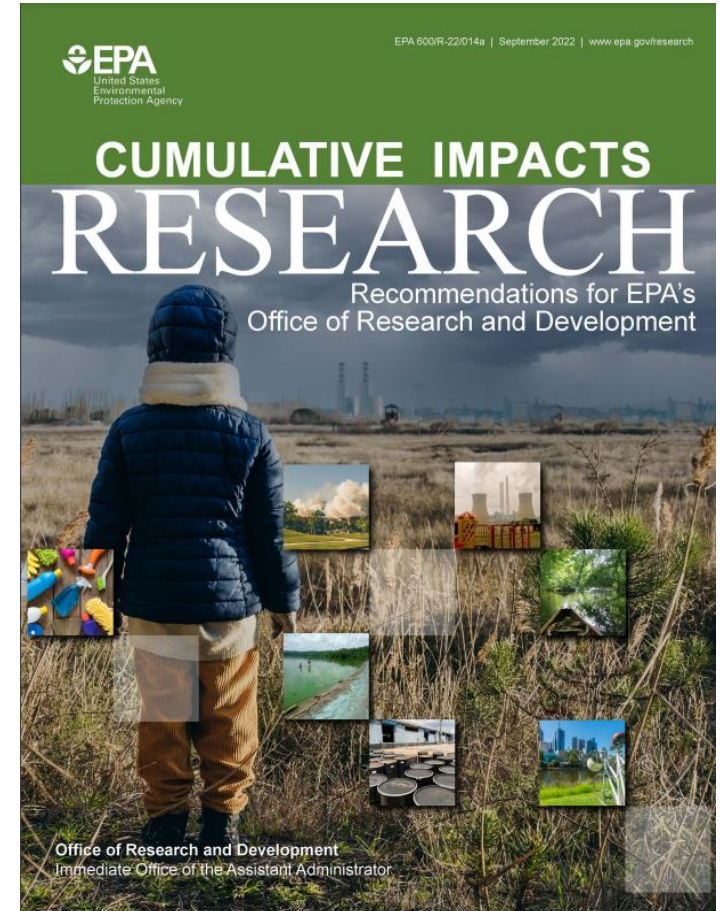


WGM #2 – Staff Shared Existing and Proposed Guidance for Cumulative Impacts from Other Agencies

- Other air districts in California
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Draft Guidance on Cumulative Impacts
- California Air Resources Board (CARB): Air Toxics Listening Sessions Related to Cumulative Impacts
- Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) Draft Framework on Cumulative Impacts
- Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's (OEHHA) CalEnviroScreen – Statewide Mapping Tool

Research Update of Cumulative Impacts from Other Agencies Since Last WGM

- U.S. EPA Cumulative Impact Research Recommendation, Final Report¹ released 9/2022. Report has a focus on research to support cumulative impact assessments
- As of November 2022, no further updates from CARB, DTSC, other air districts, or the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)



1. U.S. EPA. Cumulative Impacts Research: Recommendations for EPA's Office of Research and Development. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, D.C., EPA/600/R-22/014a, 2022.

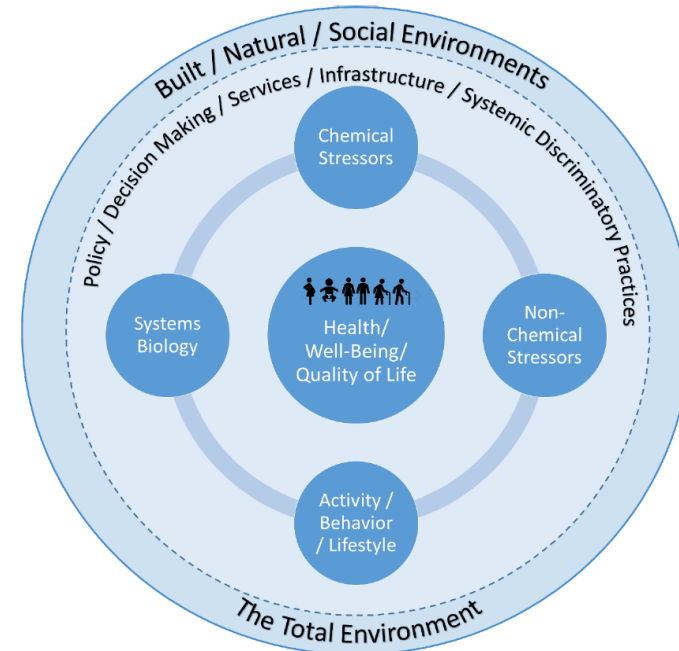
Cumulative Impact Definitions

Two Definitions in CEQA Guidelines

1. Section 15355: “**Cumulative impacts**” refers to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts
2. Section 15065(a)(3), the project has possible environmental effects that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable
 - “**Cumulatively considerable**” means that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.”

Other Agency Definitions

- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)(1969)/Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)(1978)
- U.S. EPA Office of Research and Development (ORD) 2022 Cumulative Impacts Research Recommendations



Summary of Stakeholder Feedback

- Have a screening criteria with a multi-tiered approach
- Include a geographic scope, how far (distance) a project should look for cumulative impacts
- Consider developing a cumulative significance threshold
- Consider other health risks in addition to cancer risk
- MATES is a good tool for cancer risk metric, but should also use other tools for additional health risks
- Expand cumulative impact analysis to criteria pollutants, greenhouse gases, and South Coast AQMD's permitting decisions

Concepts Included in the Current Proposal

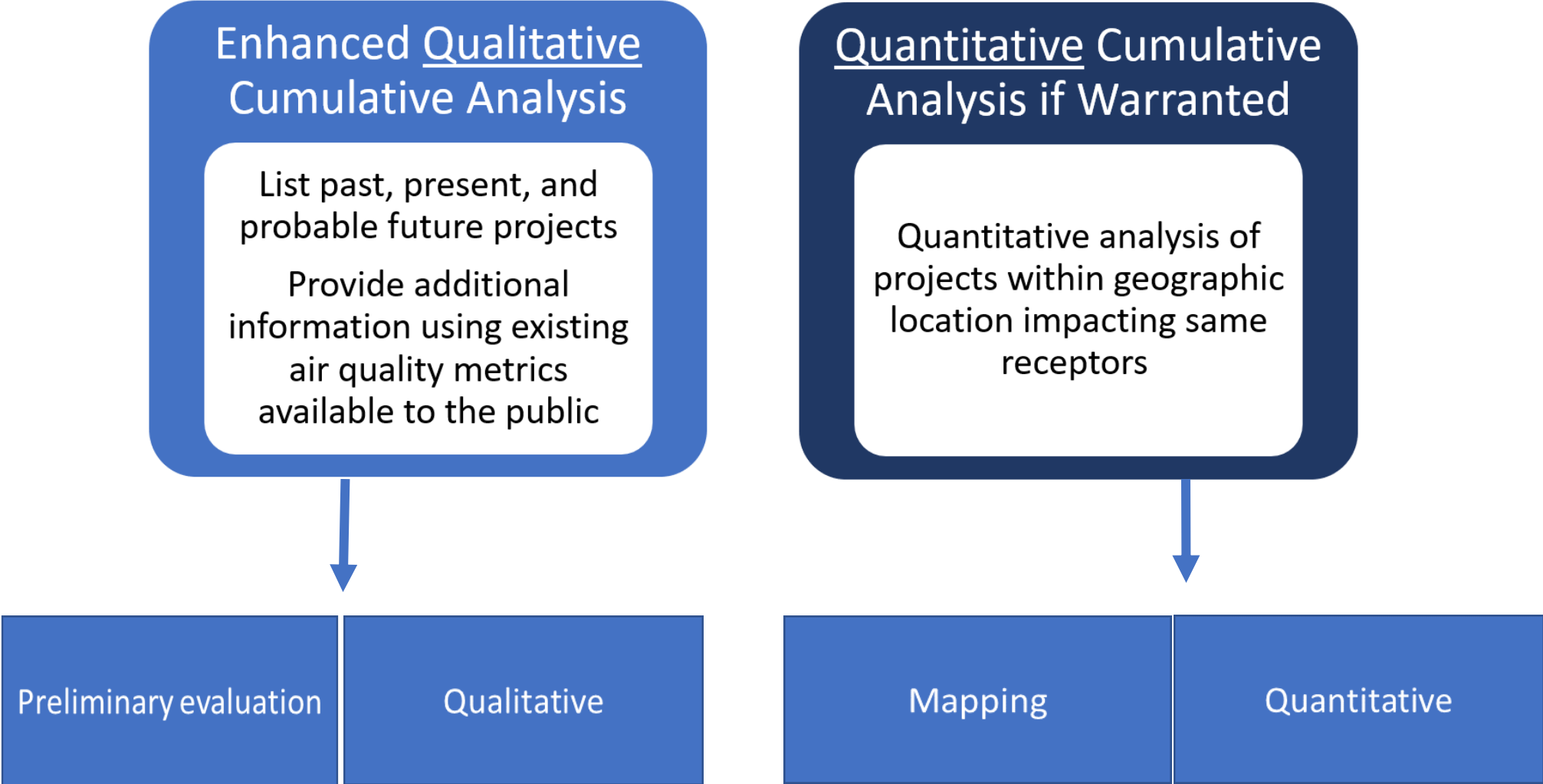
Concept/Element	How concept/element will be used
Expand Qualitative Discussion	Incorporate into qualitative discussion project information such as CalEnviroScreen score, MATES CR metric., AB 617 status, etc.
Define geographic scope by applying a range of distances	<p>Will utilize multiple distances to define the geographic scope of the cumulative impact</p> <p>Distances to be determined, in part, by toxic chemical species utilized in a project</p>
Incorporate Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities as part of Screening Criteria	Will use EJ indicators as part of an initial screening
Allow continued use of negative declarations (ND) and mitigated negative declarations (MND) where appropriate	Provide a tiered analysis to identify projects that warrant further evaluation
Cumulative Significance Threshold	Cancer risk numbers will be one of the factors utilized to identify if a project warrants further evaluation

Concepts Not Included in the Current Proposal

Concept/Element	Reason for Not Using
Include criteria pollutants	Rely on Localized Significance Thresholds (LST) for this. Staff incorporated cumulative impacts of criteria pollutants when they developed the LST methodology
Include greenhouse gases (GHG)	GHG impacts are not localized and regulated at the State level
Health risks in addition to cancer	Cancer risk is a widely used and accepted metric for air toxic impacts and, as such, will be the health risk utilized
Avoid using socioeconomic factors for CEQA analysis	CalEnviroScreen and AB 617 aid in providing project background information and context and in identifying projects that warrant further evaluation
Apply to South Coast AQMD permitting decisions	Involves multiple discussions between departments within South Coast AQMD on a larger scale. This concept will need further discussion and will not be included

A Phased Approach to Enhance Cumulative Analysis for Air Toxics under CEQA

Slide from Working Group Meeting #1, Slide 15

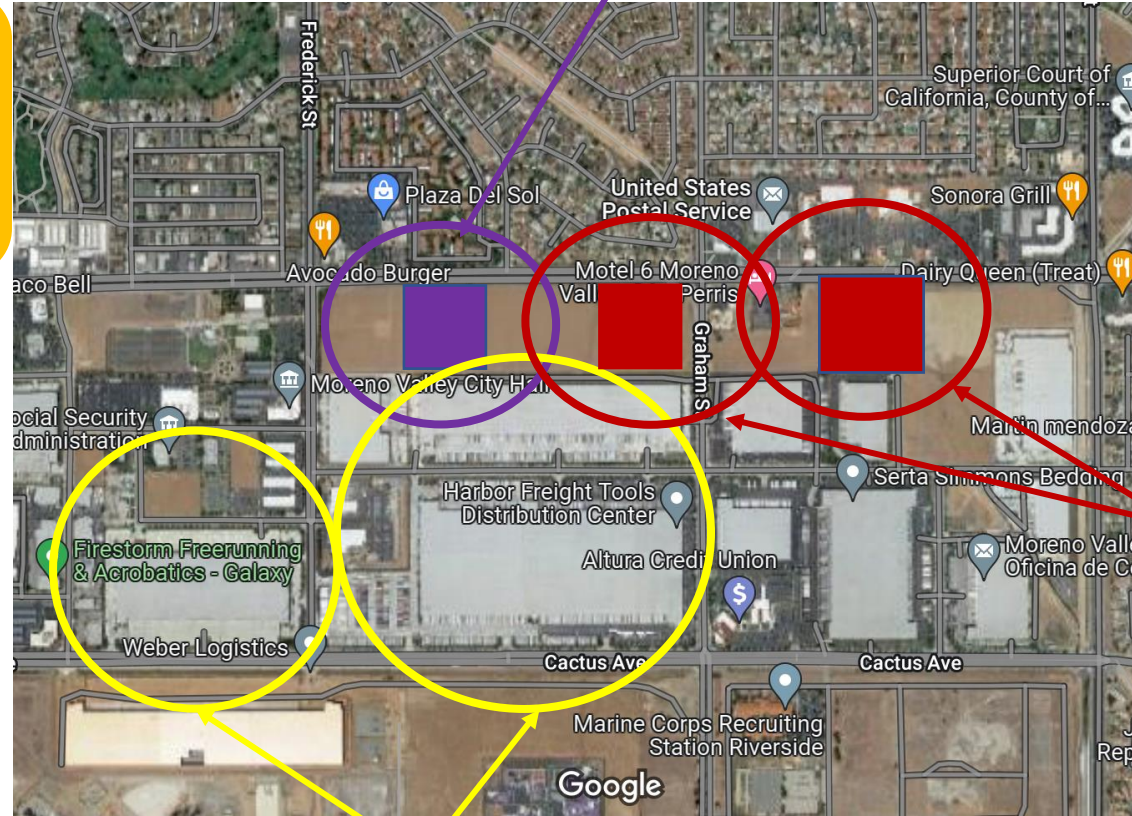


Concepts and Approaches for Discussion

Impacts from Proposed Project (2023)

Background environment

Concept of Cumulative TAC Impacts



Impacts from foreseeable future proposed project (2024)

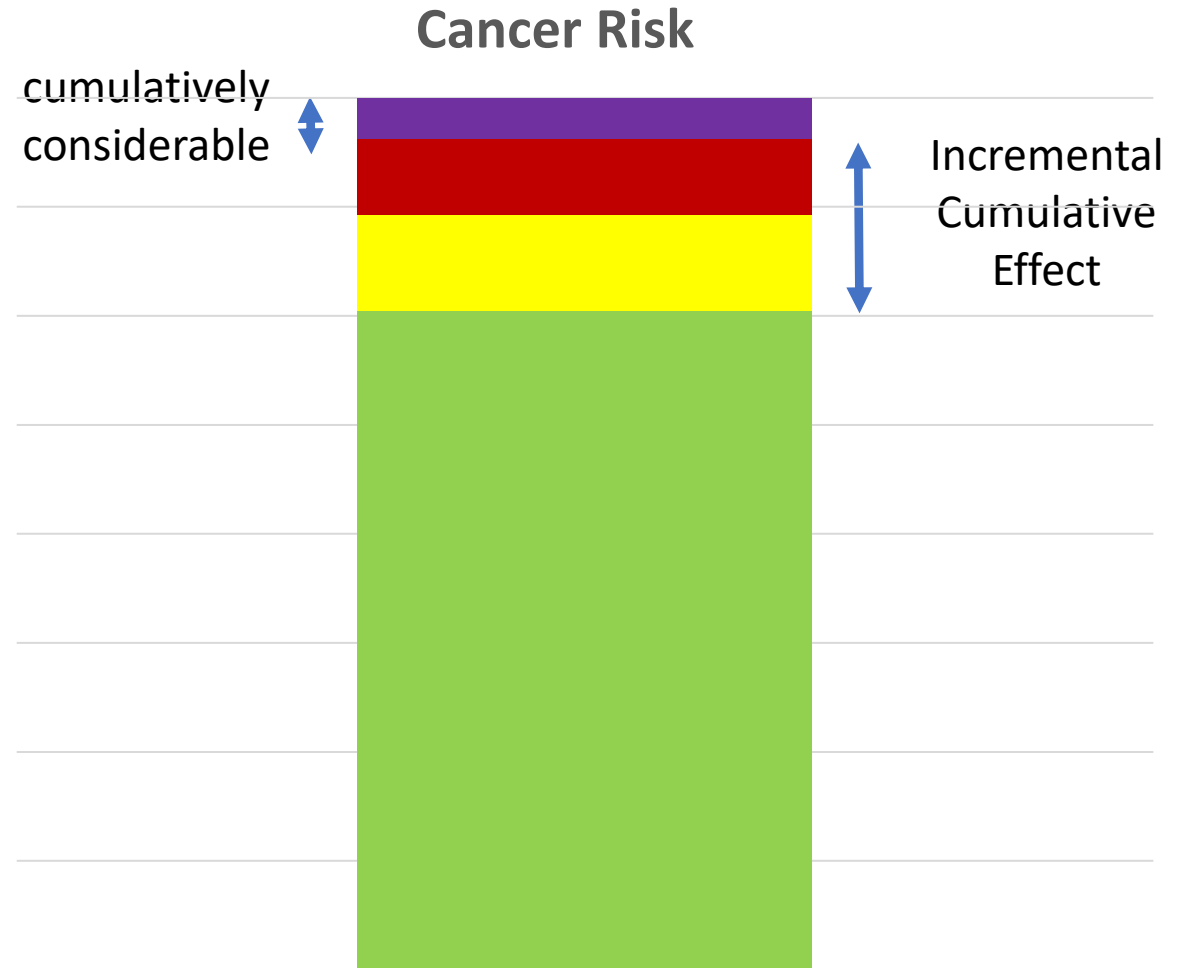
Impacts from newly built facilities

Environmental effects may be individually limited but cumulatively considerable

Concept of Cumulative TAC Impacts

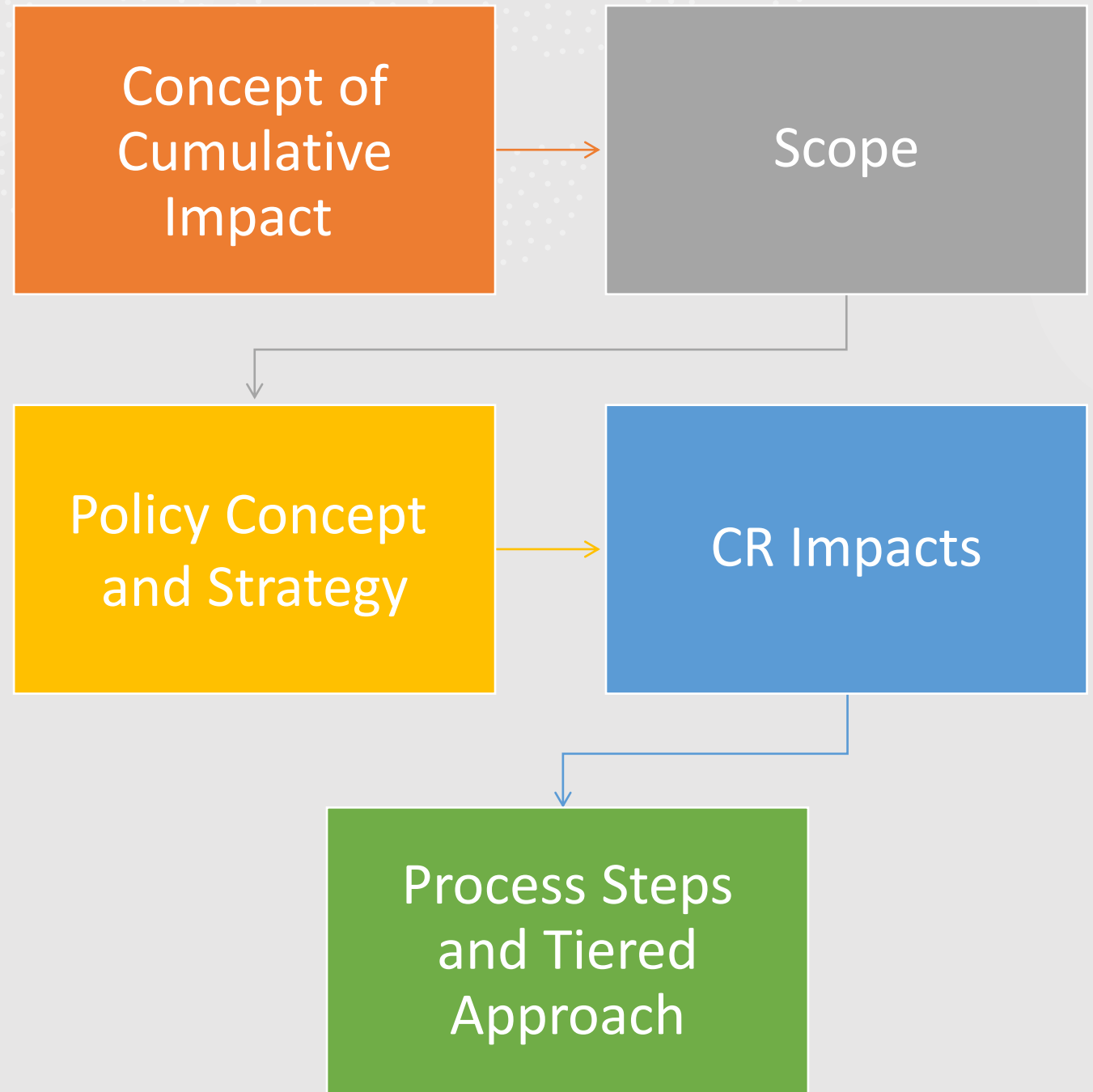
Concepts focus on:

- Defining significant thresholds for cumulatively considerable project
- Evaluating the incremental project impacts qualitatively and quantitatively
- Combining background and incremental impacts



- proposed project
- future projects
- projects after MATES V (2019- present)
- background (MATES V, 2018)

Cumulative TAC Impacts Analysis Considerations



Cumulative TAC Impacts Analysis Consideration - Scope

- **CEQA Requirement - CR during project operation (point and non-point sources)**
- **Potential CR impacts are varied by the land use type and size**

Low CR Impacts

- Residential (apartment, condo, mobile home, SFH, community)
- Commercial (office, bank, government, pharmacy, R&D, hospital)
- Recreational (arena, park, restaurant, golf course, health club, hotel, theater, etc.)
- Educational (daycare, school, college, library, church)
- Retail (auto care, market, mall, shopping store, supermarket)

Medium CR Impacts

- Truck yard (enclosed, parking lot, structure, asphalt/non-asphalt)
- Retail (gas station)
- Certain small industrial projects
- Linear (bridge, road, freeway, new or improvement)

High CR Impacts

- Industrial (warehouse, light, heavy, manufacturing, industrial park)
- Major transportation projects (airport, port, railyard, bus/train station)
- Major planning projects (Master Plan/General Plan/Specific Plan, and etc.)

Cumulative TAC Impacts Analysis Consideration - Scope

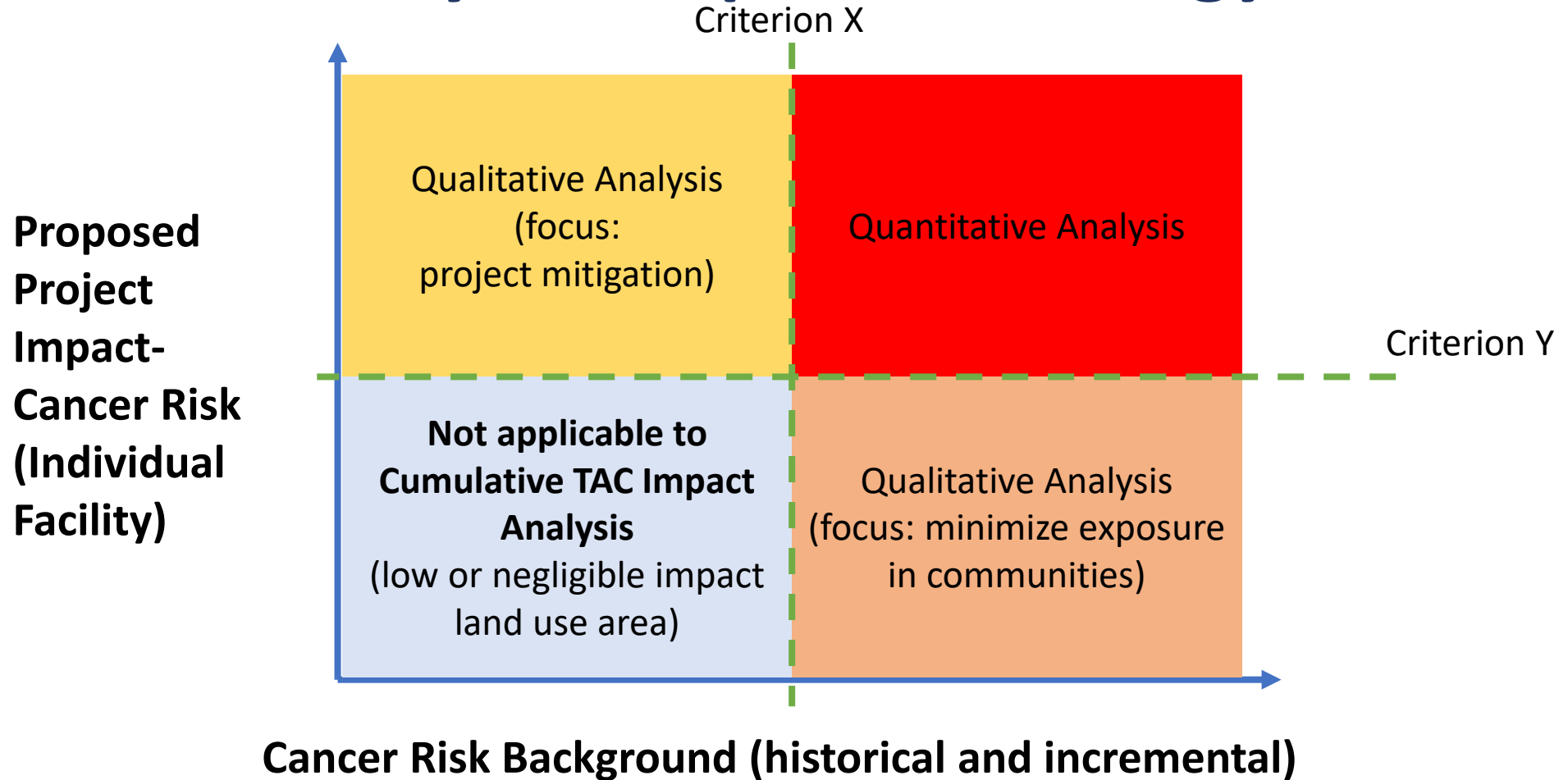
Project-level cumulative TAC Impact Analysis is NOT applicable for:

- Land use projects that have no or really low TAC impact (will provide a list of examples)
- CEQA statutory, ministerial, and certain categorical project (will provide a list of examples)
- The individual project-level analysis is already included in regional project (e.g. certain general plan, master plan, specific plan, and other regional programs)
- Projects that the lead agency has its own guidance to address cumulative impact

Goals and Boundaries:

- Provide a tiered and streamlining analysis to identify projects that warrant further evaluation
- Provide the public and the lead agency with a scientific tool to identify the proposed project's potential cumulative TAC impact in the area that may require special attention or additional actions to mitigate the impacts
- This cumulative analysis approach is to be implemented at the discretion of local public agencies acting as a lead agency pursuant to CEQA
- Do not allow or consider netting/offsetting in cumulative analysis at this point

Cumulative TAC Impacts Analysis Consideration - Policy Concept and Strategy



Note: Historical background CR is from MATES V;
incremental background CR is the impacts from the projects after 2018 MATES V baseline year

Cumulative TAC Impacts Analysis Consideration - CR impacts

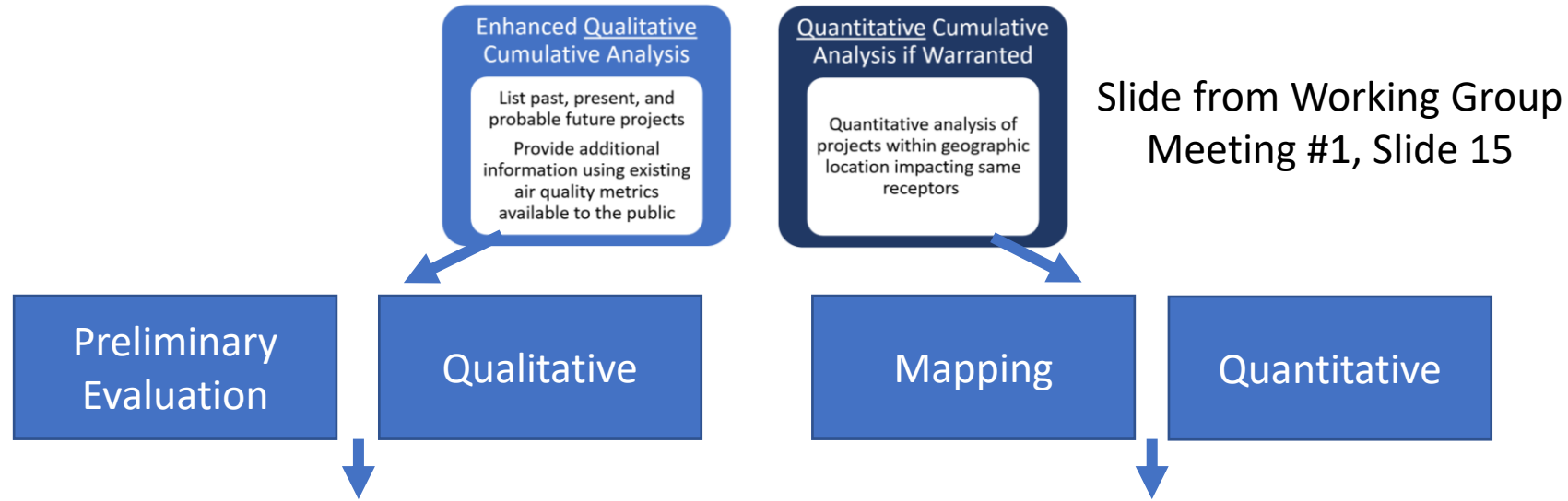
Background CR- MATES V

- Modeled results from emission inventory and monitoring data in year 2018
- basin average = 455 in one million CR, maximum = 1,141 in one million CR
- More than 30 TACs are included
- Provided by grid and zip code

Incremental CR

- Definition of “past, present, and probable future projects”, CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 (b)
- From HRA look up table (in development)
 - CR by project type and size
 - Protective and conservative results from dispersion and HRA modeling
 - Similar to our LST or Attachment N in Risk Assessment Procedure (R1401) but simplified
- From actual modeling results

Developing Process Steps and Tiered Approach



- **Preliminary evaluation:** Projects to provide additional information (including MATES, AB 617, CalEnviroScreen, AirToxScreen, etc.), initial screening and applicability test
 - Categorize Projects: Not applicable, Regional Plan, Tiers
 - Multiple X and Y criteria to help categorize and bin projects
- **Qualitative Review:** Listing approach
- **Mapping:** map out the potential CR impacts from proposed and incremental projects
- **Quantitative Review:** full HRA to determine incremental CR

Feedback and Questions

Staff is seeking stakeholder feedback on:

- ✓ The approaches for the updated guidance
- ✓ Any other thoughts or concerns that staff should consider



Visit: [http://www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/ceqa/ceqa-policy-development-\(new\)](http://www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/ceqa/ceqa-policy-development-(new))

Next Steps

Continue Working Group Meetings

Continue Individual Meetings with Stakeholders

Provide Updates

Staff Contacts

Guidance for Cumulative Impacts from Air Toxics for CEQA Projects	General Questions
Lead Staff: Sam Wang, Program Supervisor, 909-396-2649, swang1@aqmd.gov	<p>Michael Krause Assistant Deputy Executive Officer 909-396-3105 Mkrause@aqmd.gov</p>
Contributor: Danica Nguyen, Air Quality Specialist, 909-396-3531, Dnguyen1@aqmd.gov	
Contributor: Evelyn Aguilar, Air Quality Specialist, 909-396-3148, Eaguilar@aqmd.gov	
<p>Michael Morris Planning and Rules Manager 909-396-3282 Mmorris@aqmd.gov</p>	
<p>Sign up for the mailing list at: https://www.aqmd.gov/sign-up (select CEQA Updates)</p>	

References

- Bay Area Air Quality Management District. California Environmental Quality Act Air Quality Guidelines (May 2017). Accessed at: <https://www.baaqmd.gov/plans-and-climate/california-environmental-quality-act-ceqa/updated-ceqa-guidelines>.
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts (May 2015). Accessed at: https://www.valleyair.org/transportation/ceqa_idx.htm.
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- South Coast Air Quality Management District. Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study V (August 2021). Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/air-quality/air-quality-studies/health-studies/mates-v>.



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