

Chapter 1 : Introduction

Assembly Bill (AB) 617 was signed into California law in July 2017 and focuses on addressing local air pollution in environmental justice (EJ) communities. The bill recognizes that while California has seen tremendous improvement in regional air quality, some communities are still disproportionately impacted by local sources. Major local sources of air pollution in EJ communities include mobile sources (trucks, trains, ships, etc.) and industrial facilities. These communities also experience social and economic disadvantages that make people more vulnerable to the health effects of pollution. The AB 617 program provides focused action and additional resources to address air quality in these communities.

On September 27, 2018, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) designated 10 communities across the state to implement community plans for the first year of the AB 617 program. Local air districts are tasked with developing and implementing community emissions reduction and/or community air monitoring plans in partnership with residents and community stakeholders. The Community Air Monitoring Plan (CAMP) includes actions to enhance our understanding of air pollution in the designated communities, and support effective implementation of the Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP). For the three first year AB 617 communities in the South Coast AQMD, both a CAMP and a CERP are being developed. Separate documents describe the CAMP development process and the draft plan. Information is available at www.aqmd.gov/ab617. Figure 1-1 gives a general overview of the CERP timeline.

Figure 1-1: Overview of Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP) Timeline for Year 1 Communities



Purpose of the Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP)

The CERP is a plan for achieving air pollution emission and exposure reductions within the San Bernardino, Muscoy community, and is tailored to address this community's air quality priorities. The CERP includes actions to reduce emissions and/or exposures, an implementation schedule, an enforcement plan, a description of the process and outreach conducted to develop the CERP, as well as additional elements that are relevant to developing an effective CERP. Community partnership and engagement have been crucial throughout the process.

Because the work to implement the CERP and CAMP is dynamic, certain action items have been written with built-in flexibility to allow adjustments as new information becomes available. South Coast AQMD staff is committed to working with Community Steering Committee (CSC) members to evaluate ongoing actions and progress.

CERP Development Process and Emphasis on Community Input

Community engagement and input to inform both the process and the actions in the CERP have been a primary element of the AB 617 program. The San Bernardino, Muscoy CSC, working with the South Coast AQMD staff, are seeking to address the community's air quality priorities through development and implementation of this CERP. In addition to public meetings, numerous conversations and communications among committee members, South Coast AQMD staff, individuals and small groups occurred to ensure that community voices were an integral part of the plan. Chapter 2 describes the CSC process and the outreach that was conducted. Throughout the process, information exchanges between all parties, including feedback and input from committee members and members of the public ensured transparency and engagement. Numerous adjustments to consolidate and incorporate feedback were made and South Coast AQMD staff continuously aims to improve community engagement on air quality issues.

About this Community

This community includes major portions of the City of San Bernardino and all of the unincorporated community of Muscoy, both of which are located in San Bernardino County (Figure 1-2).

More than 90,000 people live within the San Bernardino and Muscoy community (Figure 1-3). Nearly three-quarters of the people living in this community are Latino (Figure 1-4). About 13.1% of the residents in this community are African American and 9.3% are White. The population in this community is younger compared to the population in the state of California, with nearly one out of every five people in this community being a child under the age of 10 years, and only 7.0% of the population being adults over the age of 65 years (Figure 1-5). These age categories are particularly important because young children and older adults can be more sensitive to the health effects of air pollution.¹

Figure 1-2: Location of the San Bernardino, Muscoy community in the South Coast AQMD jurisdiction

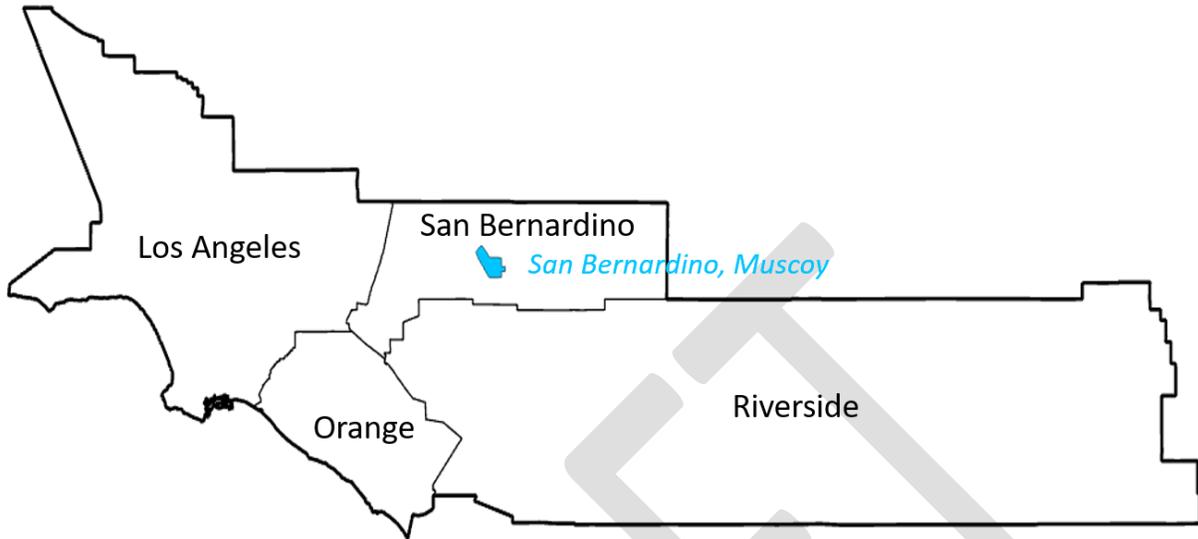


Figure 1-3: Population of San Bernardino, Muscoy community, based on the 2010 Census

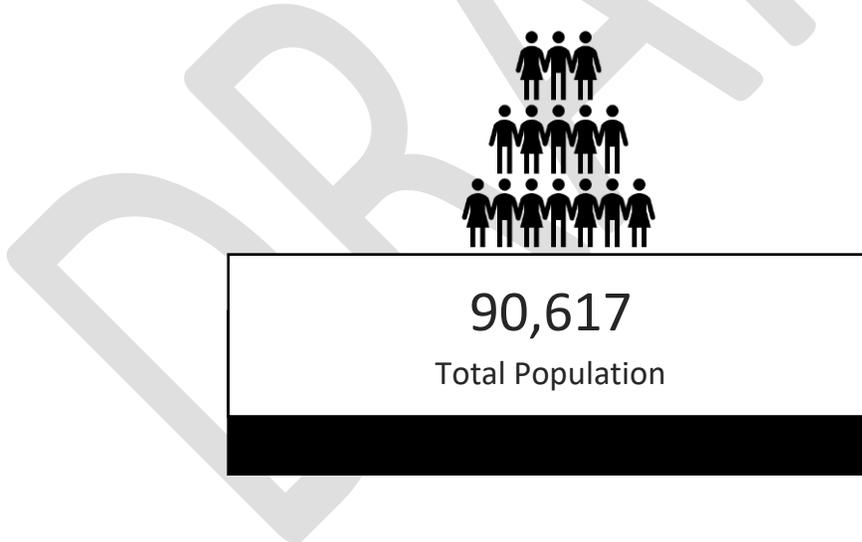


Figure 1-4. Population by Race/Ethnicity in San Bernardino, Muscoy and the state of California, based on 2010 Census

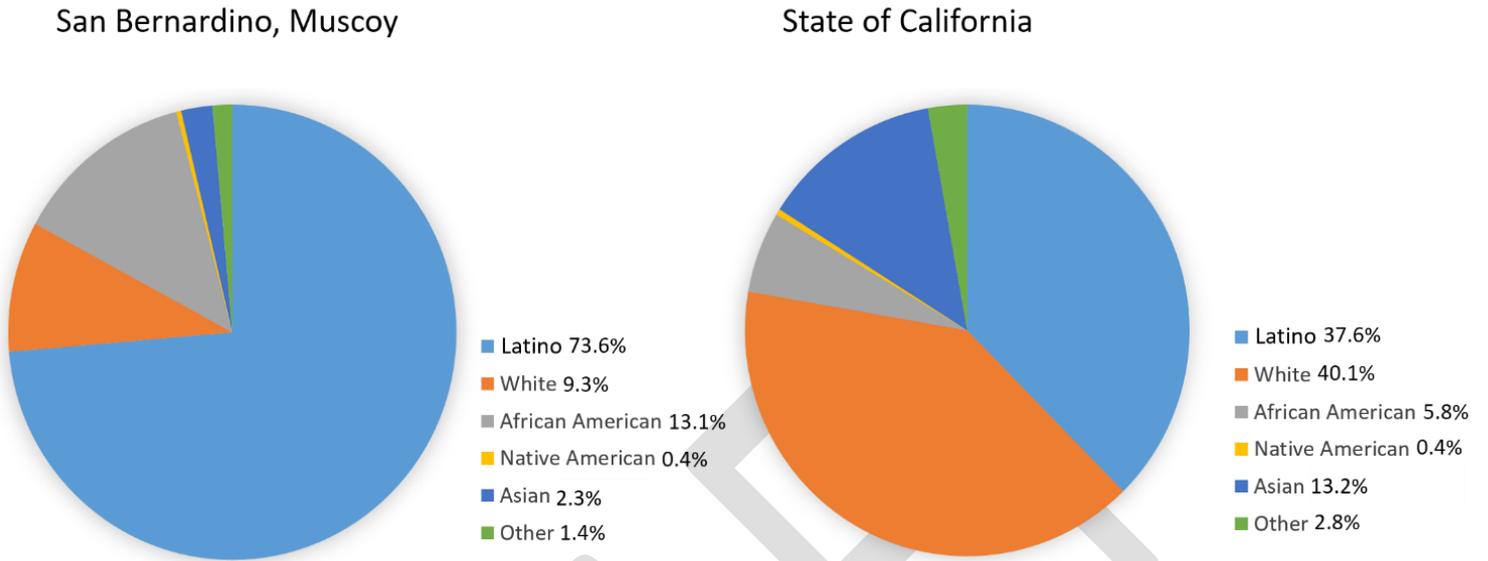
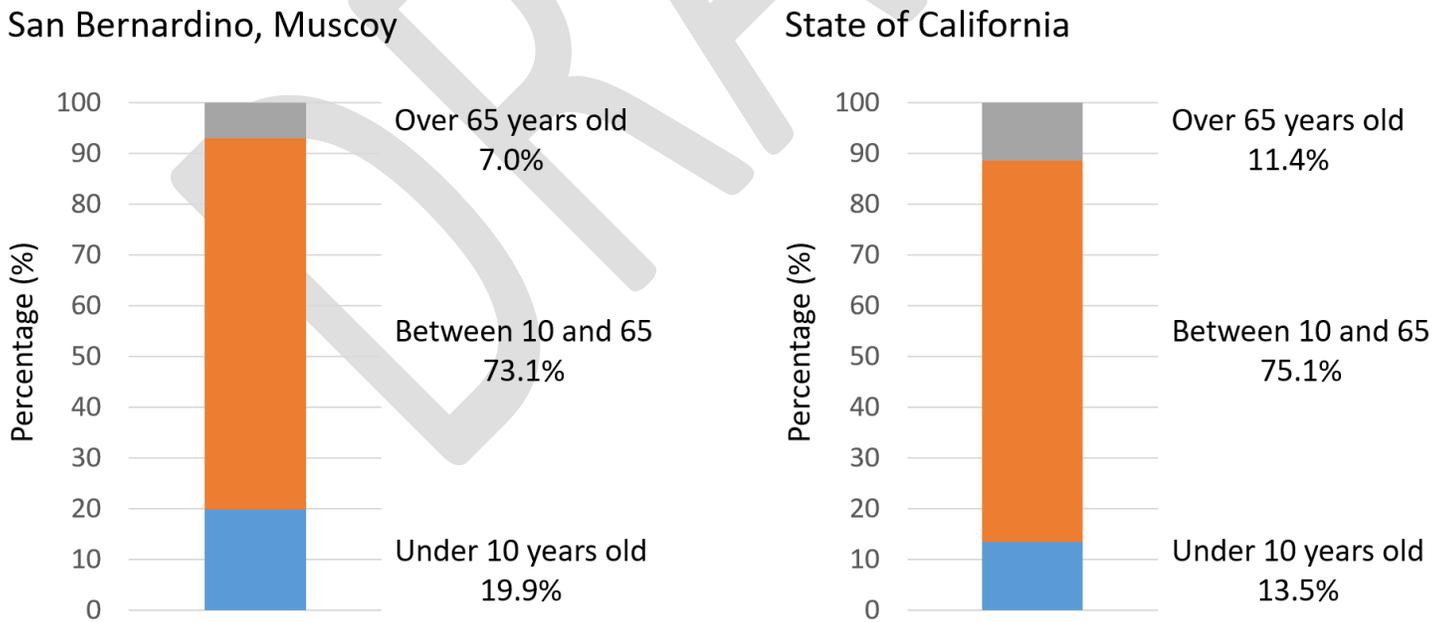


Figure 1-5. Age profile in San Bernardino, Muscoy and the state of California, based on 2010 Census



While the demographics and geography provide useful information, the members of the community are what make each community unique and distinct. Community members bring intimate familiarity with their community and the air quality concerns that affect their neighborhood. Below are some community voices describing this community.

Photo Pending



"I have been organizing and working with the youth and this community for over 20 years. When I see the news about the deaths from gun violence I know that isn't the truth. It is air quality that is killing our youth. It's a conversation that is critical to the future of our community, especially the youth, and more importantly health. They can't breathe the air. If we don't work together in this community to solve this issue, all the work we do is for nothing. It is the most urgent need that our community faces." - Mary Valdemar, Community Steering Committee Member, San Bernardino Valley College

"I have been a resident in the San Bernardino area for over 20 years and I have seen how resilient my community is. We will fight together to clean our air. La unión hace la fuerza." - Miguel Rivera, Community Steering Committee Member, Active Resident from Muscoy



"I grew up as a youth in San Bernardino with asthma and I have stayed in this community, because I think it is a diamond in the rough. I am waiting for its day in the sun and I think air quality is so important to its success." - Mathew Taylor, Community Steering Committee Member, Active Resident from San Bernardino

"I love my community because this is where I live. My children and my grandchildren were raised here, my husband works here, and this is where my house is. I have been living here for a long time and together we have walked the streets to help the people who are the most in need. I wish we had cleaner air because there are many people who are getting sick." - Graciela Regalado, Community Steering Committee Member, Active Resident from San Bernardino

Photo Pending



References

1. Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (2014), California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool, Version 2.0, <https://oehha.ca.gov/media/CES20FinalReportUpdateOct2014.pdf>, Accessed June 12, 2019.

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