

BOARD MEETING DATE: May 2, 2025

AGENDA NO. 15

REPORT: Intergovernmental Review of Environmental Documents and CEQA Lead Agency Projects

SYNOPSIS: This report provides a listing of environmental documents prepared by other public agencies seeking review by South Coast AQMD between March 1, 2025 and March 31, 2025, and proposed projects for which South Coast AQMD is acting as lead agency pursuant to CEQA.

COMMITTEE: Mobile Source, April 18, 2025, Reviewed

RECOMMENDED ACTION:
Receive and file.

Wayne Nastri
Executive Officer

SR:MK:BR:SW:ET:DC

Background

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statute and Guidelines require public agencies, when acting in their lead agency role, to provide an opportunity for other public agencies and members of the public to review and comment on the analysis in environmental documents prepared for proposed projects. A lead agency is when a public agency has the greatest responsibility for supervising or approving a proposed project and is responsible for the preparation of the appropriate CEQA document.

Each month, South Coast AQMD receives environmental documents, which include CEQA documents, for proposed projects that could adversely affect air quality. South Coast AQMD fulfills its intergovernmental review responsibilities, in a manner that is consistent with the Board's 1997 Environmental Justice Guiding Principles and Environmental Justice Initiative #4, by reviewing and commenting on the adequacy of the air quality analysis in the environmental documents prepared by other lead agencies.

The status of these intergovernmental review activities is provided in this report in two sections: 1) Attachment A lists all of the environmental documents prepared by other public agencies seeking review by South Coast AQMD that were received during the reporting period; and 2) Attachment B lists the active projects for which South Coast AQMD has reviewed or is continuing to conduct a review of the environmental documents prepared by other public agencies. Further, as required by the Board's October 2002 Environmental Justice Program Enhancements for fiscal year (FY) 2002-03, each attachment includes notes for proposed projects which indicate when South Coast AQMD has been contacted regarding potential air quality-related environmental justice concerns. The attachments also identify for each proposed project, as applicable: 1) the dates of the public comment period and the public hearing date; 2) whether staff provided written comments to a lead agency and the location where the comment letter may be accessed on South Coast AQMD's website; and 3) whether staff testified at a hearing.

In addition, the South Coast AQMD will act as lead agency for a proposed project and prepare a CEQA document when: 1) air permits are needed; 2) potentially significant adverse impacts have been identified; and 3) the South Coast AQMD has primary discretionary authority over the approvals. Attachment C lists the proposed air permit projects for which South Coast AQMD is lead agency under CEQA.

Attachment A – Log of Environmental Documents Prepared by Other Public Agencies and Status of Review, and Attachment B – Log of Active Projects with Continued Review of Environmental Documents Prepared by Other Public Agencies

Attachment A contains a list of all environmental documents prepared by other public agencies seeking review by South Coast AQMD that were received pursuant to CEQA or other regulatory requirements. Attachment B provides a list of active projects, which were identified in previous months' reports, and which South Coast AQMD staff is continuing to evaluate or prepare comments relative to the environmental documents prepared by other public agencies. The following table provides statistics on the status of review¹ of environmental documents for the current reporting period for Attachments A and B combined²:

¹ The status of review reflects the date when this Board Letter was prepared. Therefore, Attachments A and B may not reflect the most recent updates.

² Copies of all comment letters sent to the lead agencies are available on South Coast AQMD's website at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/regulations/ceqa/commenting-agency>.

Statistics for Reporting Period from March 1, 2025 to March 31, 2025	
Attachment A: Environmental Documents Prepared by Other Public Agencies and Status of Review	56
Attachment B: Active Projects with Continued Review of Environmental Documents Prepared by Other Public Agencies (which were previously identified in the January and February 2025 report)	6
Total Environmental Documents Listed in Attachments A & B	62
<i>Comment letters sent</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Environmental documents reviewed, but no comments were made</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>Environmental documents currently undergoing review</i>	<i>2</i>

Staff focuses on reviewing and preparing comments on environmental documents prepared by other public agencies for proposed projects: 1) where South Coast AQMD is a responsible agency under CEQA (e.g., when air permits are required but another public agency is lead agency); 2) that may have significant adverse regional air quality impacts (e.g., special event centers, landfills, goods movement); 3) that may have localized or toxic air quality impacts (e.g., warehouse and distribution centers); 4) where environmental justice concerns have been raised; and 5) which a lead or responsible agency has specifically requested South Coast AQMD review.

If staff provided written comments to a lead agency, then a hyperlink to the “South Coast AQMD Letter” is included in the “Project Description” column which corresponds to a notation in the “Comment Status” column. In addition, if staff testified at a hearing for a proposed project, then a notation is included in the “Comment Status” column. Copies of all comment letters sent to lead agencies are available on South Coast AQMD’s website at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/regulations/ceqa/commenting-agency>. Interested parties seeking information regarding the comment periods and scheduled public hearings for projects listed in Attachments A and B should contact the lead agencies for further details as these dates are occasionally modified.

In January 2006, the Board approved the Clean Port Initiative Workplan (Workplan). One action item of the Workplan was to prepare a monthly report describing CEQA documents for projects related to goods movement and to make full use of the process to ensure the air quality impacts of such projects are thoroughly mitigated. In accordance with this action item, Attachments A and B organize the environmental documents received according to the following categories: 1) goods movement projects; 2) schools; 3) landfills and wastewater projects; 4) airports; and 5) general land use projects. In response to the action item relative to mitigation, staff maintains a compilation of mitigation measures presented as a series of tables relative to off-road engines; on-road engines; harbor craft; ocean-going vessels; locomotives; fugitive dust; and greenhouse gases which are available on South Coast AQMD’s website at:

<http://www.aqmd.gov/home/regulations/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook/mitigation-measures-and-control-efficiencies>. Staff will continue compiling tables of mitigation measures for other emission sources such as ground support equipment.

Attachment C – Proposed Air Permit Projects for Which South Coast AQMD is CEQA Lead Agency

The CEQA lead agency is responsible for determining the type of environmental document to be prepared if a proposal requiring discretionary action is considered to be a “project” as defined by CEQA. South Coast AQMD periodically acts as lead agency for its air permit projects and the type of environmental document prepared may vary depending on the potential impacts. For example, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is prepared when there is substantial evidence that the project may have significant adverse effects on the environment. Similarly, a Negative Declaration (ND) or Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) may be prepared if a proposed project will not generate significant adverse environmental impacts, or the impacts can be mitigated to less than significance. The ND and MND are types of CEQA documents which analyze the potential environmental impacts and describe the reasons why a significant adverse effect on the environment will not occur such that the preparation of an EIR is not required.

Attachment C of this report summarizes the proposed air permit projects for which South Coast AQMD is lead agency and is currently preparing or has prepared environmental documentation pursuant to CEQA. As noted in Attachment C, South Coast AQMD is lead agency for four air permit projects during March 2025.

Attachments

- A. Environmental Documents Prepared by Other Public Agencies and Status of Review
- B. Active Projects with Continued Review of Environmental Documents Prepared by Other Public Agencies
- C. Proposed Air Permit Projects for Which South Coast AQMD is CEQA Lead Agency

ATTACHMENT A
ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PREPARED BY OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES AND STATUS OR REVIEW
March 1, 2025 to March 31, 2025

SOUTH COAST AQMD LOG-IN NUMBER	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	TYPE OF DOC.	LEAD AGENCY	COMMENT STATUS
PROJECT TITLE				
<i>Waste and Water-related</i> ORC250312-07 S & S Polishing	The project consists of cleaning up volatile organic compounds in the soil at elevated levels. The project site is located at the Former S & S Polishing and plating facility at 1503 N Miller Street in Anaheim. Comment Period: N/A Public Hearing: N/A	Other	City of Anaheim	Document reviewed - No comments sent
<i>Waste and Water-related</i> ORC250325-06 Danny's Cleaners	The project consists of cleaning up tetrachloroethylene in the soil and soil vapor onsite. The project is near a small shopping center containing other businesses and across from El Modena High School and located at 3534 E. Chapman Avenue in Orange. Comment Period: 3/25/2025- 4/25/2025 Public Hearing: N/A	Other	Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)	Under review, may submit comments
<i>Waste and Water-related</i> RVC250304-06 Thousand Palms Channel Improvement Project	The project consists of improving approximately 5,750 feet of the existing Thousand Palms Channel and the Avenue 42 and Madison Street Channel crossing to meet the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Coachella Valley Storm Water Channel (CVWD) requirements for flood control and stormwater conveyance of regional flows into the CVWD, from the Thousand Palms Channel to the Sun City Shadow Development, located north of the existing Thousand Palms Channel. The Thousand Palms Channel runs south-southeast intersecting Madison Street, Avenue 42, and I-10, before it converges with the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel CVSC at its southern exit. The project is located in the Central portion of the Greater Coachella Valley within Indio. Comment Period: 2/28/2025- 3/31/2025 Public Hearing: N/A	Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration	Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD)	Document reviewed - No comments sent
<i>General Land Use (residential, etc.)</i> SBC250318-06 Mill Street Residential Rehabilitation Project#	The project consists of rehabilitating a 0.45-acre site with six residential units located on two parcels. The project site is located within a Federal Emergency Management Agency Zone X and is within the 500-year floodplain. The project is located at 1139 and 1141 West Mill Street in the southwest portion of San Bernardino. Comment Period: 3/18/2025- 3/28/2025 Public Hearing: N/A	Other	City of San Bernardino	Document reviewed - No comments sent

Key:

= Project has potential environmental justice concerns due to the nature and/or location of the project.

LAC = Los Angeles County, ORC = Orange County, RVC = Riverside County, SBC = San Bernardino County, ALL = All counties within the South Coast AQMD jurisdiction, and ODP = Project located outside of South Coast AQMD jurisdiction

Project Notes:

1. Disposition may change prior to Governing Board Meeting
2. Documents received by the CEQA Intergovernmental Review program but not requiring review are not included in this report.

**ATTACHMENT C PROPOSED AIR PERMIT PROJECTS FOR
WHICH SOUTH COAST AQMD IS CEQA LEAD AGENCY
THROUGH MARCH 31, 2025**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PROPONENT	TYPE OF DOCUMENT	STATUS	CONSULTANT
<p>Quemetco is proposing to modify its existing South Coast AQMD permits to allow the facility to recycle more batteries and to eliminate the existing daily idle time of the furnaces. The proposed project will increase the rotary feed drying furnace feed rate limit from 600 to 750 tons per day and increase the amount of total coke material allowed to be processed. In addition, the project will allow the use of petroleum coke in lieu of or in addition to calcined coke and remove one existing emergency diesel-fueled internal combustion engine (ICE) and install two new emergency natural gas-fueled ICEs.</p>	<p>Quemetco</p>	<p>Environmental Impact Report (EIR)</p>	<p>The Draft EIR was released for a 124-day public review and comment period from October 14, 2021 to February 15, 2022 and approximately 200 comment letters were received.</p> <p>South Coast AQMD held two community meetings on November 10, 2021, and February 9, 2022, which presented an overview of the proposed project, the CEQA process, detailed analysis of the potentially significant environmental topic areas, and the existing regulatory safeguards. Response to written comments submitted relative to the Draft EIR and oral comments made at the community meetings are currently being prepared by the consultant.</p> <p>After the Draft EIR public comment and review period closed, Quemetco submitted additional applications for other permit modifications. South Coast AQMD staff is evaluating the effect of these new applications on the EIR process.</p>	<p>Trinity Consultants</p>
<p>Sunshine Canyon Landfill is proposing to modify its South Coast AQMD permits for its active landfill gas collection and control system to accommodate the increased collection of landfill gas. The proposed project will: 1) install two new low-emission flares with two additional 300-horsepower electric blowers; and 2) increase the landfill gas flow limit of the existing landfill gas collection system.</p>	<p>Sunshine Canyon Landfill</p>	<p>Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR)</p>	<p>The consultant has provided an updated Draft SEIR which is being concurrently reviewed by South Coast AQMD staff and the facility.</p>	<p>Castle Environmental Consulting</p>

**ATTACHMENT C PROPOSED AIR PERMIT PROJECTS FOR
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THROUGH MARCH 31, 2025**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PROPONENT	TYPE OF DOCUMENT	STATUS	CONSULTANT
<p>SoCalGas is proposing to modify their Title V permit for the Honor Rancho Natural Gas Storage Field to: 1) replace five compressor engines with four new natural gas-fueled compressor engines (each rated at 5,000 horsepower (hp)), new selective catalytic reduction systems and a new aqueous urea storage tank; 2) install two new electric compressors (each rated at 5,500 hp) with associated ancillary equipment; 3) construct a new building to house the new compressors; 4) install an advanced renewable energy system, which will include hydrogen electrolyzers, hydrogen storage, and fuel blending equipment to mix hydrogen with natural gas which will fuel the compressor engines; 5) install a hydrogen vehicle fueling station; 6) install an electric microgrid with an energy storage system and a natural gas fuel cell system; and 7) install one new electricity transmission line which will connect to Southern California Edison.</p>	<p>Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas)</p>	<p>Addendum to the Final Subsequent Environmental Assessment for Rule 1110.2 and Rule 1100, and the Final Program EIR for the 2016 Air Quality Management Plan</p>	<p>The consultant has prepared a revised preliminary draft Addendum which South Coast AQMD staff is reviewing.</p>	<p>Dudek</p>
<p>Tesoro is proposing modifications to its Carson Operations and Wilmington Operations at the Marathon Los Angeles Refinery in order to replace aging coke drums, produce asphalt binder, and make more high-octane, low vapor pressure clean-gasoline blendstock by modifying the fluid feed hydrodesulfurization unit, the fluidized catalytic cracking unit, and the alkylation units.</p>	<p>Tesoro Refining & Marketing Company, LLC (Tesoro)</p>	<p>Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Initial Study (NOP/IS)</p>	<p>The consultant has prepared a preliminary draft NOP/IS which South Coast AQMD staff is reviewing.</p>	<p>Environmental Audit, Inc.</p>