

California Environmental Protection Agency



**Air Resources Board**

**PROPOSED  
AMENDMENTS TO  
STATE  
AREA DESIGNATIONS  
AND MAPS**

**2011**



*May 2011*

***Proposed  
2011 Amendments to  
State Area Designations and Maps***

***STAFF REPORT:  
Initial Statement of Reasons for Proposed Rulemaking***

**Release Date: May 5, 2011**

California Environmental Protection Agency  
Air Resources Board  
Planning and Technical Support Division  
P. O. Box 2815  
Sacramento, California 95812

This document has been reviewed and approved by the staff of the California Environmental Protection Agency, Air Resources Board. Approval does not signify that the contents necessarily reflect the views and policies of the California Air Resources Board.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Air Resources Board (ARB or Board) has established State ambient air quality standards (State standards or standards) to protect public health and welfare. State law requires ARB to assess the air quality in each area of California and determine whether it meets State standards. These area designations are based on established criteria, ensuring they are made in a consistent manner. Currently, the ARB makes area designations for ten pollutants. ARB reviews the area designations annually, using the most currently available air quality data, thereby ensuring the designations reflect the healthfulness of air quality. Each area of the State is designated as one of four categories:

- **Attainment** – pollutant concentrations do not violate the State standard
- **Nonattainment** – pollutant concentrations violate the State standard
- **Nonattainment-Transitional** – pollutant concentrations violate the State standard, but air quality is improving
- **Unclassified** – insufficient data

### **Proposed Changes to the Area Designation Regulations**

This annual review of the area designations is based on 2007 through 2009 air quality data. Based on these data, ARB staff is proposing the Northeast Plateau Air Basin be redesignated as attainment for ozone. Under State law, this is the only change that requires formal ARB action. In contrast, two additional changes occur by operation of law. These comprise one change from nonattainment to nonattainment-transitional and one change from nonattainment-transitional to nonattainment. ARB staff is proposing the Board confirm these two changes, so they can be reflected in the area designation regulations. All of the proposed changes are summarized in Table ES-1.

### **Other Information in this Staff Report**

As required by State law, this staff report also includes maps and tables identifying the attainment status of each area of the State with respect to the State and national ambient air quality standards (national standards). These maps and tables are provided in Attachment C to this report. They reflect the proposed area designations for State standards that are summarized in this staff report and the current area designations for the national standards.

**TABLE ES-1**  
**PROPOSED AREA DESIGNATIONS FOR STATE STANDARDS**  
*(Based on 2007-2009 data)*

<i><b>Pollutant</b></i>	<i><b>Air Basin/County</b></i>	<i><b>Current Designation</b></i>	<i><b>Proposed Designation</b></i>
<b>Ozone</b>	<b>Northeast Plateau Air Basin</b>		
	Lassen County	U	A
	Modoc County	U	
	Siskiyou County	NA-T	
	<b>Lake Tahoe Air Basin</b>		
	Entire Air Basin	N	NA-T*
	<b>Sacramento Valley Air Basin</b>		
	Glenn County	NA-T	N*

*Designation Categories:*

A = Attainment; N = Nonattainment; NA-T = Nonattainment-Transitional; U = Unclassified.

\* Changes in ozone designation from nonattainment to nonattainment-transitional or from nonattainment-transitional back to nonattainment occur by operation of law under Health and Safety Code section 40925.5.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER I

### BACKGROUND

A. INTRODUCTION .....	1
B. STATE AND NATIONAL AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS .....	1
C. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS .....	1
D. PUBLIC PROCESS .....	2

## CHAPTER II

### AREA DESIGNATION CRITERIA

A. INTRODUCTION .....	3
B. GENERAL PROVISIONS OF THE DESIGNATION CRITERIA .....	3
C. DESIGNATION CATEGORIES .....	3
D. DATA REQUIREMENTS .....	4
E. SIZE OF DESIGNATED AREA .....	5
F. HIGHLY IRREGULAR OR INFREQUENT EVENTS .....	5

## CHAPTER III

### PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE AREA DESIGNATIONS

A. INTRODUCTION .....	7
B. DESIGNATION PROCESS .....	7
C. DESIGNATION VALUE .....	8
D. OZONE .....	8
1. Northeast Plateau Air Basin .....	8
2. Lake Tahoe Air Basin .....	9
3. Glenn County (Sacramento Valley Air Basin).....	10

## CHAPTER IV

### ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS .....

## CHAPTER V

### IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

A. ECONOMIC IMPACTS .....	13
1. Legal Requirement .....	13
2. Potential Impact on Businesses, Business Competitiveness, Employment, and Business Creation, Elimination, or Expansion.....	13
3. Potential Cost to Local and State Agencies .....	14

**CHAPTER VI**

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

A. INTRODUCTION ..... 15  
B. AIR QUALITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS ..... 15  
C. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ..... 15

**ATTACHMENTS**

A. AREA DESIGNATION CRITERIA ..... A-1  
B. PROPOSED 2011 AMENDMENTS TO THE AREA DESIGNATIONS ..... B-1  
C. MAPS AND TABLES OF AREA DESIGNATIONS FOR  
STATE AND NATIONAL AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS ..... C-1  
D. CONVENTION FOR ROUNDING AMBIENT AIR QUALITY DATA ..... D-1  
E. REFERENCES ..... E-1

# CHAPTER I

## BACKGROUND

### ***A. INTRODUCTION***

This chapter provides background information on the differences between the State and national ambient air quality standards, the legal requirements for the State designation criteria and area designation regulations, the implications of the various designation categories, and the public process used in developing the proposed area designation amendments that are described in Chapter III.

### ***B. STATE AND NATIONAL AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS***

California law requires the Board to establish State ambient air quality standards (State standards or standards) in consideration of public health, safety, and welfare. These standards define the maximum amount of pollutant that can be present in the ambient air. Currently, there are State standards for ten pollutants: ozone, suspended particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>), fine suspended particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, sulfates, lead, hydrogen sulfide, and visibility reducing particles. In addition to the State standards, the Federal Clean Air Act requires the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) to establish national ambient air quality standards (national standards). In some cases, California's State standards are more health-protective than the corresponding national standards. Additionally, the Board has established State standards for pollutants not covered by national standards (for example, sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, and visibility reducing particles).

Both State and national standards are generally specified as a concentration averaged over a specific time period, such as 1-hour, 8-hours, 24-hours, or 1 year. The different averaging times and concentrations are meant to protect against different exposure impacts. Some ambient air quality standards are expressed as a concentration that is not to be exceeded, while others are expressed as a concentration that is not to be equaled or exceeded. The national standards are further categorized as primary standards (established to protect public health) and secondary standards (established to protect public welfare).

### ***C. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS***

Health and Safety Code (H&SC) section 39607(e) requires the Board to establish criteria for designating areas as attainment or nonattainment for the State standards and to periodically review these criteria to ensure their continued relevance. The criteria (summarized in Chapter II) describe the procedures that the Board must use in

determining area designations for State standards. The Board originally adopted the required designation criteria in June 1989 and has amended them several times since, most recently, in March 2010.

H&SC section 39608 requires the Board to use the designation criteria to designate areas of California as attainment, nonattainment, or unclassified for the State standards. In addition, HS&C section 40925.5 provides a mechanism for redesignating a nonattainment district as nonattainment-transitional for ozone. Finally, H&SC section 39608 requires the Board to conduct an annual review of the area designations and update them, as warranted. The area designations are made for each of the ten pollutants listed previously.

In addition to the designation criteria and area designation requirements, H&SC section 40718 requires the Board to publish maps showing the areas with one or more violations of any State or national standard. The maps and summary tables provided in Attachment C to this report fulfill this requirement by indicating the attainment status of each area of the State. The maps and tables for the State standards reflect the proposed area designation changes described in Chapter III of this report. The maps and tables for the national standards reflect the current federal area designations, as promulgated by U.S. EPA. Attachment C also contains a table listing the State and national standard levels, averaging times, and analytical measurement methods.

#### ***D. PUBLIC PROCESS***

In order to facilitate public comment during the designation review process, ARB staff requested public input in a number of ways. After ARB staff's initial review of the 2007 through 2009 air quality data, staff noted potential changes to the existing area designations for ozone. Staff contacted the affected air pollution control and air quality management districts (districts) to discuss the results of the review and provide an opportunity for district input. Staff also maintained a web-based subscriber notification process or listserve. For those who subscribe, the listserve provides electronic updates related to area designation issues.

On March 1, 2011, staff announced a public workshop scheduled for March 16, 2011. Staff notified the affected districts, as well as subscribers to the designation listserve. The workshop announcement included a discussion of the staff's proposed amendments to the area designations based on the 2007 through 2009 air quality data. Approximately 15 people participated in the workshop. The proposed amendments described in this report incorporate comments received from the public. The Board is scheduled to consider these amendments at a public hearing on June 23, 2011.

## CHAPTER II

### AREA DESIGNATION CRITERIA

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides a summary of the existing designation criteria. The following sections describe the general provisions of the criteria, the area designation categories, the data requirements, the size of the designated area, and the requirements for identifying highly irregular or infrequent events. Attachment A contains the full text of the designation criteria.

#### **B. GENERAL PROVISIONS OF THE DESIGNATION CRITERIA**

The designation criteria describe the procedures ARB must use in determining an area's designation status with respect to the State standards. In summary, the designation criteria specify:

- The requirements for each designation category
- The data to use in making area designations
- The procedure for excluding qualifying high concentrations
- The size of the designated area
- The requirement for an annual review of the area designations

#### **C. DESIGNATION CATEGORIES**

The designation criteria specify four designation categories: nonattainment, nonattainment-transitional, attainment, and unclassified. Determining which category is appropriate for an area is generally based on the number of violations in the area. Therefore, it is essential to understand the difference between an exceedance and a violation. An exceedance is any concentration that is higher than the level of the State standard. In contrast, violations are a subset of exceedances. A violation is an exceedance that is not affected by a highly irregular or infrequent event and therefore, cannot be excluded from the area designation process (refer to Section F, below).

*Nonattainment.* The Board designates an area as nonattainment for a pollutant if air quality data show a State standard for that pollutant was violated one or more times during the previous three calendar years.

*Nonattainment-Transitional.* The nonattainment-transitional category is a subcategory of nonattainment, and there are different requirements for ozone than there are for the other pollutants. For pollutants other than ozone, the Board designates an area as nonattainment-transitional if air quality data show a State standard for that pollutant was violated two or fewer times at each site in the area during the most recent calendar year. In contrast, the nonattainment-transitional requirements for ozone are specified in State law rather than in the designation criteria. Specifically, H&SC section 40925.5 specifies that a nonattainment district is designated as nonattainment-transitional for ozone if air quality data show three or fewer exceedances of the State standard at each site in the area during the most recent calendar year.

There are four key differences in the ozone nonattainment-transitional requirements, compared with those for the other pollutants. First, the designated area is always a district (or portion of a district within an air basin), rather than an air basin, county, or other geographic area. Second, the designation is based on exceedances, which means all air quality measurements are considered -- none are excluded. Third, only nonattainment districts may be designated as nonattainment-transitional for ozone. Finally, the ozone nonattainment-transitional designation occurs by operation of law. However, ARB confirms the change based on guidelines set forth in the designation criteria. ARB also amends the area designation regulations to reflect the change.

*Attainment.* In contrast to nonattainment and nonattainment-transitional, ARB designates an area as attainment for a pollutant if data show the State standard was not violated during the previous three calendar years. Data used for an attainment designation must be representative of the averaging time of the standard and complete for the time period evaluated.

*Unclassified.* Finally, ARB designates an area as unclassified for a pollutant if the available data are insufficient to support any other designation category.

#### ***D. DATA REQUIREMENTS***

To the extent possible, the area designations are based on the most recent air quality data. These must be data for record, which means they satisfy specific siting and quality assurance procedures established by the U.S. EPA and ARB. Generally, data for record are those data collected by or under the direction of ARB or the local districts. Air quality data from other sources may also qualify as data for record, as long as the same requirements are met. For area designation purposes, air quality measurements and statistics are rounded to the precision of the State standard before being compared with the standard. The rounding convention is summarized in Attachment D.

When adequate and recent air quality data are not available, ARB may use other types of information to determine an appropriate area designation. These other types of information may include historical air quality data, emissions data, meteorological data, topographical data, and data relating to the characteristics of population or emissions.

#### ***E. SIZE OF DESIGNATED AREA***

The size of the area designated for a pollutant varies, depending on the nature of the pollutant, the location of contributing emissions sources, meteorology, and topographic features. An air basin is the area generally designated for pollutants with a regional impact: ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfates, and visibility reducing particles. A county (or portion of a county located within an air basin) is generally the area designated for pollutants with a more localized impact: carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, lead, and hydrogen sulfide. Depending on the area and the characteristics of the emissions sources, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> may be considered to have either regional or localized impacts. In some cases, ARB may designate a smaller area if it finds that the smaller area has distinctly different air quality.

#### ***F. HIGHLY IRREGULAR OR INFREQUENT EVENTS***

The designation criteria provide for excluding certain high air quality measurements from the area designation process. More specifically, the criteria provide for excluding exceedances affected by highly irregular or infrequent events, because it is not reasonable to mitigate these exceedances through the regulatory process. Appendix 2 to the designation criteria (refer to Attachment A) defines three types of highly irregular or infrequent events:

- Extreme concentration events
- Exceptional events
- Unusual concentration events

*Extreme Concentration Event.* An extreme concentration is identified using a statistical procedure. This procedure calculates a concentration that is not expected to be exceeded more than once per year, on average. The calculated value is commonly called the Expected Peak Day Concentration or EPDC. In practice, a pollutant-specific EPDC is calculated for each monitoring site, using air quality data measured at the site during the most recent three calendar years. The EPDC value is rounded to the precision of the State standard and then compared with air quality measurements for the same site, which are also rounded to the precision of the State standard. Measurements that exceed the State standard and are higher than the rounded EPDC are excluded from the area designation process; these exceedances are not considered violations of the standard. In contrast, measurements that exceed the State standard but are equal to or lower than the rounded EPDC are not excluded from the designation process; these values are considered violations of the State standard.

In cases where data are not complete for the three-year period being evaluated, the EPDC may not be valid for area designation purposes. If the EPDC is not valid, no measurements are excluded as extreme concentration events. Finally, an EPDC is calculated only for standards with an averaging time less than 24-hours.

*Exceptional Event.* In contrast to an extreme concentration event, an exceptional event is an exceedance of a State standard that is caused by a specific, identifiable event and is beyond reasonable regulatory control. An exceptional event may be caused by an act of nature (for example, a wildfire or severe windstorm) or it may be of human origin (for example, a chemical spill or industrial accident). Air quality measurements identified as exceptional events are not considered violations and are excluded from the designation process.

*Unusual Concentration Event.* An unusual concentration is an unexpected or atypical exceedance of a State standard that cannot be identified as an extreme concentration or an exceptional event. Unusual concentrations are identified only for areas already designated as attainment or unclassified. Generally, unusual concentrations are identified for sites with limited air quality data, and therefore, uncertainty as to the expected concentration levels. In identifying such events, the Executive Officer must make specific findings based on relevant information. An area may retain its attainment or unclassified designation based on the exclusion of unusual concentrations for up to three consecutive years. If an exceedance occurs during the fourth year, the area is redesignated as nonattainment, unless the exceedance can be excluded as an extreme concentration or an exceptional event.

## CHAPTER III

### PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE AREA DESIGNATIONS

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter describes the area designation process and the proposed changes to the area designation regulations. As required by H&SC section 39608, the area designations are reviewed and updated each year, based on air quality data from the most recent three calendar years. This year's review considered air quality data collected during 2007 through 2009. Based on these data, staff proposes several changes for ozone. These changes, listed below, amend the existing CCR, title 17, section 60201. The proposed change for the Northeast Plateau Air Basin requires ARB action and must be approved by the Office of Administrative Law. In contrast, the other two changes occurred by operation of law.

- *Redesignate the Northeast Plateau Air Basin as attainment*
- *Confirm the redesignation of Lake Tahoe Air Basin as nonattainment-transitional; this change occurred by operation of law*
- *Confirm the redesignation of Glenn County in the Sacramento Valley Air Basin as nonattainment; this change occurred by operation of law*

#### **B. DESIGNATION PROCESS**

The area designations are based on air quality data for record as defined in section 70301 of the designation criteria (refer to Chapter II Section D). The process used to designate an area is generally the same for each pollutant:

- Gather data for the three-year period for each site in the area
- Evaluate data representativeness and data completeness for each site
- Identify and exclude exceedances affected by highly irregular or infrequent events
- Tabulate the number of exceedances and violations by site
- Determine the designation value for each site
- Determine the designation value for the area
- Determine the appropriate designation category

Determining the designation value is the most critical part of the designation process because the designation value determines the designation category. More detail about the designation value and how it is determined, is found in the following section.

### **C. DESIGNATION VALUE**

The designation value is the measured concentration that is used to determine the designation status of a given area. In practice, the designation value is the highest measured concentration in the three-year period that remains, after excluding concentrations affected by highly irregular or infrequent events.

A designation value is determined for each pollutant, for each monitoring site in an area. The highest designation value for any site in the area becomes the designation value for the area. When there is more than one standard for a single pollutant, a designation value is determined for each standard averaging time. For example, there is both a 1-hour and an 8-hour State standard for ozone. As a result, there is a 1-hour designation value, as well as an 8-hour designation value. The final area designation reflects the more stringent designation category for either of the two averaging periods. Using ozone as an example, consider an area with a 1-hour ozone designation value that is lower than the State standard, indicating attainment and an 8-hour designation value that is higher than the State standard, indicating nonattainment. In this case, the area would be designated as nonattainment for ozone, because that is the more stringent designation category.

### **D. OZONE**

The State ozone standards are a 1-hour standard of 0.09 parts per million (ppm) and an 8-hour standard of 0.070 ppm, neither to be exceeded. To be attainment, the designation values for all sites in the area must be at or below both standards. Based on data collected during 2007 through 2009, the staff recommends a change in designation for three areas.

#### *1. Northeast Plateau Air Basin*

The staff recommends designating Northeast Plateau Air Basin as attainment for ozone. The Northeast Plateau Air Basin includes three counties: Siskiyou, Lassen, and Modoc. Currently, Siskiyou County is designated as nonattainment-transitional, while Lassen and Modoc counties are designated as unclassified. During 2007 through 2009, monitoring data are available for one site in the Air Basin, located at Yreka-Foothill Drive in Siskiyou County. Yreka represents the most urbanized portion of the Air Basin and reflects the highest ozone concentrations expected in the area. As a result, the site can be used to represent all three counties in the Northeast Plateau Air Basin.

An attainment designation must be based on representative and complete data. Although the ozone data collected at Yreka are representative, they are not available for all 36 months during the 2007 through 2009 time period. However, the data are complete for the ozone season during each of the three years. Based on these

complete data, ARB staff calculated an 8-hour EPDC value of 0.075 ppm for Yreka. This represents a very conservative value, because it is based only on data for the ozone season, when concentrations are highest. Thus, the approach is more stringent than what is required by the designation criteria.

Under the designation criteria, concentrations that are higher than the EPDC are excluded from the designation process as extreme concentrations. Between 2007 and 2009, only one exceedance of the State 8-hour ozone standard was recorded – a value of 0.076 ppm. This value is higher than the calculated EPDC value (0.075 ppm), and is, therefore, excluded. Based on the remaining data, the 8-hour designation value for the Yreka site is 0.067 ppm, which is below the level of the State 8-hour standard. Similarly, Yreka attains the State 1-hour ozone standard, as the highest measured value (0.08 ppm) is also below the level of the standard. Based on these values, Siskiyou County qualifies as attainment for ozone. Furthermore, because concentrations in the remaining portions of the Air Basin are expected to be lower, ARB staff recommends the entire Northeast Plateau Air Basin be designated as attainment for the State ozone standards.

## *2. Lake Tahoe Air Basin*

The staff recommends confirming the change in designation for Lake Tahoe Air Basin to nonattainment-transitional and amending the area designation regulations to reflect this change that occurred by operation of law. Lake Tahoe Air Basin includes portions of El Dorado and Placer counties and is currently designated as nonattainment. During 2007 through 2009, monitoring data are available for one site, located in South Lake Tahoe. Data for the South Lake Tahoe-Airport site are both representative and complete, and they reflect a location expected to have the highest ozone concentrations in the Air Basin. The 8-hour designation value for the South Lake Tahoe-Airport site is 0.077 ppm, which is above the State 8-hour ozone standard. However, there was only one 8-hour exceedance during 2009. The 1-hour designation value is 0.09 ppm, which does not exceed the State 1-hour standard. Based on these values, the Air Basin meets the requirements for nonattainment-transitional.

As mentioned above, the change to nonattainment-transitional, which is a subcategory of nonattainment, occurred by operation of law, based on data collected during 2009. As of November 1, 2009, the South Lake Tahoe-Airport site closed, and ozone monitoring stopped. There are preliminary plans to establish and operate ozone monitoring sites in the Tahoe City and Kings Beach areas of the Air Basin. However, under section 70304 (d) of the designation criteria (refer to Attachment A), the area will continue to have a nonattainment designation until such time as another monitoring site is identified as having ozone concentrations equivalent to or higher than the South Lake Tahoe-Airport site.

### 3. *Glenn County (Sacramento Valley Air Basin)*

ARB staff recommends confirming the change in designation for Glenn County to nonattainment and amending the area designation regulations to reflect this change that occurred by operation of law. Glenn County is located in the Sacramento Valley Air Basin and is currently designated as nonattainment-transitional. During 2007 through 2009, monitoring data are available for a site located in Willows. Although measured concentrations do not exceed the State 1-hour ozone standard, concentrations exceed the 8-hour standard. The 8-hour designation value is 0.075 ppm, which is above the State 8-hour ozone standard, and there were four exceedance days during 2009. Therefore, Glenn County no longer qualifies as nonattainment-transitional and reverts to nonattainment by operation of law.

## CHAPTER IV

### ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

State law (H&SC section 39607(e)) requires the Board to establish criteria for designating areas as attainment, nonattainment, or unclassified for the State standards. State law (H&SC section 39608(c)) further requires the Board to use the designation criteria in an annual review of the area designations.

ARB staff's proposed amendments to the area designations are described in Chapter III. The proposed amendments reflect the application of the designation criteria set forth in CCR, title 17, sections 70300 through 70306 and Appendices 1 through 3, thereof. Each proposed change is accompanied by a discussion of its basis and justification. ARB staff have considered the potential alternatives to the proposed amendments (namely, the no action alternative). However, based on the available data, ARB staff find the proposed amendments are more appropriate than the no action alternative because the no action alternative would not be consistent with State law. In addition, the no action alternative would not inform the public about the healthfulness of air quality, based on the most recent data.

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## CHAPTER V

### IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

#### A. ECONOMIC IMPACTS

ARB staff do not expect the proposed amendments to have any adverse impacts on California employment, business status, or competitiveness.

##### 1. *Legal Requirement*

The Government Code requires State agencies proposing to adopt or amend any administrative regulation to assess the potential for adverse economic impact on California business enterprises and individuals. The assessment shall include consideration of the impact of the proposed regulatory amendments on California jobs, business expansion, elimination, or creation, and the ability of California businesses to compete in other states.

State agencies are also required to estimate the cost or savings to any State or local agency and school district in accordance with instructions adopted by the Department of Finance. This estimate is to include non-discretionary costs or savings to local agencies and the costs or savings in federal funding to the State.

##### 2. *Potential Impact on Businesses, Business Competitiveness, Employment, and Business Creation, Elimination, or Expansion*

The determinations of the Board's Executive Officer concerning the costs or savings necessarily incurred by public agencies and private persons and businesses in reasonable compliance with the proposed amendments are presented below.

The proposed amendments to the area designation regulations do not contain any requirements for action. The area designations are simply labels that describe the healthfulness of the air quality in each area, although subsequent requirements for action may result after additional steps, such as plan preparation and approval, are taken. Because the area designation regulations by themselves contain no requirements for action, they have no direct economic impact, and the following general determinations are appropriate.

In developing this regulatory proposal, ARB staff evaluated the potential economic impacts on representative private persons or businesses. The ARB is not aware of any cost impacts that a representative private person or business would necessarily incur in reasonable compliance with the proposed action.

The Executive Officer also has made an initial determination that the proposed regulatory action will not have a significant statewide adverse economic impact directly affecting businesses, including the ability of California businesses to compete with businesses in other states, or on representative private persons.

In accordance with Government Code section 11346.3, the Executive Officer has determined that the proposed regulatory action will not affect the creation or elimination of jobs within the State of California, the creation of new businesses or elimination of existing businesses within the State of California, or the expansion of businesses currently doing business within the State of California.

The Executive Officer has also determined, pursuant to title 1, CCR, section 4, that the proposed regulatory action will not affect small businesses because the proposed regulatory action does not contain any requirements for action.

Before taking final action on the proposed regulatory action, the Board must determine that no reasonable alternative considered by the agency, or that has otherwise been identified and brought to the attention of the agency, would be more effective in carrying out the purpose for which the action is proposed, or would be as effective and less burdensome to affected private persons than the proposed action.

### *3. Potential Cost to Local and State Agencies*

Similar to the previous discussion, the area designations do not contain any requirements for action, and these regulations have no direct economic impact. Therefore, pursuant to Government Code sections 11346.5(a)(5) and 11346.5(a)(6), the Executive Officer has determined that the proposed regulatory action will not create costs or savings to any State agency or in federal funding to the State, costs or mandate to any local agency or school district whether or not reimbursable by the State under Part 7 (commencing with section 17500), Division 4, Title 2 of the Government Code, or other nondiscretionary savings to State or local agencies.

Before taking final action on the proposed amendments to the regulations, the Board must determine that no alternative considered by the agency would be more effective in carrying out the purpose for which the action is proposed or would be as effective and less burdensome to affected private persons than the proposed action.

## CHAPTER VI

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

#### ***A. INTRODUCTION***

The intent of the proposed regulatory action is to identify areas with unhealthy ambient air quality. Adopting the proposed amendments to the area designations will not result in any direct impact on public health or the environment because the regulations do not contain any requirements for action. However, because State law specifies certain requirements based on an area's designation status, there may be indirect benefits based on the area designations.

#### ***B. AIR QUALITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS***

The area designations do not contain any requirements for action, and therefore, they will not result in any air quality or environmental benefits. However, the area designations do label areas with respect to the healthfulness of their air quality. Based on these labels, certain planning requirements may come into play, thereby providing some indirect benefits to air quality and the environment.

The proposed amendments to the area designations would change the State ozone designations for three areas. Under State law, there are specific planning requirements for areas designated as nonattainment for ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and carbon monoxide, or nonattainment-transitional for ozone and carbon monoxide. Furthermore, areas designated as attainment are required to adopt and implement rules and regulations necessary to maintain attainment status. The goal of these planning requirements is to bring the area into attainment as expeditiously as practicable. Therefore, these requirements will result in air quality and environmental benefits.

#### ***C. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE***

The Board is committed to evaluating community impacts of proposed regulations, including environmental justice concerns. Because some communities experience higher exposures to air pollutants, it is a priority of the Board to ensure that full protection is afforded to all Californians. The proposed amendments to the area designations do not contain any requirements for action. However, the area designations are designed to identify areas with unhealthful air quality, based on the most recently available data.

Based on an area's designation category, there may be specific planning requirements for improving the level of air quality. These requirements will result in reduced emissions for all nonattainment communities throughout the State. Furthermore,

although State law does not impose any specific planning requirements upon districts with areas designated as attainment or unclassified, State law does require districts and the Board to make a coordinated effort to protect and enhance the ambient air quality (H&SC sections 39001 through 39003). As part of this effort, the districts must adopt rules and regulations sufficiently effective to achieve and maintain the State standards (H&SC sections 40001 and 41500). These requirements will result in improved air quality in communities throughout the State, with associated lower potential health risks.