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For Immediate Release



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Air District launches ‘Fast-Track’ plan for clean air

Strategies being developed to cut smog sooner than 2024

A Fast-Track Action Plan designed to clean up the valley’s air sooner than the 2024 federal attainment deadline was launched today at the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board meeting in Fresno. The Fast-Track Action Plan is a dynamic air-quality management strategy designed to capitalize on evolving technologies, market opportunities, and public funding mechanisms over the coming years to beat the 2024 deadline.

“These are innovative and complex measures that require buy-in and participation from a diverse group of stakeholders; federal, state and local governments; and all Valley residents,” said Seyed Sadredin, the Air District’s Executive Director/Air Pollution Control Officer. “The measures will require significant effort to formulate and implement.”

The Fast Track complements the recently passed 2007 Ozone Plan, which sets a federal deadline of 2024 to reach air-quality standards and meets federal legal obligations while shielding the valley from devastating federal sanctions. The District Governing Board directed staff to work on a “dual-path” strategy for reaching attainment as quickly as possible. The dual-path strategy complements the \$20 billion in new industry regulation outlined in the 2007 Ozone Plan with the innovative ideas outlined in the Fast-Track Plan. District staff has adopted the term “Fast Track” to describe this accelerated path to attainment, which is being developed in an open public process. The Fast-Track Plan relies on innovation and collaboration to reach air-quality goals years ahead of the federally mandated timeline.

Fast Track has three components that collectively move the valley toward cleaner air while involving all communities, businesses and individuals in the clean-up process.

The first component involves working diligently to ensure that the California Air Resources Board and the federal Environmental Protection Agency do their fair share in controlling emissions from mobile sources. Mobile sources, such as cars and trucks, are not under the Air District’s jurisdiction, yet account for up to 80 percent of the valley’s air pollution responsible for ozone and particulates.

The second component seeks a significant increase in incentive funding of \$200 million per year to be used to reduce emissions from those sources not under the regulatory authority of the District. The District is involved in an extensive advocacy effort to bring Valley approximately \$360 million out of the \$1 billion designated through Proposition 1B to fund air-quality mitigation.

The third component identifies new and innovative air quality measures. Technology limits the pace of air quality improvements, and the measures outlined in the Fast Track are designed to overcome the

technology limitation that the Valley faces given its low tolerance for air pollution. For example, the Fast Track investigates new ways to move goods through the Valley by more air-friendly means other than high-polluting heavy duty diesel trucks.

“Reaching attainment ahead of the 2024 federal deadline demands a significant change in the state’s goods and people movement infrastructure, accelerated modernization of on-road and off-road fleets, a shift to cleaner energy, and major advancements in pollution-control technology,” said Sadredin. “There are no easy solutions. This plan will involve complex, ambitious, and long-term actions that likely will directly affect every resident in the valley.”

The District has formed an action-oriented task force comprised of members from environmental organizations, industry representatives, and the Governor’s San Joaquin Valley Partnership to devise, implement and advance the new and innovative measures needed for early attainment.

The Fast-Track plan includes a comprehensive list of strategies and measures including:

Green contracting – Compel cities and counties, as well as the private sector, to select contractors/vendors that use low-emission fleets and processes. Although this may add to costs, the public should support businesses that are willing to do their share to clean our air.

Short-sea shipping and inland ports – Reduce heavy-duty truck and locomotive miles passing through the valley by transporting goods by sea between northern and southern parts of the state. Inland ports similarly could significantly reduce emissions but would require additional infrastructure and take a long time to implement.

Energy conservation and alternative energy – Lower energy consumption through incentives and regulations. Encourage the use of electric, solar, hydrogen fuel cells and other low-emitting sources of energy.

High-speed rail – A cleaner transportation alternative to air and motor vehicle travel, this is a long-term and costly project that could change the way we move goods and people through the valley.

Truck replacement and retrofit – Develop effective proposals for accelerating private sector fleet turnover. This could potentially reduce 40 tons per day (tpd) of NOx emissions.

Expanded Spare the Air – Incorporate “Clean Air Days” by developing additional voluntary measures for individuals and businesses to reduce peak ozone concentrations in a short timeframe.

“Valley smog has been reduced by 80 percent since the 1980s, and the District is continuing to take a leadership role to reach attainment as soon as possible,” Sadredin noted. “Those who champion clean air are invited to join us in developing this ‘Fast Track’ plan to clean the valley’s air.”

The Valley Air District covers eight counties including San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the valley portion of Kern. For more information, visit <http://www.valleyair.org/> or call the nearest District office: Modesto (209) 557-6400, Fresno (559) 230-6000 and Bakersfield (661) 326-6900.

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