

**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION FROM THE  
CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)**

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**To:** County Clerks for the Counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino, and Governor's Office of Planning and Research - State Clearinghouse  
**From:** South Coast Air Quality Management District  
21865 Copley Drive  
Diamond Bar, CA 91765

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**Project Title:** 2021 Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan for the 2006 and 1997 24-Hour PM2.5 Standards for South Coast Air Basin

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**Project Location:** The proposed project is located within the four-county South Coast Air Basin (SCAB) portion of South Coast Air Quality Management District's (South Coast AQMD) jurisdiction, which includes all of Orange County and the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties.

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**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:** The South Coast Air Quality Management District is required to demonstrate attainment with the federal National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for fine particulate matter (PM) less than or equal to 2.5 microns in diameter (PM 2.5). The SCAB portion of South Coast AQMD's jurisdiction is currently designated as a serious nonattainment area for the 2006 24-hour average PM2.5 NAAQS and a moderate nonattainment area for the 1997 24-hour average PM2.5 NAAQS. As of August 24, 2016, the United State Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) determined that the SCAB is in attainment with the 1997 24-hour average PM2.5 NAAQS. In addition, the PM2.5 data for years 2018 through 2020 indicate that the SCAB is also in attainment with the 2006 24-Hour PM2.5 NAAQS. The South Coast AQMD is formally requesting the U.S. EPA to redesignate the SCAB as in attainment with the 2006 and 1997 24-hour PM2.5 NAAQS standards. The South Coast AQMD has prepared the 2021 Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan for the 2006 and 1997 24-Hour PM2.5 Standards for SCAB which contains a maintenance plan and a demonstration that the SCAB is expected to maintain its attainment status because the improvement in air quality is due to permanent and enforceable emission reductions.

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**Lead Agency Approving Project:**  
South Coast Air Quality Management District

**Lead Agency Carrying Out Project:**  
South Coast Air Quality Management District

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**Exempt Status:**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) – Common Sense Exemption

CEQA Guidelines Section 15308 – Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment

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**Reasons why project is exempt:** South Coast AQMD, as Lead Agency, has reviewed the proposed project pursuant to: 1) CEQA Guidelines Section 15002(k) – General Concepts, the three-step process for deciding which document to prepare for a project subject to CEQA; and 2) CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 – Review for Exemption, procedures for determining if a project is exempt from CEQA. Since the proposed project is demonstrating that attainment with the 2006 and 1997 24-hour PM2.5 NAAQS standards for SCAB will be maintained through 2035 without further emission reductions beyond already adopted regulations and programs, it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposed project may have a significant adverse effect on the environment. Therefore, the proposed project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) – Common Sense Exemption. The proposed project is also categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15308 – Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment, because the proposed project is designed to further protect or enhance the environment by demonstrating how attainment with the 2006 and 1997 24-hour PM2.5 NAAQS standards for SCAB will be achieved. Further, there is no substantial evidence indicating that any of the exceptions to the categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply to the proposed project.

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**Date of Project Approval:** South Coast AQMD Governing Board Hearing: November 5, 2021

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**Date Received for Filing:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_



Barbara Radlein  
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Planning, Rule Development, and Area Sources