

Edie Chang

Talking Points for OHV Commission Meeting February 1, 2024

This document represents prepared remarks. The remarks that were delivered may differ. Please consult the recording of the meeting for the actual remarks.

Mission of CARB

- CARB's mission is to reduce air pollution to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of all Californians.
- CARB is the lead state agency regulating air pollution and greenhouse gases. CARB works closely with local air district partners and the U.S. EPA.
- CARB primarily regulates mobile sources, like cars, trucks and off-road equipment. The local air districts regulate stationary sources such as power plants. U.S. EPA regulates new interstate sources, such as locomotives, aircraft, and ships.

Air quality standards

- CARB sets statewide ambient air quality standards -how clean the air needs to be for it to be healthy to breathe.
- Ambient air quality standards are established to protect the health of the most sensitive groups in our communities like children, the elderly and those with respiratory illness.
- Both the federal government and CARB set air quality standards based on the most up to date health science. California's standards are often more stringent than the national standards.
- Each year, CARB reviews air quality data from our network of monitors to assess whether areas across the State meet the State air quality standards.

- Local air districts and CARB implement controls to improve air quality throughout the state to meet the national and state air quality standards.

Particulate Matter Overview

- PM is the term for a mixture of particles found in the air that are made up of different chemical components, such as smoke, soot, salts, acids, metals, and dust.
- From a regulatory perspective, CARB differentiates between fine particles (PM that is 2.5 microns or less in size) and coarse particles (PM that is 10 microns or less in size). Particles 10 microns and smaller are inhalable and small enough to pass through the throat and nose and enter the lungs. Particles 2.5 microns and smaller are so small that they can pass into your blood stream.
- Fine particles are created from combustion and chemical processes, such as diesel exhaust. Coarse particles are created from mechanical processes, such as windblown dust. PM10 is both the fine and the coarse particles.
- The State has two PM10 standards. A daily standard of 50 micrograms per meter cubed and an annual standard of 20 micrograms per meter cubed.
- Health studies show that PM10 concentrations over the standards have health impacts regardless of whether the particles are natural or manmade. It's the size and concentration of particles that matters.
- Adverse health impacts have been associated with both short and long term exposure to PM10, and can lead to:
 - reduced lung function;
 - worsening of asthma and respiratory diseases;
 - increased hospitalization and emergency department visits;
 - faster disease progression; and
 - reduced life expectancy.

Controlling Air Pollution

- For areas that don't attain the standards, CARB and the districts act to reduce pollution.
- Air monitoring measurements have demonstrated that there are a variety of contributors to PM10 downwind of Oceano Dunes, including cars and trucks, industrial sources, smoke, sea salt and windblown dust from the Dunes. Data shows the highest levels of PM10 during high northwest wind conditions when the winds blow over the Dunes and that the levels decrease further away from the dunes. PM10 levels during these times are higher than seen in other coastal areas. The Dunes are a large contributor when PM levels are high.
- There are a multitude of sources so there are a multitude of approaches to reduce emissions. CARB is controlling mobile sources, such as cars and trucks. The District is controlling industrial sources. The district and State Parks are addressing windblown dust from the Dunes.
- CARB recognizes that natural emissions may cause unhealthy air, and there are provisions in the law to acknowledge that the air is not healthy to breathe, but that controls are not possible. Together with the district, our goal is to reduce the impact of off highway vehicle use so that it isn't exacerbating air pollution downwind.
- CARB commends State Parks and the air district for their collective efforts to reduce dust pollution at Oceano Dunes. Under the SOA, the air district and State Parks have successfully worked together to reduce emissions from the riding area.
- Over the last 5 years, State Parks has implemented dust controls on over 400 acres, as well as prohibited public access to nearly 300 acres to protect nesting snowy plovers and California least tern, which provides additional dust control benefits.
- These are the same kinds of controls that have been implemented in other dusty areas such as Owens Lake. Since the application of dust control within the park, PM10 air quality in and around the Dunes has improved significantly.

- We recognize that dust control projects take time to reach full effectiveness, especially in the case of vegetation projects. CARB expects that as the vegetation projects are implemented over larger areas, we will continue to see air quality improvements.

Closing

- CARB is supportive of the air district and State Parks' continued efforts to improve air quality for areas downwind of the Park. We know that the Dunes are dusty under "natural" conditions, and the law doesn't require us to clean up "natural emissions". Together, we do need to do what we can to reduce anthropogenic pollution. CARB is committed to further technical work and consultation with the Scientific Advisory Group needed to refine emission reduction targets, which is currently underway.
- CARB will continue to work with both State Parks and the air district to improve air quality for local residents and visitors.