



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Part 52

[EPA-R09-OAR-2026-3664; FRL-13379-01-R9]

Attainment Date Extension for the South Coast, California 2012 Annual PM_{2.5} Fine

Particulate Matter Nonattainment Area

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing to grant an extension of the “Serious” area attainment date for the Los Angeles-South Coast Air Basin (“South Coast”) nonattainment area for the 2012 annual fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS or “standards”) from December 31, 2025, to December 31, 2030, based on a proposed determination that the State has satisfied the statutory criteria for this extension. The EPA will accept comments on this proposed rule during a 30-day public comment period.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].

ADDRESSES: Submit your comments, identified by Docket ID No. EPA-R09-OAR-2026-3664 at <https://www.regulations.gov>. For comments submitted at Regulations.gov, follow the online instructions for submitting comments. Once submitted, comments cannot be edited or removed from Regulations.gov. The EPA may publish any comment received to its public docket. Do not submit electronically any information you consider to be Confidential Business Information (CBI) or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. Multimedia submissions (audio, video, etc.) must be accompanied by a written comment. The written comment is considered the official comment and should include discussion of all points you wish to make. The EPA will generally not consider comments or comment contents located outside of the

primary submission (i.e., on the web, cloud, or other file sharing system). For additional submission methods, please contact the person identified in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section. For the full EPA public comment policy, information about CBI or multimedia submissions, and general guidance on making effective comments, please visit <https://www.epa.gov/dockets/commenting-epa-dockets>. If you need assistance in a language other than English or if you are a person with a disability who needs a reasonable accommodation at no cost to you, please contact the person identified in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ashley Graham; Geographic Strategies and Modeling Section (AIR-2-2); EPA Region IX; 75 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, CA 94105; telephone number: (415) 972-3877; email address: graham.ashleyr@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Throughout this document, “we,” “us,” and “our” refer to the EPA.

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I. Background for Proposed Action

A. PM_{2.5} NAAQS

Under section 109 of the Clean Air Act (CAA or “Act”), the EPA has established NAAQS for certain pervasive air pollutants (referred to as “criteria pollutants”) and conducts periodic reviews of the NAAQS to determine whether they should be revised or whether new

NAAQS should be established. On January 15, 2013, the EPA strengthened the primary annual NAAQS for PM_{2.5} by lowering the level from 15.0 µg/m³ to 12.0 µg/m³ (“2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS”).¹

The EPA established the PM_{2.5} NAAQS after considering substantial evidence from numerous health studies demonstrating that serious health effects are associated with exposures to PM_{2.5} concentrations above these levels. Epidemiological studies have shown statistically significant correlations between elevated PM_{2.5} levels and premature mortality. Other important health effects associated with PM_{2.5} exposure include aggravation of respiratory and cardiovascular disease (as indicated by increased hospital admissions, emergency room visits, absences from school or work, and restricted activity dates), changes in lung function, and increased respiratory symptoms. Individuals particularly sensitive to PM_{2.5} exposure include older adults, people with heart and lung disease, and children.²

Sources can emit PM_{2.5} directly into the atmosphere as a solid or liquid particle (primary PM_{2.5} or direct PM_{2.5}), or PM_{2.5} can form in the atmosphere (secondary PM_{2.5}) as a result of various chemical reactions from precursor emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO_x), sulfur oxides (SO_x), volatile organic compounds (VOC), and ammonia.³

B. South Coast PM_{2.5} Designations, Classifications, and SIP Revisions

The South Coast PM_{2.5} nonattainment area is home to approximately 17 million people, has a diverse economic base, and contains one of the highest volume port areas in the world. For a precise description of the geographic boundaries of the South Coast PM_{2.5} nonattainment area, see 40 CFR 81.305. The local air district with primary responsibility for developing a plan to attain the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS in the South Coast nonattainment area is the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD or “District”). The District works cooperatively

¹ 78 FR 3086 (January 15, 2013) and 40 CFR 50.18. Unless otherwise noted, all references to the PM_{2.5} standards in this document are to the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS of 12.0 µg/m³ codified at 40 CFR 50.18.

² EPA, Air Quality Criteria for Particulate Matter, No. EPA/600/P-99/002aF and EPA/600/P-99/002bF, October 2004.

³ 81 FR 58010, 58011 (August 24, 2016).

with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) in preparing these plans. Authority for regulating sources in the South Coast nonattainment area is split between the District, which has responsibility for regulating stationary and most area sources, and CARB, which has responsibility for regulating most mobile sources and some categories of consumer products.

Following promulgation of a new or revised NAAQS, the EPA is required under CAA section 107(d) to designate areas throughout the nation as attaining or not attaining the NAAQS. On January 15, 2015, the EPA designated and classified the South Coast area as “Moderate” nonattainment for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS, effective April 15, 2015.⁴

On April 27, 2017, CARB submitted the “Final 2016 Air Quality Management Plan (March 2017)” (“2016 PM_{2.5} Plan”) to address the CAA requirements associated with the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS in the South Coast.⁵ The 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan included a demonstration, to address the requirements of CAA section 189(a)(1)(B), that attainment of the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS by the December 31, 2021 Moderate area attainment date in the South Coast area was impracticable, despite the implementation of required control measures.⁶ The 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan also included a request that the EPA reclassify the nonattainment area from Moderate nonattainment to Serious nonattainment, and included a Serious area attainment demonstration, emissions inventories, attainment related plan elements, and control measure provisions.⁷ Effective December 9, 2020, the EPA approved or conditionally approved the portions of the 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan that pertain to the Moderate area planning requirements for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS in the South Coast nonattainment area and, pursuant to CAA section 188(b)(1), reclassified the area as a Serious nonattainment area.⁸

Upon reclassification as a Serious PM_{2.5} nonattainment area, the South Coast area

⁴ 80 FR 2206 (January 15, 2015) (codified at 40 CFR 81.305).

⁵ Letter dated April 27, 2017, from Richard Corey, Executive Officer, CARB, to Alexis Strauss, Acting Regional Administrator, EPA Region IX (transmitting the “Final 2016 Air Quality Management Plan (March 2017)”) (submitted electronically April 27, 2017).

⁶ 85 FR 71264, 71266 (November 9, 2020).

⁷ Id. at 71268.

⁸ Id. at 71264.

became subject to a new statutory attainment date of as expeditiously as practicable but no later than the end of the tenth calendar year following designation (i.e., December 31, 2025) and a requirement to submit a Serious area plan satisfying the requirements of CAA title I, part D, including the requirements of subpart 4, for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS.⁹ As explained in the EPA's final reclassification action, the Serious area plan for the South Coast must include, among other things, provisions to assure that, under CAA section 189(b)(1)(B), the best available control measures (BACM) for the control of direct PM_{2.5} and PM_{2.5} precursors shall be implemented no later than four years after the area is reclassified and a demonstration (including air quality modeling) that the plan provides for attainment as expeditiously as practicable and no later than the applicable attainment date. The EPA also noted that California may choose to submit a request for an extension of the December 31, 2025, Serious area attainment date pursuant to CAA section 188(e).¹⁰

Our final action on the 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan's Moderate area requirements and reclassification of the nonattainment area to Serious noted that the submitted 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan included Serious area planning elements for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS and stated that we would evaluate and act on those elements through subsequent rulemakings as appropriate.¹¹ On March 29, 2023, the CARB and the District notified the EPA of their determination that the portions of the 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan pertaining to the Serious area planning requirements for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS were no longer appropriate for inclusion in the SIP and requested that those portions of the submittal be considered withdrawn.¹²

Following the State's withdrawal of the portions of the 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan that pertained to the Serious area planning requirements for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS, the EPA issued two

⁹ Id. at 71266 through 71268.

¹⁰ Id. at 71267.

¹¹ Id. at 71268.

¹² Letter dated March 8, 2023, from Sarah Rees, Deputy Executive Officer, Planning, Rule Development & Implementation, SCAQMD, to Michael Benjamin, Chief, Air Quality Planning and Science Division, CARB (submitted electronically March 29, 2023); and letter dated March 29, 2023, from Michael Benjamin, Chief, Air Quality Planning and Science Division, CARB to Martha Guzman, Regional Administrator, EPA Region IX (submitted electronically March 29, 2023).

findings that California had failed to submit SIP submissions to address the Serious area planning requirements for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS. In the first finding, published in the *Federal Register* on May 26, 2023, the EPA found that California had failed to submit revisions to address the base year emissions inventory and BACM requirements, which the State was required to submit by June 9, 2022.¹³ In the second finding, published on January 30, 2024, the EPA found that California had failed to submit the Serious area plan requirements for a reasonable further progress (RFP) demonstration, quantitative milestones, an attainment demonstration, and contingency measures by December 31, 2023.¹⁴ These findings, which became effective on June 26, 2023, and February 29, 2024, respectively, triggered clocks under CAA section 179(a) for the application of emissions offset sanctions 18 months after the findings, and highway funding sanctions 6 months thereafter, unless the EPA affirmatively determined that the State made a complete SIP submission addressing the identified failure to submit deficiencies.¹⁵ The findings also triggered the obligation under CAA section 110(c) for the EPA to promulgate a Federal implementation plan no later than two years after the finding, unless the State has submitted, and the EPA has approved, the required SIP submission.¹⁶

On August 6, 2024, CARB submitted the “South Coast Air Basin Attainment Plan for the 2012 Annual PM_{2.5} Standard” (“2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan” or “Plan”), adopted by SCAQMD on June 7, 2024, and by CARB on June 27, 2024, to the EPA as a revision to the California SIP.¹⁷ The 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan addresses the Serious area nonattainment plan requirements for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS in the South Coast nonattainment area and includes a request under CAA section 188(e) for an extension of the Serious area attainment date for the area for these NAAQS from December 31, 2025, to December 31, 2030.

II. Completeness Review of the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan

¹³ 88 FR 34093 (May 26, 2023).

¹⁴ 89 FR 5770 (January 30, 2024).

¹⁵ 88 FR 34093, 34095 (May 26, 2023) and 89 FR 5770, 5772 (January 30, 2024).

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ Letter dated August 5, 2024, from Steven S. Cliff, Executive Officer, CARB, to Martha Guzman, Regional Administrator, EPA Region IX, with enclosures (submitted electronically on August 6, 2024).

CAA sections 110(a)(1) and (2) and 110(l) require each state to provide reasonable public notice and opportunity for public hearing prior to the adoption and submission of a SIP or SIP revision to the EPA. To meet this requirement, every SIP submission should include evidence that the state provided adequate public notice and an opportunity for a public hearing consistent with the EPA's implementing regulations in 40 CFR 51.102.

CAA section 110(k)(1)(B) requires the EPA to determine whether a SIP submission is complete within 60 days of receipt. This section also provides that any plan that the EPA has not affirmatively determined to be complete or incomplete will become complete by operation of law six months after the date of submission. The EPA's SIP completeness criteria are found in 40 CFR part 51, appendix V.

On December 17, 2024, the EPA issued a letter finding that the emissions inventory and BACM elements of the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan conform to the EPA's completeness criteria in 40 CFR part 51, appendix V.¹⁸ On June 9, 2025, the EPA issued a second letter finding that the RFP demonstration, quantitative milestones, attainment demonstration, and contingency measures elements of the Plan also conform to the completeness criteria in 40 CFR part 51, appendix V.¹⁹ These completeness findings corrected the deficiencies identified in the EPA's previous findings of failure to submit, and terminated the sanctions clocks started by the findings.

III. Clean Air Act Requirements for an Extension of a Serious Area Attainment Date

Under section 188(e) of the Act, a state may apply to the EPA for a single extension of the Serious area attainment date by up to five years, which the EPA may grant if the state satisfies certain conditions. Before the EPA may extend the attainment date for a Serious area under CAA section 188(e), the state must:

¹⁸ Letter dated December 17, 2024, from Mathew Lakin, Director, Air and Radiation Division, EPA Region IX, to Steven S. Cliff, Executive Officer, CARB.

¹⁹ Letter dated June 9, 2025, from Matthew Lakin, Director, Air and Radiation Division, EPA Region IX, to Steven S. Cliff, Executive Officer, CARB.

- 1) Demonstrate that attainment by the Serious area attainment date is impracticable;
- 2) Demonstrate that it has complied with all requirements and commitments pertaining to the area in the implementation plan;
- 3) Demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Administrator that the plan for the area includes the “most stringent measures” (MSM) that are included in the implementation plan of any State or are achieved in practice in any State, and can feasibly be implemented in the area;
- 4) Submit a modeled attainment demonstration showing attainment of the NAAQS in the area by the most expeditious alternative date practicable; and
- 5) Apply for an extension of the attainment date beyond the Serious area attainment date.²⁰

A state must seek an extension of the Serious area attainment date at the same time it submits the Serious area attainment plan if the state cannot demonstrate attainment by the otherwise applicable statutory attainment date.²¹

The EPA established regulatory requirements and provided further interpretive guidance on the statutory SIP requirements that apply to areas designated nonattainment for the PM_{2.5} standards in an August 24, 2016 final rule titled “Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standards: State Implementation Plan Requirements” (“PM_{2.5} SIP Requirements Rule”).²² Under the EPA’s regulations at 40 CFR 51.1005(b)(2), a state seeking an extension of the Serious area attainment date under CAA section 188(e) must also submit a Serious area attainment plan that meets the following requirements:

- 1) Base year and attainment projected emissions inventory requirements in 40 CFR 51.1008(b);

²⁰ CAA section 188(e) and 40 CFR 51.1005(b). For a discussion of the EPA’s interpretation of the requirements of CAA section 188(e), see 81 FR 58010, 58094 through 58097 (August 24, 2016), and 59 FR 41998, 42002 (August 16, 1994).

²¹ 40 CFR 51.1005(b)(2).

²² 81 FR 58010 (August 24, 2016).

- 2) The MSM requirement in 40 CFR 51.1005(b)(1)(iii) and 51.1010(b), and best available control measures not previously submitted;
- 3) Attainment demonstration and modeling requirements in 40 CFR 51.1005(b)(1)(i) and 51.1011;
- 4) RFP requirements in 40 CFR 51.1012;
- 5) Quantitative milestone requirements in 40 CFR 51.1013;
- 6) Contingency measure requirements in 40 CFR 51.1014; and
- 7) Nonattainment new source review plan requirements pursuant to 40 CFR 51.165.²³

In addition to establishing specific preconditions for an extension of the Serious area attainment date, CAA section 188(e) provides that the EPA may consider a number of factors in determining whether to grant an extension and the appropriate length of time for any such extension. These factors are: (1) the nature and extent of nonattainment in the area, (2) the types and numbers of sources or other emitting activities in the area (including the influence of uncontrollable natural sources and trans-boundary emissions from foreign countries), (3) the population exposed to concentrations in excess of the standard in the area, (4) the presence and concentrations of potentially toxic substances in the mix of particulate emissions in the area, and (5) the technological and economic feasibility of various control measures.²⁴ Notably, neither the statutory requirements nor the discretionary factors identified in CAA section 188(e) include the specific ambient air quality conditions in CAA section 188(d)(2), which must be met for an area to qualify for an extension of a Moderate area attainment date.

The EPA is evaluating the State's request for an extension of the Serious area attainment date in accordance with these statutory criteria and regulatory requirements, as further described below.

1. Demonstrate that attainment by the Serious area attainment date is impracticable.

²³ 40 CFR 51.1005(b)(2).

²⁴ CAA section 188(e).

Section 188(e) of the Act authorizes the EPA to grant a state request for an extension of the Serious area attainment date if, among other things, attainment by the date established under CAA section 188(c) would be impracticable. In order to demonstrate impracticability, EPA guidance has stated that the plan must show that the implementation of best available control measures (BACM) and best available control technology (BACT) (and additional feasible measures) on relevant source categories will not bring the area into attainment by the statutory Serious area attainment date.²⁵ For the South Coast, the Serious area attainment date for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS under CAA section 188(c)(2) is December 31, 2025.²⁶

The EPA has defined BACM in the PM_{2.5} SIP Requirements Rule to mean “any technologically and economically feasible control measure that can be implemented in whole or in part within 4 years after the date of reclassification of a Moderate PM_{2.5} nonattainment area to Serious and that generally can achieve greater permanent and enforceable emissions reductions in direct PM_{2.5} emissions and/or emissions of PM_{2.5} plan precursors from sources in the area than can be achieved through the implementation of RACM on the same source(s). BACM includes BACT.”²⁷

Consistent with longstanding EPA guidance,²⁸ the preamble to the PM_{2.5} SIP Requirements Rule discusses the following steps for determining BACM and BACT:

- (1) Develop a comprehensive emission inventory of the sources of PM_{2.5} and PM_{2.5} precursors;
- (2) Identify potential control measures;

²⁵ 81 FR 58010, 58094 (August 24, 2016).

²⁶ Under CAA section 188(c)(2), the attainment date for a Serious area “shall be as expeditiously as practicable but no later than the end of the tenth calendar year beginning after the area’s designation as nonattainment....” The EPA designated the South Coast as nonattainment for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS effective April 15, 2015 (80 FR 2206, January 15, 2015). Therefore, the latest permissible attainment date under CAA section 188(c)(2), for purposes of the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS in this area, is December 31, 2025.

²⁷ 40 CFR 51.1000 (definitions). In longstanding guidance, the EPA has similarly defined BACM to mean, “among other things, the maximum degree of emissions reduction achievable for a source or source category, which is determined on a case-by-case basis considering energy, environmental, and economic impacts.” 59 FR 41998, 42010 and 42013 (August 16, 1994).

²⁸ 59 FR 41998 (August 16, 1994).

(3) Determine whether an available control measure or technology is technologically feasible;

(4) Determine whether an available control measure or technology is economically feasible; and

(5) Determine the earliest date by which a control measure or technology can be implemented in whole or in part.²⁹

The EPA allows consideration of factors such as physical plant layout, energy requirements, needed infrastructure, and workforce type and habits when considering technological feasibility. For purposes of evaluating economic feasibility, the EPA allows consideration of factors such as the capital costs, operating and maintenance costs, and cost effectiveness (i.e., cost per ton of pollutant reduced by a measure or technology) associated with the measure or control.³⁰

2. Comply with all requirements and commitments in the applicable implementation plan.

A second precondition for an extension of the Serious area attainment date under CAA section 188(e) is a showing that the state has complied with all requirements and commitments pertaining to that area in the implementation plan. We interpret this criterion to mean that the state has implemented the control measures and commitments in the SIP revisions it has submitted to address the applicable requirements in CAA sections 172 and 189 for that particular PM_{2.5} nonattainment area; in this case, the South Coast nonattainment area for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS.³¹ For a Serious area attainment date extension request submitted simultaneously with the initial Serious area attainment plan for the area, the EPA interprets CAA section 188(e)

²⁹ 81 FR 58010, 58083 through 58085 (August 24, 2016).

³⁰ 40 CFR 51.1010(a)(3) and 81 FR 58010, 58041 and 58042 (August 24, 2016).

³¹ Although the EPA has previously interpreted this requirement as applying to additional PM_{2.5} NAAQS for the same area (see 85 FR 17382, 17405), this position is not required by the statute or our regulations, and the EPA no longer believes that this interpretation is the best available reading of the Act. The EPA maintains that the implementation of a plan developed for an entirely separate NAAQS should not have an impact on the relevant requirements for the NAAQS at issue. There is no indication that Congress intended such an additional hurdle for areas that are in nonattainment for multiple NAAQS. Accordingly, the EPA believes that the best interpretation of the statute is that “compliance with all requirements and commitments pertaining to that area in the implementation plan” refers only to the implementation plan for the particular NAAQS at issue.

not to require the area to have a fully approved Moderate area attainment plan, and to allow for extension of the attainment date if the area has complied with all Moderate area requirements and commitments pertaining to that area in the State's submitted Moderate area implementation plan.³² This interpretation is based on the plain language of CAA section 188(e), which requires the state to comply with all requirements and commitments pertaining to the area in the implementation plan.³³

3. Demonstrate the inclusion of the most stringent measures.

A third precondition for an extension of the Serious area attainment under CAA section 188(e) is for the state to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Administrator that the plan for the area includes the MSM that are included in the implementation plan of any State, or are achieved in practice in any State, and can feasibly be implemented in the area. The EPA has defined the term MSM as "any permanent and enforceable control measure that achieves the most stringent emissions reductions in direct PM_{2.5} emissions and/or emissions of PM_{2.5} plan precursors from among those control measures which are either included in the SIP for any other NAAQS, or have been achieved in practice in any state, and that can feasibly be implemented in the relevant PM_{2.5} NAAQS nonattainment area."³⁴ The EPA has interpreted the Act to require implementation of MSM as expeditiously as practicable and no later than one year before the extended Serious area attainment date identified by the state in its extension request.³⁵

An MSM demonstration must satisfy the requirements of the PM_{2.5} SIP Requirements Rule as described in the preamble to the rule, as follows:³⁶

- 1) Update the emission inventory to identify all sources of direct PM_{2.5} and all PM_{2.5} precursor emissions in the nonattainment area;

³² 81 FR 58010, 58095 (August 24, 2016).

³³ The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld this interpretation of CAA section 188(e) in *Vigil v. Leavitt*, 366 F.3d 1025, amended at 381 F.3d 826 (9th Cir. 2004).

³⁴ 40 CFR 51.1000 and 81 FR 58010, 58096 and 58097 (August 24, 2016); see also 59 FR 41998, 42010 (August 16, 1994) and 65 FR 19964, 19968 (April 13, 2000).

³⁵ 81 FR 58010, 58097 (August 24, 2016).

³⁶ 40 CFR 51.1010(b) and 81 FR 58010, 58095 through 58097 (August 24, 2016).

- 2) Identify all potential MSM to reduce emissions from sources of direct PM_{2.5} and PM_{2.5} plan precursors that are approved into any state implementation plan or used in practice in any state;
- 3) Compare the potential MSM for each relevant source category to the measures, if any, already adopted for that source category in the nonattainment area to determine whether such potential MSM would further reduce emissions and, where the state chooses to reject a measure from further consideration, demonstrate that it is not technologically or economically feasible to implement the measure in whole or in part within five years after the applicable attainment date for the area; and
- 4) Adopt and implement all potential MSM identified through this process that collectively will achieve attainment as expeditiously as practicable and no later than five years after the applicable attainment date, except those measures for which the state has provided reasoned justification for rejection, based on technological or economic feasibility.

Notably, the “to the satisfaction of the Administrator” qualifier on the MSM requirement is an explicit grant by Congress to the EPA of discretion to determine whether a plan includes MSM.

4. Submit a demonstration of attainment by the most expeditious alternative date practicable.

Section 189(b)(1)(A) of the Act requires that the State submit a demonstration of attainment, including air quality modeling, by the most expeditious date practicable after the statutory Serious area attainment date.³⁷ CAA section 188(e) states that the threshold requirement is submission of such a demonstration.³⁸ Accordingly, the EPA must evaluate

³⁷ Id. at 58097.

³⁸ The CAA does not require the EPA to act on the submitted attainment demonstration as a precondition to granting an extension. Section 188(e) of the Act states that “[a]t the time of such application, the State must submit a revision to the implementation plan that includes a demonstration of attainment by the most expeditious alternative date practicable.” In particular, the statute provides that “[t]he Administrator may not approve an extension until the State submits an attainment demonstration for the area.”

whether the submission containing the extension request also includes such a demonstration.

5. Apply for an attainment date extension.

Finally, the state must apply in writing to the EPA for an extension of a Serious area attainment date, and this request must accompany the submission of the modeled attainment demonstration showing attainment by the most expeditious alternative date practicable.

Additionally, the state must provide the public reasonable notice and opportunity for a public hearing on the attainment date extension request before submitting it to the EPA in accordance with the requirements for SIP revisions in CAA section 110.

IV. Review of the South Coast PM_{2.5} Extension Application

In this section of the preamble, we present our evaluation of the State's request to extend the Serious area attainment date from December 31, 2025, to December 31, 2030, under CAA section 188(e).

A. Demonstration That Attainment by Serious Area Attainment Date Is Impracticable

The 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan includes a demonstration, based on air quality modeling, that even with the implementation of BACM and BACT for all appropriate sources, attainment by December 31, 2025, is not practicable. The impracticability demonstration is included in Chapter 6 ("Federal Clean Air Act Requirements") of the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan, which references the State's modeling results in Chapter 5 ("Future Air Quality") of the Plan. The BACM/BACT demonstration is included in Appendix III ("Stationary and Mobile Source BACM/MSM"). Because of the substantial overlap in the source categories and controls evaluated for BACM and those evaluated for MSM, the BACM demonstration is discussed alongside our evaluation of the Plan's MSM demonstration in section IV.C of this document.

Table 5-4 of the Plan presents base year and modeled 2025 annual PM_{2.5} design values at 17 PM_{2.5} monitoring sites in the South Coast nonattainment area. The demonstration is summarized in table 1 of this document.

Table 1. Impracticability Demonstration, Annual PM_{2.5} Design Value Concentrations (µg/m³)

Monitoring Site	2018 (Base Year)	2025 (Projected)
Anaheim	10.54	10.22
Azusa	10.13	9.7
Big Bear	6.34	5.87
Los Angeles	11.96	11.48
Compton	12.25	11.89
Fontana	11.35	10.66
Long Beach Near-Road	12.28	11.95
Long Beach	10.53	10.25
Mira Loma	13.52	12.62
Mission Viejo	7.95	7.61
Ontario Near-Road	13.98	13.09
Pasadena	9.68	9.31
Pico Rivera	11.87	11.48
Reseda	9.73	9.06
Riverside	12.13	11.35
South Long Beach	10.57	10.31
San Bernardino	10.88	10.12

Source: 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan, Chapter 5, Table 5-4.

The State projected that the annual design value in the South Coast nonattainment area in 2025 would be 13.09 µg/m³, which is substantially above the 12.0 µg/m³ level of the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS. Thus, we find it reasonable to conclude based on the State’s evaluation that attainment by the end of 2025 was impracticable.

In addition to the information in the South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan, we have reviewed recent PM_{2.5} monitoring data from the South Coast Air Basin. These data show that annual average PM_{2.5} levels in the South Coast remained above the 12.0 µg/m³ level of the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS in 2024 at eight monitoring sites in the South Coast nonattainment area.³⁹ Furthermore, based on monitored ambient PM_{2.5} air quality data from 2023 and 2024, we calculated the maximum 2025 annual average concentration that would result in an attaining 2025 design value⁴⁰ at the historical design value site in the nonattainment area,⁴¹ and compared this

³⁹ EPA, AQS Design Value Report (AMP480), Report Request ID: 2371760, April 13, 2026. As of the time that this proposed rulemaking was being prepared, 2024 was the most recent year for which certified ambient air quality data were available.

⁴⁰ An attaining design value for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS corresponds to a 3-year average PM_{2.5} concentration of 12.04 µg/m³, accounting for rounding conventions.

⁴¹ The historical design value site in the South Coast nonattainment area, i.e., the site with, historically, the highest monitored design value in the area, is the Ontario-Route 60 Near Road monitor.

concentration to the lowest recorded annual average since 2012. This comparison is shown in table 2 below.

Table 2. Impracticability Demonstration, Annual PM_{2.5} Monitoring Data Assessment

Site Name	2023 Annual Average PM _{2.5} Concentration (µg/m ³)	2024 Annual Average PM _{2.5} Concentration (µg/m ³)	Maximum 2025 Annual Average PM _{2.5} Concentration Resulting in Attaining 2025 Design Value (µg/m ³)	Lowest Recorded Annual Average PM _{2.5} Concentration 2012-2024 (µg/m ³)
Ontario-Route 60 Near Road (06-071-0027)	12.3	14.3	9.5	12.2

Sources: EPA, AQS Design Value Report (AMP480), Report Request ID: 2371760, April 13, 2026; and EPA, AQS Design Value Report (AMP480), Report Request ID: 2372245, April 13, 2026.

The EPA’s monitoring analysis determined that the maximum 2025 annual average concentration that would result in an attaining 2025 design value at the historical design value site in the nonattainment area is 9.5 µg/m³, approximately 33 percent below the monitored annual average PM_{2.5} concentration from the previous year, and approximately 22 percent lower than the lowest annual average PM_{2.5} concentration recorded at this site since it was established in 2015. Although the certified data for 2025 are not yet available, the available data indicate that it is infeasible for the area to attain by the December 31, 2025 attainment date.

Thus, our review of the State’s impracticability demonstration and of the available ambient air quality data indicate that the South Coast area could not practicably have attained the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS by the applicable attainment date of December 31, 2025.

B. Compliance With All Requirements and Commitments in the Implementation Plan

We interpret this criterion to mean that the State has implemented the control measures and commitments in the plan revisions it has submitted to address the applicable requirements in

CAA sections 172 and 189 for the relevant PM_{2.5} NAAQS for the nonattainment area.⁴² For the South Coast for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS, the State has submitted, and the EPA has approved into the California SIP, the control measure requirements and commitments in the 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan that pertained to the Moderate area planning requirements for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS. In the remainder of this section, we describe the State's and District's implementation of those control measures and commitments.

As discussed in section I of this document, CARB submitted the 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan to the EPA on April 27, 2017.⁴³ On November 9, 2020, the EPA approved all but the contingency measure element of the submitted SIP revision as meeting all applicable Moderate area requirements for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS, and conditionally approved the contingency measure element as meeting the Moderate area contingency measure requirement.⁴⁴ The State subsequently withdrew those portions of the 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan pertaining to the Serious area planning requirements for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS, including those commitments intended to meet the Serious area plan requirements.

A majority of the emission reductions needed to demonstrate RFP in the South Coast nonattainment area in the 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan came from rules and regulations that were adopted prior to the submittal of the Plan in April 2017. However, the State determined as part of its RFP analysis for the 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan that an additional 7 tons per day (tpd) of NO_x emission reductions from new or revised control strategy measures was necessary to show linear progress towards attainment by the Serious area attainment date and thereby meet the 2022 RFP milestone.⁴⁵ As part of the EPA's November 9, 2020 final action on the 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan, the

⁴² 81 FR 58010, and 58094 (August 24, 2016). Under 40 CFR 51.1005(b)(1)(ii), a State must have complied with all requirements and commitments in the applicable implementation plan. The EPA's regulations provide that the applicable attainment plan for a Serious PM_{2.5} nonattainment area for which a state seeks an attainment date extension under 40 CFR 51.1004(a)(2)(ii) is the Moderate area plan submitted to meet the requirements of 40 CFR 51.1003(a). 40 CFR 51.1005(b)(3).

⁴³ Letter dated April 27, 2017, from Richard Corey, Executive Officer, CARB, to Alexis Strauss, Acting Regional Administrator, EPA Region IX (transmitting the "Final 2016 Air Quality Management Plan (March 2017)") (submitted electronically April 27, 2017).

⁴⁴ 85 FR 71264 (November 9, 2020).

⁴⁵ 85 FR 40026, 40045 (July 2, 2020) and 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan, Table VI-C-6.

EPA approved, among other things, the District's commitment to achieve 7 tpd of direct PM_{2.5} emission reductions from these or substitute measures by the 2022 RFP milestone year.⁴⁶

Additionally, for purposes of meeting the Moderate area RFP contingency measure requirement for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS,⁴⁷ the District and CARB committed to develop, adopt, and submit a revised District rule, SCAQMD Rule 445, "Wood-Burning Devices" ("Rule 445"). The EPA conditionally approved the contingency measure element of the 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan, including the State's commitment to revise Rule 445, as meeting the Moderate area planning requirements for contingency measures for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS.

The State discusses compliance with the applicable 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan Moderate area planning requirements and commitments for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS in Chapter 6 ("Federal Clean Air Act Requirements") of the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan.

Regarding the 7 tpd of NO_x reductions needed to demonstrate RFP in the 2022 milestone year, the District states that it has achieved reductions in excess of those projected in the 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan.⁴⁸ Specifically, the District states that a large portion of the reductions were achieved through mobile source incentive measures under District control measure MOB-14 ("Emission Reductions from Incentive Programs").⁴⁹ The incentive programs include the Carl Moyer Program, Proposition 1B – Air Quality Improvement Fund, the Lower-Emission School Bus Program, and the Community Air Protection Program. Emission reductions from these programs are summarized in Table 6-4 of the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan and amount to 13.99 tpd of NO_x, with reductions from the Carl Moyer and Prop 1B programs alone exceeding the 7 tpd

⁴⁶ 85 FR 40026, 40035 and 40040 (July 2, 2020).

⁴⁷ The EPA's proposal to approve the Moderate area plan and impracticability demonstration for the South Coast for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS explained that because we were proposing to approve the State's demonstration that the South Coast area could not practicably attain the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS by the applicable Moderate area attainment date and to reclassify the area to Serious, attainment contingency measures were not required as part of the Moderate area plan. Additionally, with respect to RFP contingency measures, we explained that the State's 2019 quantitative milestone report demonstrated that the actual emission levels in 2019 were consistent with the approved 2019 RFP milestone year targets for direct PM_{2.5} and precursors. Accordingly, we explained that RFP contingency measures for 2019 no longer have meaning or purpose and proposed to find that the requirement for them was moot as applied to the South Coast. The EPA finalized these determinations as proposed. 85 FR 71264, 71266 (November 9, 2020).

⁴⁸ 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan, p. 6-7.

⁴⁹ Id.

needed to demonstrate RFP, totaling 11.39 tpd of NO_x reductions.⁵⁰ In addition to the reductions from incentive programs, the District identified further surplus NO_x reductions in 2022 from Rule 445; Rule 1109.1, “NO_x Emissions From Petroleum Refineries;” Rule 1179.1, “Emission Reductions From Combustion Equipment at Publicly Owned Treatment Works Facilities;” and from the general conformity set-aside account.⁵¹

Regarding CARB’s and the District’s commitment to develop, adopt, and submit a revised version of SCAQMD Rule 445, the District amended Rule 445 for purposes of meeting the PM_{2.5} contingency measure commitment on June 5, 2020. On October 27, 2020, the District made additional revisions to the rule while retaining the June 5, 2020 PM_{2.5} contingency measure revisions unchanged.⁵² The June 5, 2020 amendments to Rule 445 included the addition of new lower mandatory wood-burning curtailment provisions in section (f) (“PM_{2.5} Contingency Measures”) to be implemented as contingency measures upon a determination by the EPA that any of the four “findings of failure” listed under 40 CFR 51.1014(a) has occurred.⁵³ The EPA approved SCAQMD Rule 445, as amended on October 27, 2020, except paragraph (g) (“Ozone Contingency Measures”) and paragraph (k) (“Penalties”), into the California SIP on March 8, 2022.⁵⁴ We also determined that the submitted rule fulfilled CARB’s and the District’s commitment to adopt and submit a specific enforceable contingency measure to address CAA requirements for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS in the South Coast Air Basin and, on that basis, converted our November 9, 2020 conditional approval to a full approval.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Id. at Table 6-4. The EPA has previously reviewed the Carl Moyer Program and Prop 1B Program guidelines and found that they adequately address the EPA’s recommended elements for economic incentive programs and credited emissions reductions from these programs towards the State’s emissions reductions commitments (for example, see 81 FR 53300 (August 12, 2016)).

⁵¹ Id. at Table 6-5.

⁵² SCAQMD Rule 445, as amended October 27, 2020. The District adopted further amendments pertaining to ozone contingency measures on October 27, 2020, but retained the Rule 445 amendments adopted June 5, 2020, pertaining to PM_{2.5} contingency measures, unchanged.

⁵³ Id.

⁵⁴ 87 FR 12866, 12868 (March 8, 2022).

⁵⁵ Id.

Based on our review, we are proposing to find that the State has complied with all the Moderate area requirements and commitments in the 2016 PM_{2.5} Plan, which is the applicable implementation plan for the purposes of 51.1005(b)(1)(ii) for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS.

C. Demonstration That the Implementation Plan Includes the Most Stringent Measures

Before the EPA may extend the attainment date for a Serious nonattainment area under CAA section 188(e), the state must, among other things, demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Administrator that the plan for the area includes the most stringent measures (MSM) that are included in the implementation plan of any state or are achieved in practice in any state, and can feasibly be implemented in the area. The state must implement MSM as expeditiously as practicable and no later than the beginning of the year containing the attainment date identified by the state in its extension request, i.e., in this case, by January 1, 2030.⁵⁶ We interpret this criterion to mean that the State must demonstrate to the EPA's satisfaction that its Serious area plan includes the most stringent measures that are included in the implementation plan of any state, or achieved in practice in any state, and can feasibly be implemented in the area. The requirements that a state's MSM evaluation must satisfy are described in the PM_{2.5} SIP Requirements Rule and are summarized in section III of this document.

The 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan discusses the Plan's control strategy, including compliance with the BACM and MSM requirements, in Chapter 4 ("Control Strategy"), and contains BACM and MSM evaluations in Appendix III ("Stationary and Mobile Source BACM/MSM"). The evaluations consist of analyses by CARB and the District of source categories under their respective jurisdictions. Emissions inventories identifying sources of emissions of direct PM_{2.5} and PM_{2.5} precursors⁵⁷ in the South Coast Air Basin are described and

⁵⁶ 81 FR 58010, 58097 (August 24, 2016).

⁵⁷ Appendix VI ("Precursor Demonstration") of 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan contains a demonstration that emissions of VOC and SO_x do not contribute significantly to exceedances of the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS in the South Coast Air Basin and that such emissions should be excluded from certain CAA requirements (including BACM and MSM), consistent with the EPA's recommendations in the "Fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) Precursor Demonstration Guidance" (see memorandum dated May 30, 2019, from Scott Mathias, Acting Director, Air Quality Policy Division, EPA Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards (OAQPS), and Richard Wayland, Director, Air

included in Chapter 3 (“Emissions Inventory”) and Appendix I (“Base and Future Year Emission Inventory”) of the Plan.

CARB’s BACM/MSM analysis for sources under the State’s jurisdiction is contained in Attachment B (“Most Stringent Measures Analysis of CARB’s Control Programs”) to Appendix III of the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan. CARB’s four-step process to assess the State’s control program consists of: (1) identifying sources of direct PM_{2.5} emissions and precursor emissions; (2) identifying potential control measures for the sources identified in Step 1; (3) assessing the stringency and feasibility of the control measures identified in Step 2; and (4) adopting and implementing the feasible control measures identified in Step 3. CARB’s demonstration includes descriptions of CARB’s key mobile source programs and regulations, and a comprehensive evaluation of on-road and non-road mobile source regulatory actions taken by CARB and other states. Based on its review, CARB determined that its current control program for sources under its jurisdiction satisfies the BACM and MSM requirements.⁵⁸

The District followed a similar process to identify candidate BACM/MSM measures that are technologically and economically feasible for stationary and area sources under its jurisdiction. As a first step, SCAQMD examined the emissions inventory to identify key sources of emissions of direct PM_{2.5}. Based on these inventories, the District identified residential wood combustion, paved road dust, commercial cooking, and farming operations – livestock waste as key emission sources of direct PM_{2.5} in the South Coast nonattainment area.⁵⁹ Next, the District broadened its analysis to assess potential controls across all applicable source categories under its jurisdiction. The District reviewed existing control measures implemented in the South Coast

Quality Assessment Division, OAQPS, to Regional Air Division Directors, Regions 1 -10, with attachment titled “PM_{2.5} Precursor Demonstration Guidance;” available at https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2019-05/documents/transmittal_memo_and_pm25_precursor_demo_guidance_5_30_19.pdf) The BACM and MSM evaluations in the Plan therefore focus on sources of emissions of direct PM_{2.5}, NO_x, and ammonia, and exclude sources of VOC and SO_x.

⁵⁸ The Plan discusses CARB’s commitments therein and in the 2016 State SIP Strategy and 2022 State SIP Strategy to adopt and implement additional controls for mobile sources; however, these controls are included for attainment purposes and largely identified as “beyond MSM” due to stringency. The EPA will review these measures in the context of the control strategy and attainment demonstration in a future rulemaking.

⁵⁹ 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan, Appendix III, p. III-3.

Air Basin and compared those controls to Federal and State regulations and guidance, as well as analogous rules implemented by other air agencies to assess the stringency of existing controls and identify potential opportunities to achieve further reductions. More specifically, the District (1) conducted an in-depth analysis of control measures in the SIPs for other 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS nonattainment areas (i.e., San Joaquin Valley, CA; Plumas County, CA; Imperial County, CA; and Allegheny County, PA) to evaluate whether control technologies deemed available and cost-effective in those areas would be feasible in the South Coast Air Basin; (2) reviewed EPA technical support documents for previously adopted/amended rules submitted for approval into the California SIP; (3) reevaluated control measures that the District had found to be technologically or economically infeasible as part of the controls evaluations in the 2016 and 2022 air quality management plans (AQMPs); (4) reviewed the EPA's Menu of Control Measures;⁶⁰ and (5) reviewed the EPA's applicable guidance documents.

Based on its analysis, the District identified 15 control measures for evaluation as potential BACM/MSM.⁶¹ The District's analyses include descriptions of the measures, estimates of potential emissions reductions and assessments of technological and economic feasibility. As a result of these analyses, SCAQMD concluded that four of the measures, identified in Table 4-4 of the Plan, are feasible and should be adopted and implemented as MSM,⁶² and included commitments to adopt each of these four measures as part of the control strategy of the Plan.⁶³ SCAQMD determined that the remaining measures were not feasible for implementation in the South Coast Air Basin.

Based upon our review, the EPA has determined that the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan

⁶⁰ Available at <https://www.epa.gov/air-quality-implementation-plans/menu-control-measures-naaqs-implementation>.

⁶¹ 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan, Appendix III, p. III-39.

⁶² While the District concluded that these measures are MSM, they determined that they are not needed to meet BACM requirements.

⁶³ 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan, Table 4-4. The four measures identified as MSM include BCM-08, "Emissions Reductions from Livestock Waste at Confined Animal Facilities;" BCM-10, "Emission Reductions from Direct Land Application of Chipped and Ground Uncomposted Greenwaste;" BCM-12, "Further Emission Reductions from Commercial Cooking;" and BCM-18, "Further Emission Reductions from Wood Burning Fireplaces and Wood Stoves." See also section titled "Control Measure Assessment" in Appendix III of the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan.

contains the required elements of BACM and MSM evaluations as described in the PM_{2.5} SIP Requirements Rule. The emissions inventory identifies all sources of emissions of direct PM_{2.5} and applicable PM_{2.5} precursors. For the source categories identified in the emissions inventory for the nonattainment area, CARB and the District followed EPA guidance to identify potential measures from other areas' control requirements for similar sources, the EPA's technical support documents from rulemakings on SCAQMD control measure SIP submittals, potential control measures identified in previous SCAQMD plan submittals, the EPA's menu of control measures, and EPA guidance documents.

Our review indicates that CARB and the District conducted thorough analyses of emissions sources in the nonattainment area and potential control measures for those sources. The 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan includes commitments and an expeditious schedule for adopting the four measures identified by the District as MSM, and provides a reasoned justification for the rejection of all other potential MSM based on technological or economic feasibility, consistent with the requirements established in the PM_{2.5} SIP Requirements Rule. The District has since adopted the four measures and submitted them to the EPA for inclusion in the California SIP.⁶⁴ The EPA is not aware of more stringent and feasible measures implemented in other areas of the country beyond those identified in the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan. Thus, our review indicates that the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan includes the requisite BACM demonstration and includes the MSM that are included in the implementation plan of any state, or are achieved in practice in any state, and can feasibly be implemented in the area.

D. Demonstration of Attainment by the Most Expeditious Alternative Date Practicable

⁶⁴ Letter dated February 4, 2026, from Steven S. Cliff, Executive Officer, CARB, to Mike Martucci, Acting Regional Administrator, EPA Region 9, submitting revisions to the California SIP, including revisions to SCAQMD Rule 1133 series, "Composting, Chipping and Grinding, and Related Operations" to regulate the supply of uncomposted greenwaste for direct land application; SCAQMD Rule 1138, "Control of Emissions from Restaurant Operations" to lower the applicability threshold for chain-driven charbroilers; SCAQMD Rule 223, "Requirements for Confined Animal Facilities" to lower the applicability thresholds for dairy, chicken, and duck farms and require permits to operate and emission mitigation plans for facilities meeting the new definition of large confined animal facility; and SCAQMD Rule 445, "Wood-Burning Devices" to lower the curtailment threshold and remove the low-income household exemption (submitted electronically February 10, 2026).

Section 188(e) of the Act states that at the time of its application for an extension of an attainment deadline, the state must submit a demonstration of attainment by the most expeditious alternative date practicable, and that the EPA may not approve the extension until such a demonstration has been submitted. Section 189(b)(1)(A)(ii) of the CAA also provides that a state seeking an extension of the attainment date under CAA section 188(e) must submit a demonstration that the plan provides for attainment by the most expeditious alternative date practicable.

For the purpose of the CAA section 188(e) requirement that the District submit a demonstration that the plan provides for attainment by the most expeditious alternative date practicable, the EPA's review of the submission indicates that the submission contains the requisite demonstration. Chapter 5 ("Future Air Quality") of the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan contains the State's demonstration of attainment by 2030, and an analysis concluding that attainment by 2029 would not be possible.⁶⁵ While the EPA will evaluate this analysis in a future rulemaking action, for the purpose of the CAA section 188(e) extension prerequisite that a complete submission from the state must contain the requisite demonstration under CAA section 189(b)(1)(A)(ii), our review of the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan indicates that the State has made such a submission.

E. Application for an Attainment Date Extension

As discussed in section I.B of this document, the Serious area attainment date for the South Coast for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS under CAA section 188(c)(2) is December 31, 2025. The remaining criterion for an extension of the attainment date beyond this statutory attainment date is that the State must apply for such extension. In the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan, CARB and SCAQMD submitted a complete application for an extension of the Serious area attainment date for the South Coast to December 31, 2030, for the 2012 annual PM_{2.5}

⁶⁵ The submitted analysis states the conclusion that "the earliest attainment date of the annual PM_{2.5} standard would be in 2030."

NAAQS.⁶⁶ In accordance with the requirements of the PM_{2.5} SIP Requirements Rule in 40 CFR 51.1005(b)(1), the State's submission includes demonstrations that attainment by the Serious area attainment date is impracticable, that the State has complied with all requirements and commitments in the applicable SIP, and that the plan includes MSM. Additionally, in accordance with 40 CFR 51.1005(b)(2), the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan contains all of the required components of a Serious area plan accompanying a request for extension of the attainment date under CAA section 188(e), as follows: (1) base year and attainment projected emissions inventories, (2) provisions to implement MSM and BACM, (3) a modeled attainment demonstration, (4) reasonable further progress provisions, (5) quantitative milestone provisions, (6) contingency measure provisions, and (7) nonattainment new source review plan provisions.⁶⁷ As discussed in section II of this document, the EPA previously found that the State provided the public reasonable notice and an opportunity for a public hearing on the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan, including the attainment date extension request, before submitting it to the EPA, in accordance with the requirements for SIP revisions in CAA section 110.

F. Other Factors That the EPA May Consider

Finally, as noted section III of this document, CAA section 188(e) lists five additional factors that the EPA may consider in deciding whether to grant an attainment date extension and the length for such extension. These factors include: (1) the nature and extent of the nonattainment problem; (2) the types and numbers of sources or other emitting activities in the area (including the influence of uncontrollable natural sources and international transport); (3) the population exposed to concentrations in excess of the standard; (4) the presence and concentration of potentially toxic substances in the mix of particulate emissions in the area; and (5) the technological and economic feasibility of various control measures. In evaluating these

⁶⁶ CARB Resolution 24-7 (June 27, 2024), (adopting the Plan and directing the CARB Executive Officer to submit the Plan to the EPA as a SIP revision), SCAQMD Governing Board Resolution 24-16 (June 7, 2024) (adopting the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan), and 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan, Ch. 6, p. 6-2.

⁶⁷ Letter dated August 5, 2024, from Steven S. Cliff, Executive Officer, CARB, to Martha Guzman, Regional Administrator, EPA Region 9, with attachments (transmitting the adopted 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan to the EPA for inclusion in the California SIP) (submitted electronically on August 6, 2024).

factors, we have focused on the nature and extent of the nonattainment area problem and the technological and economic feasibility of additional control measures.

The South Coast Air Basin has made significant progress towards improving air quality and meeting the NAAQS despite challenges associated with being one of the nation's largest urban areas and meteorological conditions and mountainous terrain that tend to trap pollutants in the Air Basin.⁶⁸ In the years prior to the adoption of the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan, CARB and the District developed and implemented several comprehensive plans (e.g., the 2012 AQMP and 2016 AQMP) to provide for attainment of PM_{2.5} and ozone NAAQS. These plans have resulted in the adoption and implementation of many new rules and amendments to existing rules across source categories. These regulations and strategies have yielded significant reductions from sources under the State's and District's jurisdictions. As a result of these already-adopted State and District measures, sources in the South Coast nonattainment area are already subject to the most stringent rules in the country, leaving fewer and more technologically challenging opportunities to reduce emissions, as demonstrated by the controls analysis in the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan.⁶⁹ The State and District continue to pursue new opportunities to achieve further reductions in direct PM_{2.5} and PM_{2.5} precursor emissions, as outlined in the Plan;⁷⁰ however, the EPA acknowledges the scarcity of additional controls and the timeline needed to develop, adopt, and implement such measures. These factors generally support a longer time frame for attainment.

V. Summary of Proposed Action and Request for Public Comment

For the reasons discussed in this proposed rule, the EPA is proposing to grant the State's request for an extension of the Serious area attainment date from December 31, 2025, to December 31, 2030, based on a conclusion that the State has satisfied the requirements for such

⁶⁸ For a discussion of challenges and historical air quality trends, see Chapter 2 ("Air Quality") of the 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan.

⁶⁹ 2024 South Coast PM_{2.5} Plan, Chapter 4, Appendix III, and Appendix IV.

⁷⁰ Id.

an extension in section 188(e) of the Act.

The EPA is soliciting public comments on the issues discussed in this document. We will accept comments from the public on this proposal for the next 30 days.

VI. Statutory and Executive Order Reviews

Additional information about these statutes and Executive Orders can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/laws-and-executive-orders>.

A. Executive Order 12866: Regulatory Planning and Review and Executive Order 13563: Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review

This action is not a significant regulatory action and was therefore not submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review.

B. Executive Order 14192: Unleashing Prosperity Through Deregulation

This action is not expected to be an Executive Order 14192 regulatory action because this action is not significant under Executive Order 12866.

C. Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA)

This action does not impose an information collection burden under the PRA because this action does not impose additional requirements beyond those imposed by State law.

D. Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA)

I certify that this action will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities under the RFA. This action will not impose any requirements on small entities beyond those imposed by State law.

E. Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA)

This action does not contain any unfunded mandate as described in UMRA, 2 U.S.C. 1531–1538, and does not significantly or uniquely affect small governments. This action does not impose additional requirements beyond those imposed by State law. Accordingly, no additional costs to State, local, or Tribal governments, or to the private sector, will result from this action.

F. Executive Order 13132: Federalism

This action does not have federalism implications. It will not have substantial direct effects on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

G. Executive Order 13175: Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments

This action does not have Tribal implications, as specified in Executive Order 13175, because the SIP is not approved to apply on any Indian reservation land or in any other area where the EPA or an Indian Tribe has demonstrated that a Tribe has jurisdiction, and will not impose substantial direct costs on Tribal governments or preempt Tribal law. Thus, Executive Order 13175 does not apply to this action.

H. Executive Order 13045: Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks

The EPA interprets Executive Order 13045 as applying only to those regulatory actions that concern environmental health or safety risks that the EPA has reason to believe may disproportionately affect children, per the definition of “covered regulatory action” in section 2-202 of the Executive Order. Therefore, this action is not subject to Executive Order 13045 because it merely proposes to approve a state request for an attainment date extension as meeting Federal requirements. Furthermore, the EPA’s Policy on Children’s Health does not apply to this action.

I. Executive Order 13211: Actions that Significantly Affect Energy Supply, Distribution, or Use

This action is not subject to Executive Order 13211 because it is not a significant regulatory action under Executive Order 12866.

J. National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act (NTTAA)

Section 12(d) of the NTTAA directs the EPA to use voluntary consensus standards in its regulatory activities unless to do so would be inconsistent with applicable law or otherwise impractical. The EPA believes that this action is not subject to the requirements of section 12(d)

of the NTTAA because application of those requirements would be inconsistent with the CAA.

List of Subjects in 40 CFR Part 52

Environmental protection, Air pollution control, Ammonia, Incorporation by reference, Intergovernmental relations, Nitrogen dioxide, Particulate matter, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Sulfur dioxide, Volatile organic compounds.

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 7401 *et seq.*

Dated: May 29, 2026.

Michael Martucci,

Acting Regional Administrator, Region IX.

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