

Steve Smith

From: Ma, Sungkey [SMA@co.riverside.ca.us]
Sent: Monday, July 28, 2008 5:36 PM
To: Steve Smith
Subject: Proposed Tiered Decision Tree Approach of a CEQA significance threshold

Dr. Smith:

According to the second revision to the tiered decision tree flowchart, Tier 2 assessment appears to consider cumulative GHG emissions and effects, while the next tier, Tier 3, considers project-level emissions and effect (De Minimus). Therefore, these 2 tiers should not be considered in a hierarchical order, as depicted in the flowchart, but rather, they should be parallel considerations. In other words, a project must pass both tiers in order to be deemed "*less than significant*" for GHGs.

Will tier-4 projects be required to calculate GHG inventories for both BAU and Emissions Reduction Scenarios for all three performance standard options?

It appears that Performance Standard Option #2 only requires a project to volunteer early implementation of applicable AB 32 Scoping Plan measures and does not require a specific emissions reduction level to be achieved from implementation of the chosen measures. Therefore, this performance standard looks a little vague.

Last but not least, where will landfill operations fit in this tiered decision tree approach? I would say landfills may be considered under Tier 4, Option #2. However, AB 32 Scoping Plan contains only one Discrete Early Action (Landfill Methane Control Measure), which will probably apply to some currently unregulated smaller or inactive landfills and may not apply to the larger active landfills, which are already regulated under Rule 1150.1. In other words, active regional landfills may not be able to claim compliance with the AB 32 Discrete Early Action for GHG emission reduction credit. Other measures under evaluation under the Scoping Plan include conversion of landfill gas (LFG) into liquefied natural gas (LNG), commercial recycling, composting, extended producer responsibility and environmentally preferable purchasing, anaerobic digestion and waste to energy. All but the extended producer responsibility and environmental preferable purchasing measure are easily implemented, and, in fact, each of these measures is capital intensive and is a significant project in its own right. The question is: How will this tiered approach determine the performance standard of an active regional landfill in terms of GHG emissions reduction?

Sorry for this late input. Hope you will be able to address these concerns in the next or future Working Group meeting.

Thank you very much.

Sung Key Ma
Planner
Riverside County Waste Management Department