



REGION 9

SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105

December 10, 2024

Michael Benjamin, Division Chief
Air Quality Planning and Science Division
California Air Resources Board
P.O. Box 2815
Sacramento, California 95812

Dear Michael Benjamin:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) concurs with the State's request to exclude data showing exceedances of the 1997 8-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) on July 14-15, 2023 at the Palm Springs – Fire Station monitoring site in the Riverside County (Coachella Valley), California, nonattainment area, pursuant to the Exceptional Events Rule (EER).

The submittal from California Air Resources Board (CARB) and South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD), dated September 12, 2024 and November 13, 2024, included documentation that the July 14-15, 2023 exceedances were caused by exceptional events due to wildfire emissions.¹ After thoroughly reviewing the information you provided, we agree that the State's submittal meets the demonstration criteria and the schedule and procedural requirements in the EER. The basis for our concurrence is set forth in the enclosed technical support document. EPA staff will enter concurrence flags for these data into the EPA's Air Quality System database.

The EPA's concurrence is a preliminary step in the regulatory process for actions that may rely on these data and does not constitute final Agency action. If the EPA completes a notice-and-comment rulemaking for an action that is influenced by the exclusion of the ozone data specified in this concurrence, the EPA's concurrence letter and accompanying technical support

¹ CARB and South Coast AQMD submitted the *Rabbit, Reche, and Highland Wildfires Ozone Exceptional Events Demonstration* concurrent with the 30-day public comment period. On November 13, 2024, CARB resubmitted the demonstration along with a letter notifying EPA that no public comments were received. There were no changes between the September 14, 2024 and November 13, 2024 demonstrations.

document would be included in the record as part of the technical basis for the proposed action. If we receive comments, we must consider and respond to those comments before taking final regulatory action. When the EPA issues that regulatory action, it is a final Agency action subject to judicial review.

We appreciate the robust technical analysis and collaborative approach used to develop these submittals. If you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me at (415) 317-3744, or Dena Vallano at (415) 972-3134.

Sincerely,

Matthew Lakin
Director, Air and Radiation Division

Enclosure

cc (via email): Edie Chang, CARB
Sylvia Vanderspek, CARB
Matthew Densberger, CARB
Jin Xu, CARB
Sarah Rees, South Coast AQMD
Scott Epstein, South Coast AQMD