2009 SMOKE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ISSUES

This is the existing language in the 2008 SMP Plan.
Underlined are references to specific problems discussed at the last TAC meeting

PRESCRIBED BURNING

In accordance with the California Code of Regulations, Title 17, all persons or entities subject to subchapter 2 Smoke Management Guidelines for Agricultural and Prescribed Burning shall comply with the requirements therein and those requirements adopted by applicable districts in local smoke management regulations. Such persons or entities proposing to conduct prescribed burning must submit a smoke management plan to the air district of jurisdiction and: 1) receive a permit to burn, 2) receive authorization to burn on a given day, and 3) maintain communication with the local air district and report on the status of the burn until it is concluded.

If the entity proposing a prescribed burn project requests a 48 hour forecast, 72 hour outlook, and a 96 hour trend be provided to them, the air district may ask for ARB's assistance in providing such information. The air district may also request that the ARB provide them with help in deciding on a burn up to 24 hours in advance of the ignition. Prioritizing burns for disease control, economic concerns, public safety etc. is an individual district decision. However, districts may, in daily burn authorization systems give preference to agricultural burning including prescribed burns employing fuel reduction measures and efforts to reduce smoke emissions.

During the fall burn period (September 1st through November 30th), all proposed prescribed burning shall be reported by districts to the CCO prior to September 1st. The information to be reported to the CCO is indicated on the Prescribed Burning Information Form (see Figure 2). The CCO will then notify the Basin districts in the computer files when a prescribed burn is scheduled at any elevation. This will provide the dissemination of burn information, promote coordination and enhance monitoring of agricultural and prescribed burning. Pertinent Internet WEB sites with meteorological and burning information will be accessed to keep apprized of current conditions of prescribed burns and wildfires. For prescribed burning districts may use the Sacramento Valley Smoke Management Plan or approved, equivalent plans of the Northeast Air Alliance or ARB. Sacramento Valley and Northeast Air Alliance documents are in the appendices.

If the burning is conducted during the fall period at or below the daily variable elevation level and not higher than 2000 feet elevation then the proposed acreage (calculated at the appropriate fuel loading) will be considered part of the local acreage distribution. The ARB may adjust the elevation threshold for burn decisions in the Valley floor versus higher elevations, pursuant to Section 80250 (a). The ARB will consider revising a no-burn decision above 2,000 feet elevation when the local district makes a request based upon review of local meteorological and air quality conditions. When persons or entities request prior afternoon decisions on burning at or below 2000 feet, the air districts must provide notification to the CCO of the scheduled day of burning to allow planning for allocation and distribution of acreage. For prescribed burns below 2000 feet the CCO will, if possible, take the acreage needed for those burns out of any excess acreage available over the initial allocation but below the interim allocation limit.

FIGURE 2

SACRAMENTO VALLEY AIR BASIN PRESCRIBED BURNING INFORMATION FORM

Air District:		County:			
Project name:					
Agency:		Contact:	Phone:		
Total acres:		Fuel loading:		Fuel consumed:	(tons/acre)
Fuel type:		Burn type:			
Minimum elevation of burn:		Mean elevation of burn:			(feet)
Burn location:	Section-Township-Range:			Latitude and Longitude:	
Nearest town/sensitive area is:		which is:		miles in:	direction
2nd Nearest town/sensitive area is:		which is:		miles in:	direction
3rd Nearest town/sensitive area is:		which is:		miles in:	direction
Preferred wind direction:				Wind speed:	(mph)
Preferred fuel moisture content%:					
Preferred burn season:					
Start date of burn:	Start time of burn:			End date and time of burn:	
Comments:					

Recent policy changes at federal and state agencies (Maps 3 and 4) regarding the need for more forest and wildland burning to improve land management have increased the amount of "prescribed burning" on public and private lands. This shift towards more prescribed burning has demanded a review of burning management programs to address the unique issues presented by this type of burning. The national forests have plans for significant increases in burning. The US Forest Service does have access to remote automatic weather stations (Map 5) and the assistance of weather forecasters to help in planning and safely conducting burning.

When meteorology and/or air quality is more favorable in one or more areas, additional acreage will be placed in those areas or directly to a zone(s) within a district around the valley but such re-distribution shall never over-concentrate the acreage in any part of the valley. The re-distribution of acreage by the CCO will take into account weather and air quality differences between the north and south sections of the Valley. Prescribed burning will be incorporated into the spatial management of the burning, by the district, in order to minimize air quality impacts. Project size, elevation and location will be factors considered in the management of prescribed burning.

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The basic Program elements include the following:

Local authority: The Program places responsibility and authority on local air districts for implementation. Current air quality and meteorological information is provided to enable districts to make informed decisions.

Conservative management: The Sacramento Valley Smoke Management Program will be administered by a conservative approach with acreage updates, as warranted. Daily management will be consistent with prevailing air quality, meteorological, and burn data. Information used as feedback for decisions include hourly data on air quality levels, meteorological conditions, airport visibilities, and district field observation reports and smoke complaints. Program procedures will reflect the goals to protect air quality and public health, and to carefully monitor agricultural burning operations.

Daily acreage allocation and distribution considerations{tc "**Daily acreage allocation and distribution considerations**"**}**

The allocation and distribution methods will use the following information:

1) Atmospheric stability, inversion heights, and depth of the mixing layer
2) Wind speeds and directions (upper level and surface)
3) Relative humidity and fuel moisture
4) Baseline air quality PM10 and PM2.5 data and airport visibilities
5) Quantity and location of agricultural residue to be burned
6) Consideration of downwind populated areas
7) Presence of ongoing, nearby wildfires

Emphasis shall be placed on the consideration of expected mixing depths during the burn hours in making burning management decisions. The meteorological services consultant and the ARB will comment on atmospheric mixing in their computer files and this will also be discussed each morning between the ARB duty meteorologist and the CCO in determining the initial acreage allocation.