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## *Memorandum*

TO: Air Quality Conformity Task Force

DATE: July 13, 2010

FR: Grace Cho

W.I.:

RE: Air Quality Updates

The following air quality-related news may be of interest to the Conformity Task Force:

- The recent release of the National Cooperative Highway Research Program report titled, *Implications of Performance Standards, Conformity-Style Approaches, and Other Mechanisms for Assessing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Strategies and Integrating GHG Objectives into Transportation Decision Making*, looks at alternative methods that DOTs and MPOs can use for addressing GHG emissions from transportation. The report is intended to help policy makers understand how alternative approaches to GHG emissions would affect states and metropolitan areas. The report considers approaches that may be effective for evaluating mobile-source GHG emission-management strategies and discusses tools that are available to support implementation of these alternative approaches. The report summary and a link to the full report can be found at: <http://144.171.11.40/cmsfeed/TRBNetProjectDisplay.asp?ProjectID=2481>
- EPA released in May 2010 the draft revised PM hot spot analysis guidance for conformity. This guidance introduces quantitative (dispersion modeling) analysis to replace the emission analysis process used in the 2006 guidance for projects of air quality concern. EPA is currently seeking comments and is holding training about the qualitative analysis procedures. To review the draft guidance, visit <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/stateresources/transconf/policy/420b06902.pdf>
- On April 1, 2010, EPA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration finalized their ruling on GHG emission levels for passenger cars and light trucks. Beginning with model year 2012 passenger cars and light duty trucks, automakers will be required to increase fuel economy and reduce fleet-wide GHG emissions to achieve an estimated 34.1 mpg for the combined fleet by 2016. This would translate into an average vehicle emissions level of 250 grams of carbon dioxide per mile. For more information, see: <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/climate/regulations.htm>.
- The EPA recently released the updated air quality trends report, *Our Nation's Air, Status and Trends Through 2008*. The report provides EPA's most recent evaluation of the nation's air quality status and also looks at the relationship between air quality and climate change. EPA reports that significant air quality improvements have been made since 1990 for all six criteria pollutants. Yet, in 2008 approximately 127 million people lived in counties that exceeded any NAAQS. The largest reductions between 1990 and 2008 were for lead with a 78% reduction followed by 8-hour CO with a 68% reduction. Reductions under the annual PM2.5 NAAQS were

19%, for PM10 a 31% reduction was achieved and for 8-hour ozone a 14% reduction occurred nationally between 1990-2008. To see the report, visit <http://www.epa.gov/airtrends/2010/>

- On June 2, 2010 the Bay Area Air Quality Management District adopted guidelines to establish thresholds for greenhouse gases and toxic risks from proposed development projects. As part of the Air District's new CEQA guidelines, local agencies will consider existing sources of air pollution in a specific area when evaluating the additional health risks that would be brought about by a proposed project. The cumulative risk provision will be especially protective of communities that already have significant air quality concerns. For more information, see [www.baaqmd.gov/Divisions/Planning-and-Research/CEQA-GUIDELINES.aspx](http://www.baaqmd.gov/Divisions/Planning-and-Research/CEQA-GUIDELINES.aspx).