

BOARD MEETING DATE: October 4, 2024

AGENDA NO. 6

**PROPOSAL:** Appropriate Funds and Amend Contract to Implement Air Quality Community Training and Provide Air Filtration Systems in Eastern Coachella Valley for U.S. EPA State Environmental Justice Cooperative Agreement Program

**SYNOPSIS:** U.S. EPA awarded South Coast AQMD a grant from the State Environmental Justice Cooperative Agreement Program to implement an Air Quality Academy to improve environmental literacy and air quality data in the Assembly Bill 617 community of Eastern Coachella Valley. The Air Quality Academy was established in 2021 and South Coast AQMD proposes to spend the remaining funds to provide air filtration systems and additional training to operate the air filtration systems and reduce exposure to air pollution within residential homes in Eastern Coachella Valley. South Coast AQMD requested a one-year no-cost extension and received approval from U.S. EPA to reallocate funding to continue implementation until October 31, 2025. These actions are to appropriate up to \$45,052 to the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion with Community Air Programs Office FY 2024-25 and/or 2025-26 Budgets, and to amend an existing contract with Desert Healthcare District and Foundation.

**COMMITTEE:** Administrative, September 13, 2024; Recommended for Approval

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

1. Appropriate up to \$45,052 from the General Fund Undesignated (Unassigned) Fund Balance to the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion with Community Air Programs Office FY 2024-25 and/or 2025-26 Budget (Org 70), Services & Supplies Major Object, Professional & Special Services account (67450) for the U.S. EPA State Environmental Justice Cooperative Agreement project; and

2. Upon receipt of an amended grant agreement, authorize the Executive Officer to amend an existing contract with Desert Healthcare District and Foundation to implement community training and provide air filtration systems in Eastern Coachella Valley.

Wayne Natri  
Executive Officer

AHJ:PP:BK:PM

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### **Background**

In June 2021, U.S. EPA granted South Coast AQMD an award of \$200,000 from the U.S. EPA State Environmental Justice Cooperative Agreement Program to partner with local entities to develop an Air Quality Academy in Eastern Coachella Valley. On October 1, 2021, the Board recognized \$200,000 and approved appropriations of \$113,091 to Planning, Rule Development & Implementation, Science & Technology Advancement, and Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Office into FY 2021-22 and/or FY 2022-23 Budgets from the U.S. EPA State Environmental Justice Cooperative Agreement Program.

South Coast AQMD has been working with Desert Healthcare District and Foundation, Alianza Coachella Valley (Desert Healthcare District and Foundations' subcontractor), and Health Assessment and Research for Communities to implement tasks outlined in the grant. To date, Alianza Coachella Valley has recruited 15 Eastern Coachella Valley community members for the Air Quality Academy and participated in the air quality training and workshops. Health Assessment and Research for Communities has also analyzed community data (e.g., environmental, demographic) to complete a community Environmental Health Report. This project builds upon existing efforts to implement the Assembly Bill 617 (AB 617) Eastern Coachella Valley Community Emission Reductions Plan, specifically objectives committing South Coast AQMD to reduce exposure to air pollution in homes (Chapter 5b, Objective 3A; Chapter 5c, Objective 2C; Chapter 5d, Objective 3B; Chapter 5e, Objective 3C; and Chapter 5f, Objective 1A).

The project was scheduled to end on October 31, 2024. However, in June 2024, U.S. EPA approved a no-cost extension until October 31, 2025. Additionally, U.S. EPA approved a non-competitive proposal to issue a sole source contract amendment with Desert Healthcare District and Foundation. This action is seeking approval from the Board to appropriate the remaining funds and amend the contract to provide additional air quality community training and purchase air filtration systems that will be distributed to residents in Eastern Coachella Valley. This additional effort supplements this project by improving environmental literacy and reducing indoor air pollution and will build on the existing AB 617 Air Filtration Program for Eastern Coachella Valley.

Appropriations requested in this Board Letter reflect the project scope change approved by U.S. EPA and supersedes FY 2024-25 appropriations authorized in the September 2023 Board Letter.

**Proposal**

This action is to appropriate up to \$45,052 in U.S. EPA State Environmental Justice Cooperative Agreement funds from the General Fund Undesignated (Unassigned) Fund Balance to the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion with Community Air Programs Office FY 2024-25 and/or 2025-26 Budget (Org 70), Services & Supplies Major Object, Professional & Special Services account (67450) to amend Desert Healthcare District and Foundations’ contract to procure related services and supplies. Approval of these actions will allow South Coast AQMD to continue implementing the Air Quality Academy in Eastern Coachella Valley and provide air filtration systems to reduce exposure to air pollution within residential homes in Eastern Coachella Valley.

**Sole Source Justification**

Section VIII.B.3 of the Procurement Policy and Procedure identifies four major provisions for justifying a sole source award funded, in whole or in part with federal funds. The request for sole source awards for the amendment of Desert Healthcare District and Foundations’ contract and the purchase of 15 air filtration systems are made under the provisions B.3.c, which states that the awarding federal agency or pass-through entity expressly authorizes non-competitive proposals in response to a written request from the non-federal entity. U.S. EPA provided written authorization for a non-competitive sole source justification to Desert Healthcare District and Foundation to continue as the contractor to implement community training and provide air filtration systems in Eastern Coachella Valley.

**Benefits to South Coast AQMD**

This work complements the ongoing efforts to partner with the community to address local air quality priorities through the AB 617 program, including providing training and education and air filtration systems to reduce air pollution exposure and emissions in Eastern Coachella Valley. This project will continue to strengthen South Coast AQMD’s collaborative partnerships in Eastern Coachella Valley and improve environmental literacy in these rural communities. Additionally, this project can serve as a model for future outreach and educational programs in this region.

**Resource Impacts**

The U.S. EPA State Environmental Justice Cooperative Agreement Program funding supports the Air Quality Academy project in the Eastern Coachella Valley.