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*2021 Legislative Platform*

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**Northern Sonoma County  
Air Pollution Control District**

*"Clean Air, Good Living"*



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## **Background**

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The positions defined within this legislative and regulatory platform reflect the District's goals and priorities as well as its position on issues that are currently, or are anticipated to be, the focus of future legislation and regulation at the local state and federal levels. District adoption of this platform authorizes the staff's active participation to influence local state and federal decision-making on legislative, administrative, regulatory and funding issues and to support judicial advocacy consistent with the District's priorities (such as Amicus Curiae filings).

Using this document as a guide, the staff and Counsel will respond to requests for amicus curiae support and review and offer positions of support or opposition on local, state and federal legislation, and collaborate with other agencies on regional advocacy efforts to effect policy change consistent with this Platform. Staff will consider the work of the CAPCOA (California Air Pollution Control Officers Association) and other organizations that represent air district interests more generally, when analyzing possible collaboration.

Staff recommends that the Legislative and Regulatory Platform be updated annually to be responsive to changes to the local, state and federal legislative and regulatory environments and to reflect the interests unique to the District and interests that may also be common to Districts throughout the state.

## **Strategies for Effective Platform Implementation**

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1. The APCO and District Counsel and staff develop strategies to influence legislation. During the course of the legislative year, staff will monitor legislation and compose letters of support or opposition as bills progress, or participate in legislative hearings through the legislative process.
2. The APCO and District Counsel and staff strategizes and coordinates with CAPCOA, other jurisdictions, special districts, and organizations on key issues of common interest to ensure a stronger voice on legislation, regulatory and policy matters.
3. The APCO and District Counsel and staff to provide updates to the Board on the Platform progress when there are developments to report at regular meetings or through correspondence with the APCO.

## **Legislative Principles**

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1. The District supports local state and federal efforts to provide funding to ensure the District can fulfill its legally required purpose and mandates.
2. The District recognizes the dire need for local action to support the reduction of GHG emissions associated with climate change, and supports legislation that works to combat climate change.
3. The District will engage on legislative efforts to reduce toxic air contaminants, ozone and particulate matter, and in particular those pollutants associated with wildfire, within California that also take into consideration principles of equity, environmental justice, the rural lifestyle and economic impacts of any such rule making.
4. The District seeks out ways to improve the existing grant programs that it administers through legislative actions to better support its local constituents with the resources necessary to effectuate the District's goals to reduce air pollution within its boundaries.

## **Priorities for 2021**

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### ***District Functions Funding Goal***

The District Funding Platform: The District will seek out to support and increase levels of subvention funding that will ensure that the District can continue to perform its mandated responsibilities under the law.

- *We take the following approaches to accomplish this:*
  1. Support legislative efforts to increase subvention to air districts in California (Amendments to Section 39800 et seq. of Health and Safety Code).
  2. Support other legislation that supports ongoing work at the District
  3. Oppose legislation that constitutes an unfunded mandate by state to the District.
  4. Support the continued existence of California Air Resource Board's support and training programs for air districts.

### ***Air Pollution Reduction Actions Goal One: Consider legislative mandates that affect sources of criteria and toxic pollutants.***

The District Pollution Reduction Platform: The District participates in the development of the funding around the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of criteria and toxic air pollutants regulated under the federal and state Clean Air Acts.

- *We take the following approaches to accomplish this:*
  1. Support local, state, and federal actions and legislation that reduce criteria and toxic pollutant emissions from a fossil fuel-based transportation sector; including transition to an EV, biofuels, or RNG transportation and infrastructure.
  2. Support local, state, and federal actions and legislation that reduce fine particulate matter and black carbon emissions from non EPA-certified wood heating appliances to cleaner certified appliances and alternative heating sources with renewable energy.
  3. Support state re-authorization and funding of the Funding Agricultural Replacement Measures for Emission Reductions (FARMER) Program that provides funding through local air districts for cleaner agricultural harvesting equipment, heavy-duty trucks, agricultural pump engines, tractors, and other equipment used in agricultural operations.
  4. Support local, state, and federal actions and legislation that assist and provide incentives to principle industry sectors, such as geothermal and agriculture to reduce criteria and toxic pollutants.
  5. Participate in the implementation of the new CARB rule relating to the reporting of minor sources (that is part of the implementation of AB 617) to ensure that the District concerns about administrative burden and costs are taken into consideration.

6. Support local, state, and federal actions and legislation that improve emissions control devices for stationary facilities that utilize biomass waste for production of energy or fuel.

***Air Pollution Reduction Actions Goal Two: Support fuel reduction and forest waste management as a tool to reduce wildfire and reduce the emissions of criteria pollutants associated with wildfire.***

The District Wildfire Reduction Platform: Related to the recent fires that wreaked havoc in Sonoma County, the District supports actions that can reduce the risk of wildfire.

- *We take the following approaches to accomplish this:*
  1. Support local, state and federal actions and legislation that funds fuel reduction activities across all land ownership types and considers forest health and resilience.
  2. Participate with local and regional entities on developing strategies to encourage local land owners to properly manage their forested lands through participation in the Forest Management Task Force.
  3. Educate and collaborate with school districts about what information the District provides, how to interpret air monitoring data and support their efforts relative to indoor air quality at local schools.
  4. Encourage federal land owners to come up with innovative ways to use local communities to manage environmental review and carry out fuel reduction activities on federal lands.
  5. Support grant applications that seek CAL FIRE grant funding under that Agency's forest health initiative and fire reduction programs funded by the Cap and Trade Program.
  6. Investigate legislative activities that support compost and the use of biochar as a soil amendment so that woody biomass is not left in place to become a fire hazard.
  7. Seek continued support and partnerships for the Biomass Business Competition, as developed by the Board's Biomass Utilization Subcommittee.

***Climate Change Goal One: Support Implementation of Climate Change laws.***

The District Climate Change Platform:

The District supported the passage of AB 398 and the continuation of the State's Cap and Trade Program in order to see California move forward as a leader in combating climate change.

- *We take the following approaches to accomplish this:*
  1. Participate in the forums presented by the Air Resources Board for Districts to interact with the state on the implementation of the Cap and Trade Program

2. Continue to provide resources to businesses within the District that might be impacted by the Cap and Trade Program.
3. Collaborate with the County groups like RCPA and others to help implement state and local climate action plans and other climate change reduction activities at a local level.

### ***Climate Change Goal Two: Renewable Energy.***

#### **The District Renewable Energy Platform:**

To support federal, state and local action that promotes the use of flexible generation baseload renewable power, such as geothermal energy, and to call for more renewable energy that takes into consideration the life cycle benefits of using waste to energy, such as forest and agricultural biomass, dairy digestion and other types of bioenergy, with support for that industry to continue to transform its business model to best serve energy users in the most efficient, reliable and cost-effective way possible.

➤ *We take the following approaches to accomplish this:*

1. Support legislation, policies, and regulations that ensure utility regulation and new environmental laws consider the life cycle benefits of renewable energy, and in particular bioenergy.
2. Support legislation that develops cost-effective renewable-energy resources.
3. Support legislation and regulations that streamline permitting for new small-scale energy or fuel generating facilities.
4. Support legislation that provides for multiple approaches to meet energy peak usage, especially the use of flexible generation.
5. Support newly formed joint-power action groups and new municipal power entities.
6. Support legislation that preserves public tax-exempt financing, and federal tax credits for renewable energy projects, including but not limited to bioenergy projects.
7. Oppose legislation that would reduce funding for renewable energy programs.
8. Support legislation and efforts that ensure future changes to transmission-system improvements and/or requirements include allocations of the costs for those activities to the parties that impact the systems and/or stand to benefit from those improvements (“the Beneficiary Pays Principle”).



## ***District Grant Programs Goal One: Support Existing Grant Programs.***

### **Current Grant Program Improvement Platform**

The District seeks out opportunities within the legislature to support the existing grant programs including the Moyer Program, the Wood Stove Replacement Program and the programs based on the collection of the Vehicle License fee (vehicle pollution mitigation program).

- *We take the following approaches to accomplish this:*
  1. Review and comment on proposed CARB and CAPCOA guidelines and strategies that impact legislation, including providing input to CARB in the form of survey responses, informal information exchange, and committee meeting discourse and Report Program metrics to CARB for the purposes of reviewing program efficacy.
  2. Provide formal written and verbal comments on legislative actions that affect District grant programs listed above.

## ***District Grant Programs Goal Two: New Grant Programs.***

### **The District Grant Expansion Platform:**

The District monitors the legislature to identify and support opportunities for new grant programs and pilot programs that would further expand the District's ability to support its local constituents with the resources necessary to reduce air pollution within the District's boundaries.

- *We take the following approaches to accomplish this:*
  1. Support legislative actions that aim to spearhead new grant incentive programs.
  2. Participate with CARB and CAPCOA in the formation of guidelines that support new legislative action to disburse grant funds.
  3. Evaluate feasibility of legislative and guideline proposals from a small rural district perspective, including issues related to retroactive funding and administrative costs.