



Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District
14306 Park Avenue, Victorville, CA 92392
(760) 245-1661

MEDIA RELEASE

PAGE ONE OF TWO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 6, 2014

For further information contact:

Violette Roberts, Community Relations & Education Manager

Mojave Desert AQMD (760) 245-1661 ext. 6104

Victorville & Barstow Targeted to Receive Cap-and-Trade Investments Funds from greenhouse gas-reduction programs to benefit disadvantaged communities

Victorville – The California Environmental Protection Agency has prioritized disadvantaged communities across the state for projects funded by California's cap-and-trade program. As a result, more than \$200 million of \$832 million in cap-and-trade proceeds from the 2014-2015 budget will be earmarked for low-income areas, including the communities of Victorville and Barstow, the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District has announced.

“When you consider the impacts of transported emissions from the Los Angeles basin on the High Desert’s air quality and the lingering effects of the recession on our economy, it is gratifying to see that two local communities will directly reap the benefits of the state’s cap-and-trade program,” commented MDAQMD Executive Director Eldon Heaston.

Projects utilizing those funds include energy efficiency, public transit, affordable housing, and other greenhouse gas-cutting programs. A 2012 State law (Senate Bill 535 - De Leon) requires that at least 25 percent of these cap-and-trade funds be invested for the benefit of the State's most disadvantaged

PAGE TWO OF TWO

communities. At least 10 percent of those funds must be for projects located within the communities themselves.

CalEPA used census data, public input from workshops and briefings, and the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool to designate the funding areas and ensure that California's most environmentally impacted communities will be eligible for funding. CalEnviroScreen is a science-based tool that identifies California communities that face the greatest burdens from and vulnerability to multiple sources of pollution. Additionally, CalEPA's actions ensure that State agencies concentrate funding for greenhouse gas emission reductions in those communities.

The percentage of funds designated will probably be higher, according to the Brown Administration, which views SB 535 requirements as a minimum. The Air Resources Board, which administers the cap-and-trade program, believes that at least one third of the budget appropriation (\$272 million) will be spent on such projects.

“California is demonstrating we can combat climate change, create jobs, provide clean air, clean energy and help revitalize our most polluted neighborhoods,” said Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de Leon, who authored SB 535. “As a state, we are making tangible investments to strengthen and protect our most polluted and underserved neighborhoods.”

- END -