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Environmental Justice Fact Sheet

WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE?

The concept of environmental justice is about equal and fair access to a healthy environment, with the goal of protecting underrepresented and poorer communities from incurring disproportionate environmental impacts, with respect to development.

BACKGROUND

A 1994 Presidential Order directed every Federal Agency to make environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing the effects of all programs, policies and activities on underrepresented groups and low-income populations. Reinforcing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, this Presidential Order ensures that every federally funded project nationwide consider the human environment when undertaking the planning and decision making process.

SCAG'S ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE POLICY

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for six Southern California counties, SCAG is responsible for pursuing and developing solutions to transportation, housing, air quality and other regional issues. SCAG has developed a policy to ensure that environmental justice principles are an integral part of the transportation planning process. To implement this policy SCAG:

- analyzes its transportation plan to determine its impact on the environment, health and safety and economy of all the region's residents
- provides early and meaningful public participation in decision-making processes
- seeks out and considers input from traditionally underrepresented groups
- considers alternative approaches or proposes mitigating measures when disproportionately high and adverse impacts on low-income or underrepresented groups are identified
- evaluates and responds, as needed, to environmental justice issues that arise during the implementation of regional plans

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND THE 2012 RTP AND SCS

SCAG is committed to addressing environmental justice in all plans, programs and policies. To this end, on-going outreach efforts are underway for reaching environmental justice communities during development of the 2012 RTP and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). As is consistent with federal policies and past practices, the 2012 RTP Environmental Justice analysis will document these outreach efforts and analyze the 2012 RTP in terms of impacts to underrepresented groups and low-income populations in the SCAG region.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit the SCAG website at www.scag.ca.gov or contact **Jennifer Sarnecki** at (213) 236-1829 or via email at sarnecki@scag.ca.gov.



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
ASSOCIATION of GOVERNMENTS

818 West 7th Street, 12th Floor | Los Angeles, CA 90017
Tel: (213) 236-1800 | Fax: (213) 236-1963 | www.scag.ca.gov

“No person in The United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

—Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

2008 RTP

SCAG evaluated the 2008 RTP to determine if implementation would result in disproportionate adverse impacts on low-income, under-represented groups, elderly or disabled populations. SCAG also conducted an outreach program, soliciting input and feedback from all parts of the region.

Areas analyzed include:

- ▶ Accessibility (Employment Services and Parks)
- ▶ Distribution of Plan Expenditures (Investments)
- ▶ Taxes Paid
- ▶ Auto Travel Time Savings
- ▶ Auto Travel Distance Reductions
- ▶ Environmental Impact Analyses (Air Emissions and Noise)

SCAG's analysis found no disproportionate impact in most areas. However, the results from the 2008 RTP analysis did indicate that low-income and underrepresented groups will be disproportionately impacted by aviation and highway noise. The 2008 RTP proposed mitigating these impacts to the extent possible and proposed grade crossings and clean technologies for goods movement corridors.