

**Supplemental**  
Responses to Comments

on the

**Environmental Analysis**

Prepared for the

**2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving  
Carbon Neutrality**

December 15, 2022

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) received comments raising environmental-related concerns during the December 15, 2022 Public Hearing. CARB has already responded to a majority of these comments in the December 13, 2022 Response to Comments on the Draft Environmental Analysis (RTC) document. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) does not require a response to comments received after the close of the noticed written public comment period, which ended October 24, 2022. However, for completeness, CARB has prepared this Supplemental Response to Comments document to provide additional responses on the record to some comments raised today.

A commenter stated that inadequate time was provided for reviewing the final environmental documents. CARB responds as follows: CARB provided two 45-day comment periods on the draft CEQA documents - including the Recirculated Draft Environmental Analysis, which covered all of the elements of the final 2022 Scoping Plan. The final 2022 Scoping Plan is the result of an extensive, years-long public engagement process.<sup>1</sup> There is no requirement to provide a comment period on the Final Environmental Analysis (EA) prior to the hearing, and CARB has fully complied with CEQA's procedural requirements.

CARB also received a comment about availability of documents relied upon by the 2022 Scoping Plan environmental documents. CARB notes that most reference materials were hyperlinked in the environmental documents themselves and available online, and those that were not hyperlinked were available by request prior to the hearing.

Commenters also raised some concerns about potential impacts related to CCS, and transportation and storage of CO<sub>2</sub>, and petroleum refining for export. These concerns have been fully addressed in the Final EA and in the RTC document.

CARB also heard a comment that CARB did not use an "existing conditions" baseline. This is incorrect; in its CEQA analysis, CARB used an "existing conditions" baseline set in 2021, consistent with CEQA convention. (See Final EA at pages 24 and 47.) Furthermore, the commenter has not provided any evidence that the selection of baseline

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<sup>1</sup> See Scoping Plan at 54. See also Final EA at 11-12.

could result in any emissions increases or other adverse environmental impacts; indeed, all of the evidence in the record shows that the 2022 Scoping Plan would achieve dramatic emissions reductions across the state. (See page 85 of the Final EA.)

We heard a comment that, in light of the modelling undertaken for the 2022 Scoping Plan, CARB should have more specifically analyzed the potential compliance responses to the 2022 Scoping Plan (including offshore wind and transmission infrastructure). CARB responds that the 2022 Scoping Plan and the associated modelling cannot identify specific resource locations. The purpose of the 2022 Scoping Plan and the supportive modeling is to identify statewide energy supply and demand needs. Any attempt to identify or analyze energy supply and demand needs in a location-specific context in the EA would be inherently speculative. See Master Response 1 in the RTC document released on December 13, 2022.

A commenter indicated that CARB failed to include nuclear energy generation as part of the project description. CARB responds that no new nuclear generating resources are relied on in the 2022 Scoping Plan. The existing nuclear resources currently serving the state (including Diablo Canyon and Palo Verde) are part of the existing environmental conditions.

CARB also heard a comment that certain elements of the 2022 Scoping Plan would lead to social and economic impacts relating to the proposed VMT reductions. CARB strongly disagrees with these claims, and has previously responded to similar claims in the supplemental responses to comments on the 2017 Scoping Plan.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the CEQA Guidelines state generally that “[e]conomic or social effects of a project shall not be treated as significant effects on the environment.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Available at <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/classic/cc/scopingplan/final-supplemental-rtc.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> See, 14 CCR § 15131(a); see also August 12, 2012 letter to California Supreme Court regarding Supreme Court Case No. S258574, *County of Butte v. Dept. of Water Resources*, Requested Modification to Opinion, available at: <https://www.cegadevelopments.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/166/2022/08/here.pdf>.