Inland Ports of Southern California – Warehouses, Distribution Centers, Intermodal Facilities
Impacts, Costs and Trends

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With globalization and the expansion of international trade, corporate and consumer demand for imported goods is continuously increasing. These imports, the majority of which arrive by ship, are transported to millions of destinations all over the country by an expanding logistics industry otherwise known as the goods movement industry. The goods movement industry includes ports, trucking companies, rail yards and rail lines, intermodal facilities, warehouses, and distribution centers—each relying upon diesel fuel to power their operations.

Currently, more than one-third of all cargo imported into the U.S. by ship enters through the Los Angeles and Long Beach Ports, making them the most active load centers in the world and the largest sources of air pollution in Southern California. In 2005, there were more than 47,000 truck trips per day out of the ports of Los Angeles. More than 35,000 trains—many of them longer than a mile and pulled by four, diesel-powered locomotives—course through the region every year. Currently, public policy encourages the expansion of the goods movement industry in Southern California causing these numbers to increase each year.¹

The region east of Los Angeles, known as the Inland Empire, includes the counties of San Bernardino and Riverside. From an economic perspective, the rapid industrial growth, lower property values, and convenient access to freeways, airports, and rail lines have made the Inland Valley an ideal location for manufacturing and industrial facilities, warehouses, rail yards, and distribution centers and has become the home of the nation’s largest distribution hub for giant retailers, like Walmart. Of the millions of ocean freight containers arriving at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, 70% are transported through communities in the Inland Valley to clusters of warehouses and rail yards before being distributed to the rest of the country.

Inland Ports

Typically, we connote Goods Movement with sea ports. More and more the industry is looking for more locations to sort, store and process the goods and products imported at the ports as it travels to its final
destination. Many of the coastal ports may reach their capacity without additional areas for storage. As more ships arrive at the ports with more containers, they stack up on the docks without a place to go. Though many of the ports are in the process of expansions and major infrastructure improvements, congestion will still present challenges to timely and cost effective throughput of goods to non coastal retailers, manufacturers and ultimately consumers. The industry solution is to have this inbound cargo transferred directly from an ocean vessel to railcars and then transported to an inland location, away from the more congested port itself, for further processing and distribution. As described by the industry, “These inland locations, or intermodal centers, serve as “inland ports,” with some handling as much cargo volumes as their coastal counterparts. Though the concept of inland ports is not new, these locations are becoming increasingly critical to the global supply chain and will affect logistics decisions ranging from shipping routes to warehouse locations. Many corporate distribution and real estate professions are just now beginning to understand the role inland ports will play as we enter the new cycle of economic and

Where are the inland ports located?
The distance between a seaport and a corresponding inland port varies. Some inland locations are over 1,000 miles from the ocean, while others are a short distance away, serving largely as a container transfer point to relieve storage and distribution congestion from seaports. An example of the latter is Front Royal, Va., set up to handle cargo from the Port of Norfolk 220 miles away.

The relatively short list of current areas widely recognized as full-fledged inland ports include Dallas/Fort Worth, Houston, Chicago, Kansas City, St. Louis, Atlanta, Memphis, Inland Empire, Columbus and Charlotte.

A legitimate inland port will typically have the following characteristics:
- Market proximity to at least 3 million people within 200 miles
- A major, direct connection to an American seaport via a Class I railroad. This rail corridor forms the “stem” of the coastal port/inland barbell, as dedicated container trains—often comprising upwards of 250 double-stack cars—run steadily between the two locations. Some inland ports primarily serve one corresponding seaport, using one Class I railroad.
- Free Trade Zone status and privileges.
- An Abundance of reasonably priced labor and commercial real estate for warehousing and distribution, relative to the East and West Coast.
- An overall governing body or at least a consortium of stakeholders collaborating in a cohesive management plan for the overall effectiveness of the inland port.
- A state and local government climate that is enthusiastic about inland port development, and willing to offer strong incentives to participants.
Foremost, an inland port is a hub designed to move international shipments more efficiently and effectively from maritime ports inland for distribution throughout the U.S. heartland. At one end the inbound containers flood into a seaport, spreading across local storage facilities as they are unloaded. If they aren’t moved quickly enough from the port, they create a bottleneck that bogs down the entire distribution cycle as containers wait longer to get off ships, to get into warehouses, and to get back out and onto trucks and trains for final shipment. Inland ports act as an integrated component to the port systems. With port systems growing in size and capacity the inland port provides the balance, with two ends connected by a dedicated rail line, originating on-dock at the container terminals with direct access to the inland port destination. In such a fashion, the inland hub provides the means for ocean cargo to pass through the waterfront terminals more quickly and more cost effectively, literally clearing the decks for the arrival of the next vessel.

While this system benefits industry, it does not take into account externalized health costs caused by the goods movement industry in California. That cost, an estimated $21.5 billion, is paid instead by taxpayers each year. In the South Coast Air Basin, which includes Orange County and parts of Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and Riverside counties, industrial health impacts such as premature death, chronic bronchitis, and hospitalization are estimated to cost $10.2 billion per year. The expansion and maintenance of public freeways and roads, on which heavy trucks create the greatest wear and tear, further subsidizes the goods movement industry.

An overall decline in air quality, property values, and quality of life also reduce economic opportunities for communities crowded by the goods movement industry. A study by Jon Haveman of the Public Policy Institute of California categorizes areas near ports, rail yards, warehouses, and distribution centers as “hot spots”—bearing the brunt of negative impacts but not sharing the economic benefits. He found that between 1990 and 2000, areas within three miles of goods movement facilities experienced a slower employment growth and slower development of business establishments than the rest of Los Angeles County. In Southern California, affected communities stretch from the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach to Riverside and San Bernardino counties.
Inland Valleys – The Southland’s Inland Port.

The warehousing industry in southern California has focused its expansion on the rural, desert areas of Riverside and San Bernardino counties which offer vast spaces of open land ready for eager developers. The Riverside /San Bernardino region of southern California, an area covering more than 30,000 square miles with a population of over 4.1 million, represents 11 percent of California’s total population. Latino and Asian communities contribute largely to this explosive growth, and Latino will constitute a majority of the Inland Empire by 2015. Often referred to as the “Inland Empire” the region is one of the fastest growing areas of the state, with a 60.8% population increase between 2000 and 2010. Vast stretches of cheap land has attracted thousands of housing tracts offering less expensive houses but few new jobs resulting in a commuter population that spends long hours on the roads instead of in their local communities. The result is a large population with few ties to the place in which they reside. This explosive growth has stretched local resources as it’s created a demand for extensive infrastructure development and has stressed existing institutions such as schools, hospitals which are not sufficient to meet the growing needs.

Lying along some of the most extensive road and rail networks in the United States, from an industry perspective, the Inland Empire is considered an ideal hub for logistics. In 2004 one-sixth of the commercial development in the nation, or over 10 million square feet, was taking place within the Inland Empire. The conversion of rural agricultural land into industrial distribution centers has placed tremendous stress on nearby communities with the thousands of trucks cramming freeways and residential streets, creating safety issues for residents and adding significant health issues from the pollution. It has also drastically changed the rural lifestyles of families, forcing the animal oriented community to compete with heavy big-rig trucks.

Jobs, Jobs, Jobs – Really!?

Warehousing has been sold to decision makers of the Inland Valley as the “door to upward mobility”, bringing good paying jobs to unskilled and uneducated populations. That promise has proven to be more wishful thinking than reality. Jobs in warehousing and distribution centers have proven to produce remarkably few jobs per square feet of land consumed – 1/4,000 sq ft. The recently built Sketchers Warehouse promised 2500 new jobs to the community of Moreno Valley but produced only 500 which were employees transferred from their old Ontario facility. Only 1 new job employing a Moreno Valley resident was created.
Under the drive to lower costs, increase speed of delivery and increase profits, warehouse jobs have become the new sweatshops. Workers report working up to 72 hour shifts and only getting paid when they are loading or unloading but not for any other work they perform. As documented in a new report “Chain of Greed – How Walmart’s Domestic Outsourcing Produces Everyday Low Wages and Poor Working Conditions for Warehouse Workers” warehouse jobs are outsourced to temp agencies by still directed by giant retailers like Walmart, creating massive wage violations, dangerous working conditions, and exploitive management practices:

**Domestic outsourcing is on the rise across key U.S. industries:** Contracting out is becoming increasingly common in many of the nation’s largest and fastest-growing industries, including construction, day labor, janitorial and building services, home health care, warehousing and retail, agriculture, poultry and meat processing, high-tech, delivery, trucking, home-based work, and the public sectors. Even hotels have begun to outsource traditional functions, including cleaning services. Often relying on the use of temporary and staffing agencies, outsourcing in these industries has also resulted in comparatively lower wages for work similar to the jobs previously performed in-house.

**Labor violations are rampant in Southern California’s Inland Empire, which is a warehouse nerve center for Walmart goods.** Under the watchful eye of Walmart managers, the outsourced warehouse operations of Schneider Logistics and its temporary staffing firms (Rogers Premier and Impact Logistics) have produced rampant wage and overtime and health and safety violations that are the subject of a class action lawsuit. Indeed, evidence produced as a result of the lawsuit makes clear that Walmart is intimately involved in the daily operations of the Schneider operations, which solely move Walmart goods. This report, court documents and recent investigations by the California Labor Commissioner and the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) reveal the breadth of labor abuses taking place in these warehouses. They include confusing “piece rate” pay schemes where workers are only paid for unloading and loading containers, not for other work performed, for working lengthy hours with no overtime pay, for illegal and falsified pay records, and for hazardous workplace conditions (especially excessive heat, pressure for speed, and unstable storage stacking). These conditions have also created a climate of fear among a largely Latino workforce that claimed labor violations and were subsequently threatened with termination, and a federal court ruling vindicating the workers who alleged retaliation.

**Domestic outsourcing imposes an especially severe toll on Latino workers in Southern California and around the U.S.:** Latinos often represent a large segment of those industries where domestic outsourcing by major corporations is most prevalent. In addition, the same industries that implement contracting-out and employ vulnerable, often Latino, workers frequently also have the highest rates of workplace violations of core labor standards. A 2009 study of over 1800 low-wage workers in Los Angeles – nearly 1300 of them Latino – found that minimum wage violations affected 38.3 percent of the workers, and that an astounding 79.6 percent of Latino workers had suffered violation of their overtime pay rights in the week prior to the survey. Logistics companies are no exception. In the production, packaging and warehousing occupations reported in the Los Angeles survey, overtime violation rates reached 37.3 percent of workers, with meal break violations affecting 83.4 percent of these workers.

With the vast open space and rural unincorporated land, the area has long been seen from the outside as merely an extension of Los Angeles to be used for projects and facilities other areas didn’t want; from toxic waste sites, incinerators, garbage dumps and now massive warehouses and intermodal facilities. Starting in
2000, the open spaces and cheap land attracted industrial development with massive distribution centers served by thousands of diesel spewing trucks and trains.

The financial crisis of the last few years has hit the area particularly hard. With the primary economic base tied to only two industries – home building and logistics— both arenas were decimated by the financial crash the economy of the area hit a wall. The area has the third-highest home foreclosures among large metropolitan areas. The unemployment rate in the region is one of the highest in the country at 10.1 percent. The economic insecurity of these families is compounded by the warehouse industry’s low-wage model. Recent census data finds the average household income for the region at $39,895.

But there are great variations within the region from the desert community of Indian Wells with a median income level of $120,074 to the City of San Bernardino with a per capita income level of less than $15,616. On the Westside neighborhood where intermodal facilities are concentrated sixty seven percent of the households have an annual income of less than $10,000. These families reported in a recent health study conducted by Loma Linda University School of Public Health that they had no health insurance or money to pay for medical care. Eighty percent of these families reported they did not go to Emergency rooms— meaning families are not receiving any medical care, relying on over-the-counter medicines and home remedies for medical treatment.

**Health Impacts on Inland Valley Families**

Compounding the lack of medical care is the health impacts from environmental pollution. The area has the highest level of particulate pollution and ozone in the nation. Seventy percent of the cancer risk to families in the Inland Valleys comes from diesel exhaust. The Goods Movement Industry is heavily reliant upon diesel fuels from ships, trucks, locomotive, forklifts, cranes and more.

According to the California Air Resources Board, diesel engines emit a complex mixture of air pollutants, composed of gaseous and solid material. The visible emissions in diesel exhaust are known as particulate matter or PM. In 1998, California identified diesel exhaust particulate matter (PM) as a toxic air contaminant based on its potential to cause cancer, premature death, and other health problems. Toxic air contaminants (TACs) are those air pollutants that may cause or contribute to an increase in death or serious illness or may
pose a present or future hazard to human health. Diesel engines also contribute to California’s fine particulate matter (PM2.5) air quality problems. Those most vulnerable are children whose lungs are still developing and the elderly who may have other serious health problems. Based on year 2006-2008 emissions in California, diesel PM contributes each year to approximately 2,000 premature deaths. In addition, diesel soot causes visibility reduction and is a potent global warmer.  

Breathing diesel exhaust isn’t just unpleasant – it is hazardous to your health. In fact, health research indicates that the portion of the exhaust you can’t see maybe the most dangerous of all. Asthma attacks, respiratory disease, cardiovascular disease, neurological illness, and even premature death – all of these are among the most serious public health problems linked to emissions from the nation’s fleet of diesel vehicles. Multiple short- and long-term studies carried out by California universities, organizations and foundations have supported the understanding of just how dangerous it is, prompting South Coast Air Quality Management District to make a transition to a zero emission logistics industry a top priority.  

Diesel exhaust has been found to cause and exacerbate the effects of asthma, lead to premature death due to effects on the heart and cardiovascular systems, and cause birth defects, including increased heart defects, low birth weight, and preterm babies. Of the ten most polluted counties in the U.S., eight are in California, including San Bernardino County which boasts the highest prevalence of asthma symptoms for children ages 1 to 17 in Southern California – 13.1%. Children are more likely than adults to be affected by outdoor air pollution because they tend to spend more time outdoors and have higher respiration rates. The Children’s Health Study, a long-term study of more than 3,000 children in 12 Southern California communities, found that traffic-related pollutants, contribute to the onset of asthma. The study found that children playing three or more team sports in high pollution areas have an increased risk of developing asthma. Since many of the warehouses and truck routes are located next to homes and schools, children and families are at high risk.  

The severe health impact of Goods Movement is documented in USC’s Children’s Health Study showing children in our area to have the slowest lung growth and weakest lung capacity and of all children studied in southern California.
A California Air Resources Board Health Risk Assessments (HRAs) found the BNSF rail yard on the Westside of the City of San Bernardino had the highest cancer risk of all rail yards in the state at a whopping 3,300 in a million.\textsuperscript{12}

The temptation to solve the local government funding shortage through warehouse development became too great to turn down—even at the expense of the health of the low-income residents of the affected communities from the concentration of diesel truck exhaust drawn to the area by the warehousing.

While ignorance could be claimed in the beginning, the emerging scientific information brought forth by the South Coast AQMD, researchers at USC and UCLA and the hundreds of other scientific studies generated on diesel, clearly show the horrific health impacts from constant, high levels of diesel exhaust. As recently as April of this year, another mega-warehouse was permitted for the area in close proximity to the Jurupa Valley High School—the “hot-spot” for diesel pollution.
Proximity to the diesel source is important.

The South Coast AQMD’s Mira Loma Specific Air Quality Study found that the closer one is to the diesel source the greater the health risk. AQMD recommended that “if we are to bring diesel sources into the community there should be a 500 meter (1500 feet) buffer zone between diesel sources and where people live.”

The study also concluded that even if all trucks coming into the area were new and used the least polluting alternative fuels the pollution levels would remain dangerously high-- the mere increase in the number of trucks would keep the pollution levels elevated.

While we were able to stop warehouses from being sited near homes on approximately 700 acres, the same developers now propose to place a residential development up to the area of existing warehouses and the truck route for vehicles exiting a new off ramp from the I-15. This plan will place hundreds of unsuspecting new homeowners directly adjacent to a major pollution source in harm’s way.

The warehouses, distribution centers, intermodal and other logistic facilities operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, creating constant noise from trucks passing through residential roads, cranes and loading equipment, and the arrival and departure of trains. Noise pollution, when encountered continuously and at high levels (of over 85 decibels) contributes to permanent hearing loss from trauma to the structures of the inner ear. Non-auditory health effects include sleep disturbance, increased blood pressure, and decreased cognitive performance. Studies of children exposed to long-term environmental noise have shown significant deficits in language comprehension, sustained attention, and reading ability and performance on national standardized tests as compared to students from quieter schools.

Communities in San Bernardino and Riverside counties suffer from the highest particulate pollution levels in the United States. The most harmful byproduct of burning diesel fuel is the ultrafine particulate matter and organic vapors.

Particulate matter is classified as a toxic air contaminant by the
California Air Resources Board causing cancer and other adverse health problems, including respiratory illnesses, asthma, heart disease, and premature death. A 2010 report written by CARB and peer reviewed by the EPA estimated that fine particulate pollution (PM$_{2.5}$) causes 9,200 premature deaths in California each year. Particulate pollution is categorized into three main sizes (see figure 1). PM$_{10}$ measure up to 10 microns in diameter and appears as black dust or soot. PM$_{2.5}$ measure 2.5 microns or smaller in diameter and PM0.1 (ultra fines) make up more than 90% of diesel particulates. The smaller the size the greater the health risk. Because of their small size, ultra fine particles with their associated organic vapors are readily inhaled and can penetrate deep into the lungs and enter the bloodstream, carrying an array of toxins throughout the body. Of the hundreds of chemical compounds in diesel exhaust, 41 are listed by the California EPA as toxic air contaminants and 19 are known carcinogens.

The ultrafine particles are surrounded by vapors of toxic chemicals. These vapors penetrate the cells and begin the disease process by two mechanisms. Prooxidant activity where reactive oxygen species are generated that induce a state of oxidative stress in the cells leading to an inflammatory response; and Electrophilic activity that form irreversible bonds with a cells proteins and DNA, resulting in the proteins being irreversibly modified and losing their normal functions. It appears that the vapors, not the particles are actually the most dangerous disease causing element within diesel exhaust.

Based on a review of over a hundred medical studies in their database, the American Heart Association has identified a causal relationship between diesel exposure and an increase in cardiovascular mortality, fatal and non-fatal cardiovascular events (such as strokes, heart failure, and arrhythmias), and a decrease in life expectancy.

Because it inhibits proper lung function and growth, particulate pollution has the greatest impact on children whose lungs are developing. An eight year study done by the University of Southern California examined the lung function of 3,677 children from 12 communities in Southern California including San Bernardino. These children were tested annually for lung capacity from the age of 10 until they turned 18. The study found that children in the Inland Valleys, like San Bernardino had the weakest lung capacity and the slowest lung growth of all children studied in southern California.

Another characteristic of particulate pollution is that health risk is determined by proximity to the source.
The closer one is to the diesel source the greater the health risk. In the South Coast Air Basin mobile sources like trucks and trains cause 90% of cancer risk to residents, 70% of which is from diesel exhaust. One study found that a child born in Riverside or San Bernardino county will be exposed to as many cancer-causing agents in his or her first 12 days of life as most people are in 70 years.

**The Inland Valley’s Unique Conditions = Severe Health Threats**

Southern California is known for its sunny hot days and cool coastal breezes. The Inland Valleys are known for its majestic mountains surrounding the vast heavily populated valleys. The combination of the two creates unique conditions that are disastrous for residents of the Inland Valley.

As the on shore coastal breezes bring cooled air onto land it blows easterly bringing whatever pollutants it encounters with it. The pollutants created by the industrial operations of refineries, manufacturing and at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach are blown east into the Inland Valleys and are trapped by the mountain ranges—compounding the pollution levels to horrendous levels.

Recent research (Froines, UCLA, 2010) demonstrates an even more alarming factor occurring with the chemicals as they move east. Not only do the numbers of particles increase in mass as they travel east but they undergo a photochemical change in their chemical structure. As with the creation of smog where vehicle emissions and industrial fumes react in the atmosphere with sunlight to form photochemical smog, a similar reaction occurs as the ultra fines and vapors travel east. Non toxic compounds from the ports travel east and are converted to highly toxic compounds that settle in the inland valley.
When these compounds reach the Inland areas they are trapped by the bowl created by the mountains. Local sources from railyards, intermodal facilities, and diesel spewing trucks delivering to massive warehouses and distribution centers in the area compound the deadly situation even more. The result is a heavy burden of pollution smothering the area, especially those at the fence line of these operations. It is of no surprise that the San Bernardino BNSF railyard poses the highest cancer risk of all railyards in the state.

The ultrafine particles of diesel exhaust are surrounded by vapors of toxic chemicals. These vapors penetrate the human cells and begin the disease process by two mechanisms. Prooxidant activity where reactive oxygen species are generated that induce a state of oxidative stress in the cells leading to an inflammatory response; and Electrophilic activity that form irreversible bonds with a cells proteins and DNA, resulting in the proteins being irreversibly modified and losing their normal functions.29

The old saying of “location, location, location” certainly applies to the deadly soup of diesel exhaust that haunts the Inland Valleys of southern California. The combination of geography, meteorology, and chemistry create the conditions that threaten families in San Bernardino. Fueled by the addition of massive local sources from the intermodal facilities and railyards with the thousands of diesel spewing trucks drawn to them create a manmade disaster in the making. This unique and horrendous situation demands a unique and extraordinary response.

**Environmental Justice and Goods Movement**

Environmental discrimination is exercised through policies and practices that disproportionately impact marginalized groups with environmental burdens and polluting facilities, most often, poor communities and racial minorities. One clear example of how vulnerable communities are targeted was documented with the discovery of the “Cerrell Report”. In 1984, the California Waste Management Board drafted guidelines for the placement of waste-to-energy incinerators after encountering opposition to many of its proposed projects. The Cerrell Report, as it became known, recommended the placement of incinerators in low-income communities. Waste management planners anticipated that public officials and residents in such locales would overlook the health problems associated with incinerators because

> “All socioeconomic groupings tend to resent the nearby siting of major (waste disposal) facilities, but the middle and upper socioeconomic strata possess better resources to effectuate their opposition,” the report says. “Middle and higher socioeconomic strata neighborhoods should not fall at least within five miles of the proposed site.”1
of their need for employment and tax revenue. Further, poor communities were thought to lack the political resources by which higher-income neighborhoods blocked the local placement of incinerators.

The report suggests that trash-to-steam plants should be built in towns with less than 25,000 people where residents are old, poor, politically conservative, and Roman Catholic. The report found that people most likely to successfully oppose such facilities are young or middle-aged, college educated, liberal, and Protestant.30

“All socioeconomic groupings tend to resent the nearby siting of major (waste disposal) facilities, but the middle and upper socioeconomic strata possess better resources to effectuate their opposition,” the report says. “Middle and higher socioeconomic strata neighborhoods should not fall at least within five miles of the proposed site.”31 The report carefully sidesteps any reference to race but its recommendations confirmed that poor communities had been targeted as the site for polluting facilities.

Subsequent demographic surveys and studies have confirmed that race is a significant factor in determining health impacts on minority communities. One study found that race, not class, was the most significant factor in determining the location of commercial hazardous waste facilities. The study found that three out of every five African American and Hispanic American citizens lived in communities with uncontrolled waste sites.32 Many studies have found that asthma occurs much more frequently among African American children than white children.33-34 African American children are also four times more likely to die from asthma than white children.35 While 52 percent of whites live in counties with high ozone levels, the figure for African Americans is 62 percent and for Hispanics it is 71 percent.36 The trend is similar for other air pollutants such as carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, lead, and particulate matter, with higher percentages of Hispanics and African Americans in counties with poor air quality.37

This advice has been followed by developers of inland ports as they’ve targeted the low income, Latino communities of the Inland Valleys. In the community of Mira Loma Village, developers are proposing 24 industrial buildings at the fence line of homes of 101 families, 90% Latino. Near the BNSF intermodal facility in San Bernardino the surrounding community is predominately Latino and low income. Despite a documented cancer risk of more than 3300 in a million, the warehouses, railyards and intermodal facilities continue to operate with little or no change. In Moreno Valley more than 41 million square feet of warehousing is planned next to homes. That’s
more than 700 football fields of distribution centers.

**A Community’s Response**

Faced with the overwhelmingly high levels of pollution; struggling on meager wages to support one’s family; given the cost of raising children; how do low income, hard working families dare to take on powerful corporations like Walmart, Target and Warren Buffet’s BNSF railroad?

CCAEJ has explored situations like these for many years— and we’ve learned some lessons. In reviewing our history we recognized that success in confronting power was based on the community’s major strength – the courage and resiliency of people strategically united toward a common goal. There is a strongly held belief in the right of all people to the basic necessities in order to live a dignified life— access to clean water, food and shelter, safe and healthy working and living conditions, a voice in decisions that affect themselves and their community. This drive for what is right spurs people no matter what the obstacles to confront power and demand action. We recognize and honor that every person brings with them special skills and talents and a wealth of lived experiences. Combining those skills in a strategic manner can overcome all the other obstacles.38

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**Inland Valley Environmental Justice Intervention And Revitalization Program**

A different approach is needed to truly address the current, outrageous levels of pollution smothering these EJ communities. To create real environmental justice where all communities have the right to healthy, safe, and prosperous communities, three things must occur—

1) Stop the levels of pollution from getting worse;
2) Intervene and take dramatic steps to reduce the imminent health threat and reduce the current levels of pollution and
3) Take proactive steps to create healthy, sustainable communities.

Once again we look back to the toxic’s movement and the systemic changes they forced around toxic chemicals. A new program similar to Superfund is needed to address the hundreds of communities suffering from the disproportionate levels of pollution smothering their families today.

CCAEJ is proposing a similar program as CERCLA be used for Environmental Justice Communities— no matter the source of the pollution. We can identify certain communities that bear a higher level of risk due to the polluting facilities in their midst. Those sources may be refineries, dump sites, landfills, incinerators, large agricultural facilities, and, as the importation of goods from Asia continues to increase, we see facilities that cater to the movement of goods and products raising the levels of air pollution. Again the concentration and highest levels are found in low income, communities of color throughout the southern California area.
Inland Valley Environmental Justice Intervention
And Revitalization Program

CCAEJ has developed a program to intervene and reduce the health risks and lessen levels of pollution smothering these communities and restore communities to healthy, safe and sustainable communities. It would consist of the following components:

1. Identify those communities heavily impacted (EJ Communities)
2. Bring local affected residents together combining their skills, talents and lived experience to identify concerns and outline comprehensive solutions.
3. Intervene to reduce current pollution levels and where that may take time, implement measures to reduce exposure levels.
4. Conduct a community visioning process lead by the local residents to outline the vision of a healthy sustainable community.
5. Target these communities – not for polluting facilities—but for resources, funding and assistance to “get rid of the bad and bring in the good”. This is in reparations for the years of disproportionate burdens of pollution and lack of services these communities have suffered under.

In 2009, CCAEJ started our journey to explore a new way of addressing both, the severe pollution levels from multiple sources and the lack of services and necessities every community deserves in order to live a health, safe and sustainable life. We developed an experimental framework we called our Inland Valley Environmental Justice Intervention and Revitalization Program.

Working with the residents of the Westside community in the City of San Bernardino we developed a leadership development program to build the capacity within the community. CCAEJ consistently focuses on those most affected by environmental health hazards: low-income communities of color and recent immigrants who live, work, learn and play closest to rail yards, industrial areas, toxic waste facilities, intermodal facilities, freeways and other areas at greatest risk for environmental health hazards. Our work within the Inland Valley is particularly strategic in advancing the goals of the environmental health and justice movements in California. The Inland Valley represents one of the fastest growing regions of the state, with San Bernardino County alone representing 10 percent of California’s total population. We leverage resources to bring the needs of these communities to the attention of elected officials, funders and key decision makers. We work to train future generations of leaders, particularly women, whose voices would otherwise not be
CCAEJ developed the belief that the key to effectively solving community problems lies in bringing the diverse segments of the community together in one strong voice. By utilizing the skills, talents, and knowledge of each community member and tapping into the resources and relationships that are inherent within each community they can identify issues, define solutions, effectively advocate and create change. Each community member brings their own expertise and talents to the table, combining with others to form a strong community force. Helping individuals recognize their own strengths; learn new skills and develop the confidence to utilize them within a group setting, defines for us grassroots leadership development. The building blocks of every community lie in the relationships at the neighborhood level. We work to enable local residents to be the authorities within their neighborhoods. People have knowledge, contacts and skills that enable them to draw their neighbors into efforts to improve their community.

Community Empowerment

Our Community Empowerment Program is the cornerstone of all the work we do at CCAEJ. The Empowerment Program focuses on leadership development and a base-building approach to bringing the voices of those directly affected into the critical policy debates of our time. Our efforts are not to build community leaders, but to encourage many community residents to share leadership. Some people are strong on research and like the details; others have strong people skills and can motivate others to get involved; others have financial skills; others have good writing skills; others have close relationships and credibility with many people in the community; and others have persuasive speaking skills. Each is a leader in their own right. Each has the ability to expand their skills and explore new experiences.

Our program starts with building awareness of the environmental health threats around us, through our SALTA program—Salud Ambiental Líderes Tomando Acción—(Environmental Health, Leaders Taking Action). The SALTA course helps individuals (primarily Latinas) who live in the Inland Valley learn about environmental health issues in their homes and neighborhoods, get involved in finding solutions, and ultimately, advocate for local and regional policy changes that will improve the health of their families and their communities.

Neighborhood Assessment Teams (A-Teams) begins to demystify science and create local experts on the issues around them. The A-Teams teach basic science of air pollution and train team members in assessing their community. We are currently involved in 5 Community Based Research Projects (CBRP) with USC, Loma Linda (2 studies), UC Davis and UCLA.

CCAEJ facilitates Community Action Teams in each of our focus communities. These are groups of local
residents that come together to take leadership to identify areas of concern, research and develop appropriate solutions and advocate for change.

Our Organizing Academy provides an opportunity to advance the skills and experience of residents through a more in-depth understanding of organizing theory and skills development. A structured 12-week class provides not only in class theory but outside practice. One does not “learn” organizing and leadership by studying in a class but by doing. Home work assignments, role plays, practice before venturing out to the real world.

Through our various partnerships, participation in coalitions and collaborative, we expand the view of local residents to broader setting and increase their experiences and knowledge by working with other groups, and communities on issues of common concern. CCAEJ particularly seeks opportunities to partner with organizations focused on other social justice issues.

Community’s Platform for Action

Our Empowerment program provides the foundation for our work. We survey and engage residents in indentifying those issues of most concern. We then facilitate a process for conducting research on the issue and identification of solutions that address the root cause of the problem. From this exercise we develop a Community Action Platform. The Platform identifies short term, midterm and long term goals. For the Goods Movement issue our long-term goal is to convert all aspects of the movement of goods and products to a zero emission logistics industry utilizing electric trucks, locomotives and equipment or maglev and other emerging, clean technologies as well as banning the use of diesel fuel. A midterm goal is strengthening regulations governing diesel emissions from trucks, locomotives, ships and equipment. Recognizing that the health of local residents continues to be damaged by these operations while we seek policy changes, we have outlined mechanisms to reduce exposure to the pollution levels. This approach of developing policy from the bottom up ensures the policies are relevant to those most directly affected.

Multi-Agency Task Force

CCAEJ’s program recognizes that to reduce the exposures and create a more healthy community will take a comprehensive approach that utilizes the resources, regulatory oversight and expertise of as many agencies, and civic organizations, as well as the effective leadership of local elected officials. To create a coordinated effort we sought to create a multiagency Task Force comprised of federal, state, regional and local agencies along with local elected officials and residents. Through this Task Force we would implement the Intervention Plan to reduce exposure to the pollution from the BNSF railyard and other pollution sources. This project seeks to change the piece meal approach to health impacts in heavily polluted communities and instead looks at the community as a whole, utilizing the various services and resources at hand in a coordinated and cooperative manner to build a healthy community. 61
CCAEJ conducted several EJ Tours of San Bernardino for agency personnel and officials to demonstrate the issues facing this community. With the support and contacts of staff at Department of Toxic Substances Control we were able to garner commitments to participate from representatives from more than -- agencies at the federal, state, regional and local levels. Task Force participants include:

- U.S. EPA
- California Air Resources Board (CARB);
- Department of Toxic Substances Control;
- South Coast Air Quality Management District; (AQMD)
- State Attorney General’s Office;
- CalOSHA;
- Public Health Department;
- San Bernardino County CUPA;
- California Conservation Corp;
- Loma Linda University
- County District Attorney’s Office
- The Delta Group- researchers from UC Davis

The Task Force has been meeting every other month for two years. Task Force members are assigned to committees that meet and coordinate activities on specific tasks. For example, there is a truck idling committee that is addressing the issue of trucks parking and idling for long periods of time. CARB, County DA’s office and the City are working together to obtain funding for anti idling signs, training of local law enforcement on idling laws, and training sessions for truckers on the law’s requirements. Another committee is exploring vegetative barriers—trees and shrubs that absorb ultrafine particles. As a result of the research conducted, we have partnered with the City’s “traffic calming project” to both prevent trucks from entering residential areas and to plant trees between the railyard and homes to capture ultrafine particles. In each committee at least one community member participates to ensure the local residents’ concerns are addressed.

Our success in building the foundation for our program – from raising awareness about the severe pollution; outlining a Platform for Action through our Community Action Teams; forming a multi-agency/residents Task Force; and identifying resources to implement the plan have placed CCAEJ in the position to make significant advances in reducing exposure and pollution levels. Our engagement approach of bringing informed residents to the table with decision makers has resulted in positive partnerships to effectively address the critical issues facing our communities. The past year has proven to be extremely successful. As a result CCAEJ is in the position to undertake some extremely important projects to provide relief from the pollution for local residents.

- CCAEJ has received a $1 million grant from CARB to install high performance air filtration units at 5 schools in highly polluted areas providing relief from the heavy burden of pollution for more than 7,000 students. South Coast AQMD is providing technical assistance;
- Joined by the California Attorney General we have filed a California Environmental Quality Act lawsuit challenging placing a major diesel sources next to homes utilizing “Overriding Circumstances”.
• We are partnering with Loma Linda University in conducting a comprehensive health study of 900 families living near the BNSF railyard in San Bernardino, a first to look at the impacts of railyards on health. We also screened 750 students at two elementary schools.

• Established a weekly mobile clinic to provide free medical care to the neighborhood;

• Working with the City of San Bernardino to redesign a “traffic calming” project to include a vegetative barrier to absorb particulate pollution and reroute truck traffic away from residential neighborhoods;

• We are working with CARB and city staff to purchase and install anti-idling signs and conduct trainings on Anti-idling laws for local law enforcement.

• Working with CARB to educate truckers and help them understand the new laws and how to be in compliance.

• Partnering with Community Action Agency to target heavily polluted neighborhoods for weatherization services that not only increase energy efficiency but reduce pollution.

• Partnering with UCLA in a study funded by AQMD to measure pollution levels and better understand the disease causing mechanism; CCAEJ is translating the scientific information so that lay persons understand and to help decision makers use the information to inform their decisions;

• Partnering with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) to file a federal lawsuit under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) citing the violation of federal law with respect to the deposition of hazardous materials when particles from the railyards settle onto the community’s land.

Each of these projects are the result of successfully bringing together trained, informed and involved affected residents to engage with agencies and officials in discussions of critical issues and solutions through our Intervention Task Force in a way that has engendered trust, respect and cooperation among the parties and develops public policies and programs to better serve these communities. We are developing a model for community engagement and demonstrating development of protective policies at the community level that can be a model for addressing environmental justice issues and developing community driven public policy.

### Revitalization Program

The next year will be devoted to effectively implementing these programs, continuing our advocacy for strong regulations of the rail industry and promoting the need for a zero emission logistics industry. We will also begin our next phase – engaging the community in a community-driven visioning process to develop a blueprint toward a safer, healthier and more sustainable community on the Westside of San Bernardino. While reducing the impacts from past development and poor land use decisions, the Westside lacks other services that make them vulnerable to negative health outcomes. The lack of availability to healthy, fresh food and produce limits the nutritional options for families; lack of access to medical care prolongs the time for obtaining medical treatment and eliminates preventive care; lack of job security and economic opportunities limits the ability to provide the basic necessities for their families. Recreational facilities are below the recommended levels for the area. As an example of what can be done through a community driven process, CCAEJ has successfully built a community park. The 13-acre park provides hiking trails, a BMX bicycle track, playgrounds, basketball and volleyball courts, an open field for soccer, a camping area,
play grounds, a water play area and more. Safe recreational facilities still limit the ability of the community to exercise, congregate and build a feeling of community.

This community driven process of defining issues, outlining solutions and engaging officials in proactive, meaningful community improvements creates a mechanism for address needs and developing protective policies in a meaningful manner.

Conclusion

The residents of the Inland Valleys of southern California both attest to health problems caused by diesel pollution and to the industry and local government’s lack of regard for the lived experiences of their families and community. Suffering from cancer, cardiovascular disease, and asthma, they have brought their grievances to the industry and their local representatives, only to have their claims denied and ignored. Based on both current medical research and interviews with residents, it is clear that Goods Movement operations throughout the Inland Valleys are violating residents’ inherent right to the highest attainable standard of health, posing a serious threat to their very lives. The federal, state, and local government is currently failing in their duty to protect the rights and interests of its people. Faced with the reality of the current situation, all stakeholders, residents, elected officials, government agencies, and industry leaders must come together, assume responsibility, and take serious action to reduce and eliminate the health threats posed by the logistics industry. The lives of residents are depending on it.

Green Zones for Economic and Environmental Sustainability

The Inland Valley work is part of a pilot project of a statewide initiative of the California Environmental Justice Alliance (CEJA) called Green Zones for Economic and Environmental Sustainability. CEJA consists of six base building organizations around the state- Communities for a Better Environment (CBE- Oakland and Los Angeles); Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN- Oakland); People Organized to Demand Environmental and Economic Rights (PODER- San Francisco); Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment (CRPE- Oakland and the Central Valley); Environmental Health Coalition (EHC-San Diego and Tijuana) and CCAEJ (the Inland Valleys of Riverside and San Bernardino). It is a program to institutionalize assistance to those communities in most need – communities of color and low income neighborhoods that are heavily impacted by pollution and lack of services and amenities such as access to healthy food, recreation, health care and quality schools. It seeks to develop a systemic program that focuses funding and resources to these areas first, seeking to bring equity, fairness and justice as part of the American Dream. For more information contact Amy Vanderwarker, CEJA C0-coordinator at 510.302.0430 x 13 or avanderwarker@caleja.org or visit our website at www.caleja.org
Recommendations

In the face of adversity residents of the Inland Valley are coming together to take action on behalf of their community. The following recommendations are part of a community action platform put forth by San Bernardino residents with the hope of protecting their children, their families, and the future of their community. They are an invitation for both industry and government to collaborate with the community and work proactively, creatively, and concretely to reduce and eliminate the health threats outlined in this report.

The Logistics Operations

- Create Zero Emission Logistics operations by investing in electrification of all equipment—locomotives, on-site equipment, and trucks—as soon as possible. Utilize the most advanced technologies to bring pollution down to as close to zero as possible. Utilizing electrical equipment, trucks and locomotives will reduce the operations pollution levels significantly.
- Transition from dirty diesel fuel to alternative fuels and technologies. Given the link to a wide variety of health impacts, diesel fuel must ultimately be banned. Just as we recognized that filtered cigarettes didn’t solve the severe health issues associated with smoking, its time to recognize the “filtering” or “trapping” diesel emissions is not solving the health issues with diesel. Clean trucks may be a bit better than old trucks but it doesn’t stop the damage created by burning this dirty fuel.

In the meantime:
- Create buffer zones between diesel sources and homes, schools and other sensitive receptors.
- Plant vegetative barriers using trees and shrubs demonstrated to absorb particulate matter. A line of trees around the perimeter of the facilities would be able to absorb some of the ultra-fine particles.
- Build block walls as a buffer between the community and the logistic operations. Block walls would significantly reduce noise pollution.
- Relocate the truck entrances and docks away from the community park and neighborhoods and create an alternative route that diverts truck traffic, diesel emissions, and noise away from residential roads.
- Invest in cleaner, safer, and more sustainable fuels and technology – cleaner locomotives and operating equipment, electrification of cranes, and the conversion of trucking companies from diesel to compressed and liquid natural gas.
**Legislation and Enforcement**

- Draft, legislate, and enforce federal and state policies that directly regulate the diesel emissions for railroads and other logistic facilities.
- Enforce noise regulations on neighboring companies.
- Revise current zoning regulations and procedures to ensure that in the future industrial facilities must be at minimum 500 meters away from residential properties and other sensitive receptors such as schools, parks, and daycares.
- Create regulations that prevent additional polluting industrial facilities from opening near heavily impacted communities because of the already poor air quality and because these communities already bear a disproportionate amount of environmental burden.

**Promoting Community Health**

- Initiate, fund, and facilitate programs to retrofit and weatherize homes on the west side—sealing doors and windows to prevent air pollution from entering, installing AC unit filters in structures with sensitive receptors like homes, schools, and daycares, and installing dual-pane windows to protect from noise pollution.
- Establish free health clinics in impacted communities that provides primary care to residents suffering from health problems exacerbated by diesel pollution who would not have access to medical care otherwise.

**Implementation and Collaboration**

In order to have a strong healthy democracy and engaged electorate we must have an informed and involved public to actively participate in public policy decisions. No one has more of a right to information and to be involved in these decisions than those most directly affected. To accomplish this goals we recommend the following:

- Increase civic involvement of well informed, confident community residents to participate with officials in decision affecting their lives by providing training and opportunities to participate. Mechanism for involvement between residents and officials are institutionalized to address community.
- Bring together a Task Force of community members, BNSF and other company representatives, relevant agencies/entities, and local, state, and federal officials. The Task Force would collaborate long-term to implement recommendations, provide mutual support, execute solutions that reduce health threats to residents, and provide a space for the community to have an equal voice.
- Maintain a clearly defined method of communication and accountability between local
government, industry and residents.

**Community Driven Planning**

While focusing on reducing the pollution levels, we recognize that the absence of pollution does not make a healthy community. The second portion of the our program is the Revitalization of the community to address the incompatible land use policies, lack of access to recreational facilities and healthy foods by advancing a community driven land use planning process to attract healthy facilities -- grocery stores, fresh produce, and walk able streets, safe housing. The program will advance a General Plan revision that incorporates the State’s Office of Planning and Research guidelines recommendations for Health, Environmental Justice and Hazard Mitigation components.

Current statistics on the health status for the Counties of San Bernardino and Riverside demonstrate the need for this program; the area is the fourth most obese region in the United States with two out of three residents considered overweight or obese; highest heart disease death rates in the state; three out of every four school children do not meet fitness standards; worst healthy food access in state, with six times as many unhealthy food retail outlets as healthy; one out of four adolescents does not have access to safe open space for physical activity; and children’s asthma rate at 32%. Compounding the problem, health research indicates that children participating in 3 or more outdoor activities actually increase their rates of asthma, making it imperative that our policy efforts to decrease air pollution are coupled with our policy efforts to address obesity. Following State and National Park Department recommendations of five acres of park land for every 1,000 persons, the area is deficient in park land by more than 300 acres. Open space around these communities is quickly being converted to industrial warehouses and intermodal facilities. Our planning process and General Plan policies are key to reversing this trend.

The lack of stores that provide fresh, healthy produce and foods are virtually not present in these two communities while liquor stores and small corner markets that sell candy, soda, and junk food abound. In addition to access to fresh foods, in our large Latino and immigrant populations we must also raise awareness to the high lead content in clay pots and bowls due to lead contaminated glazes, Mexican candies and chili’s, and even soda bottles and cans. Knowing the source of drinking water is also important due to groundwater contamination by perchlorate, an additive in rocket fuel. The chemical affects the uptake of iodine by the thyroid and is known to accumulate in plants like
lettuce and nopales, an edible cactus and staple for local families. CCAEJ participated in a legislative effort to ban candy from Mexico that is contaminated with high levels of lead. We have conducted education and awareness classes on the dangers of lead and the identity of the lead tainted candies. CCAEJ Promotoras participated in a project with the State Attorney General’s office to monitor stores to determine the prevalence of these candies. We visited more than 400 stores, liquor stores, and corner markets and found that all had these dangerous and illegal candies, some repackaged to hide their contents.

Our program will couple increasing awareness and knowledge to the need and benefits of eating healthy food through local schools and organizations, with a resident driven Community Development Plan to bring needed facilities to the community and local policies within the General Plans that address health and environmental justice. We will influence school policy on nutrition education by introducing the Harvest of the Month program that exposes children and parents to new fruits and vegetables, provides an opportunity to taste test the produce and share recipes and menus. CCAEJ will work with the school district to develop a policy to improve school lunches through a Farm to School program in San Bernardino. Already implemented in the Jurupa School District serving Mira Loma/Glen Avon, the program brings local farm produce to the school lunch program by way of salad bars. We will utilize existing community facilities, such as schools or parks to establish Farmer’s Markets bringing fresh, local farm produce to the community. We will develop a Community Plan driven by local residents and their vision for a safe, healthy community to guide siting of more stores offering fresh, nutritious foods and recreational opportunities. California guidelines suggest that General Plans incorporate Health and Environmental Justice components, but few have addressed them in local plans. Community residents will advocate for their inclusion and development the specific policies to be included in the city and county General Plans. We will explore how to augment programs for recreation to ensure program policies that address obesity, such as ensuring residents of this low income area are not charged fees to use their parks and designating land for use as a community garden. We will use the general plan process and community plans to identify the most appropriate areas for open space and recreational facilities and work with the school districts to develop safe walking routes so children can walk to school under safe conditions.
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