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MOJAVE DESERT AIR BASIN

The Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB), comprised of 21,000 square miles, encompasses the eastern portion of Riverside County consisting of the Palo Verde Valley along with portions of Los Angeles, Kern and San Bernardino Counties. Air quality conditions in the Riverside County MDAB are partly under the jurisdiction of the SCAQMD and partly under the jurisdiction of the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD).

The MDAB consists of an assemblage of mountain ranges interspersed with long broad valleys that often contain dry lakes. Many of the lower mountains that dot the vast terrain rise from 1,000 to 4,000 feet above the valley floor. Prevailing winds in the MDAB are out of the west and southwest. These prevailing winds are due to the proximity of the MDAB to coastal and central regions and the presence of the Sierra Nevada mountains, which pose as a natural barrier to the north; air masses pushed onshore in southern California by differential heating are channeled through the MDAB. The MDAB is separated from the southern California coastal and central California valley regions by mountains whose passes form the main channels for these air masses.

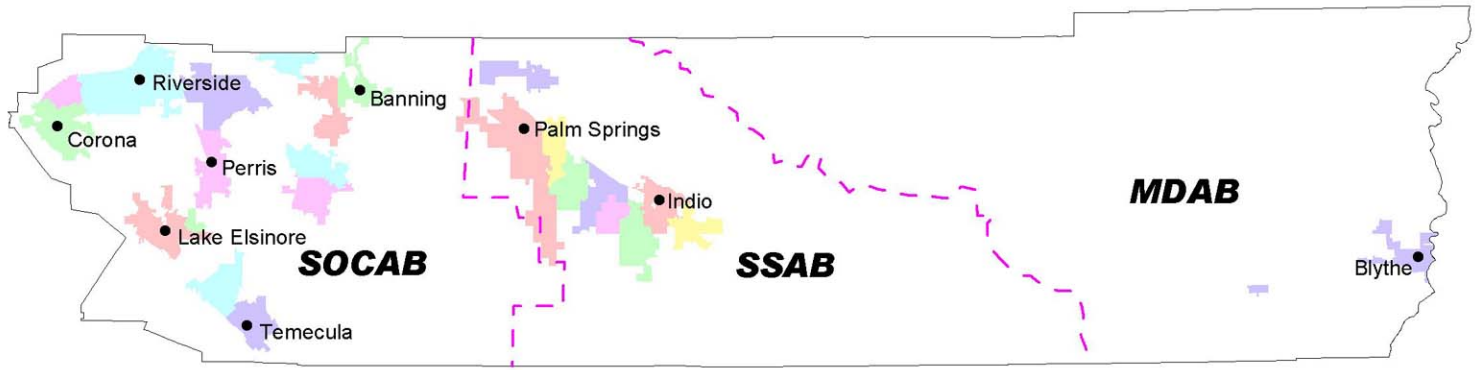
During the summer months, the MDAB is generally influenced by a Pacific Subtropical High Cell that sits off the coast, inhibiting cloud formation and encouraging daytime solar heating. The MDAB is rarely influenced by cold air masses moving south from Canada and Alaska, with desert moisture arriving from infrequent warm, moist and unstable air masses from the south. The MDAB averages between three and seven inches of precipitation per year.



County of Riverside General Plan - *Hearing Draft*

Air Quality Element

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Source Information: SCAQMD.
The oldest data shown on this map is 1990.

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Figure 1



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Air Quality Element

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