



November 3, 2003

The Honorable Bill Young
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
H-218 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Obey
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
H-218 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Young and Obey:

On behalf of the states and tribes of the Western Regional Air Partnership (WRAP), we ask for your leadership to revise and harmonize the deadlines by which states must submit regional haze plans to EPA. These deadlines were originally established in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). As shown on the attached map, the current law results in deadlines for regional haze plans ranging from as early as 2005 to as late as 2008, depending on when EPA designates areas for the fine particle (PM-2.5) health standard.


After EPA designates areas as attainment or non-attainment for PM-2.5 (which we anticipate by December 2004), we believe all Western states will need a full three years to complete their regional haze plans. More importantly, a single date is needed to allow Western states and tribes to effectively coordinate the development of emission reduction strategies to reduce haze in the West. Therefore, we suggest that the most appropriate deadline for all regional haze plans is December 2007. We recognize that tribes would not be subject to this deadline, but are encouraged by EPA to coordinate their planning with states.


Western states and tribes are in no way trying to avoid any of our legal obligations to address regional haze. The WRAP recognizes the need to avoid delays in addressing regional haze at our nation's Class I Areas, the vast majority of which are in the West. To that end, Western states and tribes have worked diligently, first through the Grand Canyon Visibility Transport Commission (GCVTC) and now through the WRAP, to develop and implement programs to reduce regional haze in the West. Our success is evidenced by the fact that five Western states are proposing to submit the nation's first-ever regional haze plans to EPA by the end of 2003. These plans implement the recommendations of the GCVTC and demonstrate the commitment of Western states and tribes to address regional haze in a timely manner.

Your help to revise the deadlines for submission of the next round of regional haze plans is needed to allow Western states and tribes to continue coordinating their efforts through the WRAP and will result in regional haze plans for the West that are truly effective for improving visibility at our nation's Class I Areas.

We thank you in advance for your support and will assist you in any way we can to accomplish a legislative solution to this problem as soon as possible.

Sincerely,


Janet Napolitano
Governor of Arizona
WRAP Co-Chair


Fred S. Vallo, Sr.
Governor, Pueblo of Acoma
WRAP Co-Chair

cc: Marianne Horinko, Acting Administrator U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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