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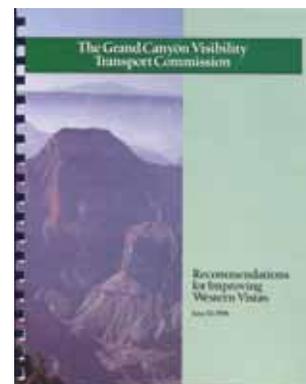
Air pollution diminishes visibility in our national parks and wilderness areas. These “Class I areas” are national treasures, and receive the most stringent protection under the Clean Air Act, with a goal of achieving natural visibility conditions by 2064. 75% of the nation’s Class I areas are in the West. Today, the average visual range in Western national parks and other Class I areas is about one-half to two-thirds of what would exist without human-caused impairment. This haze is only one of the effects of air pollution in the West.



## A Search for Solutions – the History of the WRAP

The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 included a directive to establish the Grand Canyon Visibility Transport Commission. The Commission’s task was to make recommendations to improve visibility in the 16 Class I areas on the Colorado Plateau, including Grand Canyon National Park.

The Commission completed its mission in 1996, making more than 70 recommendations, including goals for renewable energy, reducing emissions of sulfur dioxide from industrial sources, improving federal standards for mobile sources, tracking the effects of new pollution sources, and minimizing the air quality impacts of wildfire and prescribed burning.



In 1997, the Commission created the Western Regional Air Partnership (WRAP) as its successor organization. The WRAP is now one of five Regional Planning Organizations across the nation working to improve visibility in Class I areas and address related air quality issues.



## What and Who is the WRAP?

The Western Regional Air Partnership (WRAP) is a consensus-based partnership of 15 Western states, Western tribes and federal agencies.

Participants in WRAP include Western businesses and industry, environmental interests, local governments, academia and other air quality experts. The WRAP develops the data, tools and policies needed by states and tribes to comply with EPA’s Regional Haze Rule and its long-term goal of returning visibility in Class I areas to “natural conditions” by 2064. WRAP is jointly staffed and administered by the Western Governors’ Association and the National Tribal Environmental Council.



Through its various forums, work groups and committees, the WRAP works to understand current air quality conditions and recommend strategies for improvement. The WRAP identifies control measures to reduce regional haze and evaluates these measures in terms of their cost, environmental benefit, and other factors.



## What Has the WRAP Done?

Diverse interests working together through the WRAP have made great progress to reduce air pollution across the West in recent years. Some of the highlights include:

- Emissions of sulfur dioxide from Western coal-fired power plants declined 40% between 1998 and 2005. A reduction of 60% is projected with full implementation of state and tribal Regional Haze Plans over the next ten years.



- Working through the WRAP, the states of Arizona, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah and Wyoming submitted the nation's first State Implementation Plans under the Regional Haze Rule. These plans implement the recommendations of the Grand Canyon Commission.
- New EPA standards for engines and fuel will greatly reduce emissions from motor vehicles and off-road equipment in coming years. Mobile sources are the largest source of nitrogen oxide emissions in the West. These new standards will reduce mobile source emissions of nitrogen oxides by 70% over the next 15 years, even as the West continues to grow.
- Western states and tribes, working closely with federal land managers, continue to improve their smoke management programs to ensure that air quality impacts are minimized when prescribed burns are necessary on public and private land. The WRAP is implementing a fire tracking system to help land managers and air quality planners manage controllable smoke impacts on a regional basis.
- The state Regional Haze Plans due to EPA in December 2007 will address the long-standing issue of emissions from grandfathered sources. The sulfur dioxide emission reductions mentioned above are part of the solution. The 2007 regional haze plans will also implement Best Available Retrofit Technology (BART) for nitrogen oxide emissions.
- In 2005, the WRAP completed the first-ever regional inventory of emissions from oil and gas sources. Phase II of that effort is now underway. Phase II will yield better estimates of current and future emissions and identify ways to reduce emissions from this sector.
- WRAP is providing direct assistance to state and local governments and fleet owners in an effort to reduce diesel emissions through retrofit programs.



## Data Collection and Analysis

A key function of the WRAP is to provide state-of-the-art technical analysis for air quality planning across the region. Prior to WRAP, these resources did not exist. In November 2006, WRAP launched its Technical Support System at . The TSS integrates a number of different information resources under one web-based umbrella. Resources developed by the WRAP include:



Visibility Information Exchange Web System (VIEWS): VIEWS provides on-line access to monitoring data, research results and special studies related to visibility.



Regional Modeling Center: The WRAP's Regional Modeling Center at the University of California Riverside provides state and tribal agencies with sophisticated modeling of regional haze in the Western United States.



Emissions Data Management System: An emission inventory data warehouse for states and tribes. The system provides a consistent, complete and regional approach to emissions data management and tracking.



Causes of Haze Assessment: A detailed analysis of ambient monitoring data for regional haze.

Tribal Data Development: Western tribes, with technical assistance from WRAP, have gathered extensive data on emissions from tribal lands and completed initial analyses of the causes of air quality impacts on tribal lands. Improvements in the quality and completeness of tribal data are ongoing and integrated into the resources above.



## Challenges Remain

The West is a vibrant and rapidly growing region. Even as we make progress on some air quality issues, new challenges emerge.

Population growth, increased energy development, and tighter federal standards must be addressed if we are to see continued air quality improvements and meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act.

In recent years, drought and warmer temperatures have resulted in degraded air quality due to increased dust emissions and wildfires.

The members of WRAP (states, tribes, and federal agencies) along with key stakeholders (industry, environmental interests, local governments, and academia) remain committed to working together through WRAP to address these challenges. States and tribes are also using the WRAP as a forum to share information on climate change and greenhouse gas emissions, including development of a greenhouse gas inventory and a voluntary registry.

Many of the technical resources and policies developed by WRAP will benefit states and tribes as they work to address other air quality concerns, such as health standards for particulate matter and ozone and the impacts of air pollution on sensitive ecosystems.



## Contact WRAP

For more information regarding the WRAP, visit our Web site at [www.wrapair.org](http://www.wrapair.org) or contact us:

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