

MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee
1-Page Summary of Policy-Relevant Issues May 11, 2010 Meeting

Key policy-relevant issues discussed at the May 11 meeting are summarized below.

1. Measurement of Background Ozone Concentrations

The possible upcoming revisions to the ozone NAAQS lowering the standard to a range between 60-70 ppb means that it is becoming increasingly important to understand background concentrations of ozone. Generally, background concentrations range between 15 and 35 ppb in the United States. During summer, background concentrations are rarely above 25 ppb. Policy relevant background levels are defined as ozone levels in the absence of continental North American anthropogenic emissions.

2. EPA Climate Change Indicators Report

In April, EPA has released a report on Climate Change Indicators in the United States. There are 24 indicators across 5 categories. Categories include greenhouse gas emissions, weather and climate, oceans, snow and ice, and society and ecosystems. Generally, most indicators suggest serious impacts from continued increased emissions of greenhouse gases are already occurring in the United States, including increased heavy precipitation, increased sea level, decline in snow pack, and changes in plant hardiness zones. For more information, see <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/indicators.html>

3. Conformity Scope of Work and Consultation Procedures

The scope of work for this year's conformity analysis is similar to the approach used for the last several years. Major changes include use of updated land use forecasts, Round 8.0, and a new out-year milestone year of 2040. The Travel Demand Model 2.2 and EPA's MOBILE6.2 emission factor model will be used. The analysis will test regional emissions against existing approved mobile budgets, interim tests/budgets, and proposed new budgets not yet found adequate by EPA. Staff anticipate TPB adoption of the conformity determination for the 2010 CLRP and 2011-2016 TIP at its November meeting.

4. ALA State of the Air Report

The American Lung Association released its annual State of the Air Report. The report ranks nonattainment areas and counties across the United States, including the metropolitan Washington region in terms of severity of poor air quality. Rankings are not based on Design Values but on a method using number of code orange exceedance days. Air quality in the DC region improved. The Washington, DC/MD/VA nonattainment area moved from 14th to 16th worst for ozone and from 14th to 18th worst for daily PM. The DC region is not listed for annual PM. None of the region's counties were listed in the top 25 worst counties in the United States, but all received a grade of F for air quality.

5. Voluntary Measures Progress Reporting

Staff continue to work with local governments to collect information on progress in meeting the voluntary commitments in the ozone and fine particle SIPs. Once the progress reporting is completed, a 3-year Evaluation Report will be prepared for submission to EPA.

Upcoming Events

ACPAC May 17, MOVES Task Force May 18, TPB, May 19, CEEPC May 26.