

MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee
1-Page Summary of Policy-Relevant Issues April 13, 2010 Meeting

Key policy-relevant issues discussed at the April 13 meeting are summarized below.

1. Air Quality Monitors in Fairfax

Virginia DEQ has released a proposed statewide monitoring plan that includes elimination of the four air quality monitoring stations historically owned and operated by Fairfax County, as well as 2 sites owned by DEQ and operated by Fairfax County. Once the sites are closed, the only remaining monitoring station in Fairfax County will be the Lee Park site, which will include monitoring for ozone and fine particles. The public comment period ends on April 30.

2. What Would It Take Scenario Study

TPB Staff provided a briefing on the results of staff's What Would It Take Scenario Study. The "What Would It Take?" Scenario starts with specific goals for reducing greenhouse gas transportation emissions for 2030 and beyond, based on COG's November 2008 Climate Change Report. It assesses how such goals might be achieved through combinations of interventions that include increasing fuel efficiency, reducing the carbon-intensity of fuel, and improving travel efficiency. Local governments will have a significant role in reducing overall transportation-related GHG emissions, particularly in meeting early targets. Recent federal actions to improve fuel economy will provide significant reductions from the business-as-usual scenario.

3. Alternative Growth Scenarios

Members discussed the need for alternative growth scenarios to support development of the next round of air quality plans due in 2013. The alternative scenarios could address land use and transportation, tree canopy coverage, and energy efficiency/renewable energy (EERE). Implications of the alternative scenarios could be incorporated into Weight of Evidence. Members suggested that the alternative scenario for EERE be developed first.

4. Reporting for Climate and Energy Action Plan

COG has established an on-line reporting portal to collect data on progress in meeting the region's 2012 Climate and Energy Action Plan. Initial surveys will focus on Inventories and Action Plans, Municipal Renewable Energy, and Street Lights. COG is also working with jurisdictions to develop a list of data needs for a potential data sharing agreement with regional utilities. See:

<http://ncrportal.mwco.org/sites/surveys/climate/Lists/Announcements/AllItems.aspx>

5. EPA Regulatory Update

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) finalized a joint rule to establish a national program consisting of new standards for model year 2012 through 2016 light-duty vehicles that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve fuel economy. EPA finalized the first-ever national greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions standards under the Clean Air Act, and NHTSA finalized Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. The new standards apply to new passenger cars, light-duty trucks, and medium-duty passenger vehicles, covering model years 2012 through 2016. The EPA GHG standards require these vehicles to meet an estimated combined average emissions level of 250 grams of carbon dioxide (CO₂) per mile in model year 2016, equivalent to 35.5 miles per gallon (mpg) if the automotive industry were to meet this CO₂ level all through fuel economy improvements.

Upcoming Events

ACPAC April 19

MOVES Task Force April 20

MWAQC April 28