



North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor

Dee Freeman, Secretary

March 12, 2009

A. Stanley Meiburg  
Regional Administrator  
USEPA, Region 4  
Sam Nunn Federal Center  
61 Forsyth Street, SW  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960

Dear Mr. Meiburg:

Pursuant to the requirements of the federal Clean Air Act and on behalf of Governor Beverly E. Perdue, I am submitting to you and your colleagues at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the State of North Carolina's recommendations concerning the boundaries within our State of areas that either attain or do not attain the March 12, 2008 8-hour standard for ozone. We are recommending the boundaries which are described in the enclosed package because we believe that they are the most effective way to achieve the goals of cleaner air, healthier lives, a stronger economy, and more effective conservation of our land and water. We look forward to discussing these recommendations with you after EPA has had the opportunity to review and comment on them.

The federal Clean Air Act requires EPA to designate areas as attainment or nonattainment following promulgation of a new national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS), such as the March 12, 2008 8-hour standard for ozone. EPA has asked states for their recommendations for nonattainment boundaries by March 12, 2009.

Development and submittal of the State's recommendations on appropriate nonattainment boundaries are the first steps in the process of addressing the revised ozone NAAQS. We understand that if EPA intends to designate areas that differ from the State's recommendations, EPA is required to notify the State by no later than 120 days prior to the final designations which would be no later than November 12, 2009. In addition, it is our understanding that EPA plans to provide a 30-day public comment period immediately following issuance of its response letters to the states in order to consider public input in the designation process. The comment period will conclude in mid-December 2009. EPA must then provide the State an opportunity to demonstrate why modifications to a state's recommendations are inappropriate. EPA has established January 12, 2010, as the deadline for such State response. At that time, my staff anticipates providing supplemental information including consideration of the 2009 ozone season monitoring data and EPA's implementation rule currently scheduled to be released in August 2009.

In developing the recommendations, staff in the Division of Air Quality, North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), consulted with staff from the Department of Commerce, Department of Transportation, and Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. In addition, my staff conducted meetings with elected officials and public meetings around the State on draft staff recommendations and EPA presumptive boundaries in December 2008 and January 2009, and held a public comment period through February 9, 2009. Through this process, staff sought comments from local officials, metropolitan planning organizations, environmental organizations, business, industry, and the

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general public. The recommendations prepared for your review include consideration of the comments received.

Based on our extensive public discussions and analysis, we are recommending that 24 entire counties and parts of 17 counties in ten areas of the state be designated as nonattainment for the 8-hour ozone standard, one area be designated unclassifiable and all remaining areas be designated as attainment. The State's proposal reflects a regional approach that, we believe, will target areas that need our best efforts in order to achieve the goals listed above.

Ozone pollution is a serious problem in North Carolina that we are working hard in conjunction with our many local, state, and national partners to solve. Over the past decade North Carolina has implemented substantial, progressive emissions reductions that have resulted in almost statewide attainment of the 1997 8-hour ozone standard in all areas of the State except the Charlotte Metro area. Under the North Carolina legislature's Clean Air Bill of 1999, the State's vehicle inspection and maintenance program was changed to an on-board diagnostic (OBD) program which now covers 48 counties. In addition to implementation of the NOx SIP Call rules, in 2002 North Carolina's General Assembly also enacted the landmark multipollutant legislation known as the Clean Smokestacks Act (CSA) which continues to result in significant sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) emissions reductions from the State's two largest electric utility companies. As demonstrated by these and other actions, North Carolina is committed to improving air quality. The State has and will continue to use its statutory authority to implement controls in the State as warranted, regardless of whether the emission sources are located within the boundary of a nonattainment area.

North Carolina is committed to protecting the health of our citizens, our environment, and our economy. Solving our ozone and other air quality problems is critical to achieving those goals. Improving air quality is critical to the health of our citizens, our future growth, prosperity and quality of life. We look forward to continuing to work with EPA and all of our other partners on the challenging tasks ahead to establish appropriate boundaries for nonattainment areas and to develop strategies to attain the 2008 8-hour ozone standard. More detailed information and supporting data are included in the enclosed recommendation package. Thank you for your consideration of these recommendations.

Sincerely,



Dee Freeman  
Secretary

DF:jb

Enclosure

c: The Honorable Beverly E. Perdue  
The Honorable Steve Troxler  
The Honorable Gene Conti  
The Honorable J. Keith Crisco  
B. Keith Overcash

**Table 1: North Carolina – Ozone (8-Hour Standard)**

Designated Area	Designation Type	Classification Type
<p><b>Snow Bird Mountains – Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock Wilderness Area:</b>            Graham County                Above 4000 feet elevation in the Snow Bird Mountains range                Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock Wilderness Area boundary            Cherokee County                Above 4000 feet elevation in the Snow Bird Mountains range</p>	Nonattainment	
<p><b>Great Smoky Mountains National Park:</b>            Haywood County                Park boundary            Swain County                Park boundary</p>	Nonattainment	
<p><b>Great Balsam Mountains – Shinning Rock Wilderness Area:</b>            Buncombe County                Above 4000 feet elevation in this mountain range            Haywood County                Above 4000 feet elevation in this mountain range                Shinning Rock Wilderness Area boundary            Henderson County                Above 4000 feet elevation in this mountain range            Jackson County                Above 4000 feet elevation in this mountain range            Transylvania County                Above 4000 feet elevation in this mountain range</p>	Nonattainment	

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Designated Area	Designation Type	Classification Type
<p><b>Black Mountains:</b>            Buncombe County                Above 4000 feet elevation in this mountain range            Madison County                Above 4000 feet elevation in this mountain range            McDowell County                Above 4000 feet elevation in this mountain range            Yancey County                Above 4000 feet elevation in this mountain range</p>	<p>Nonattainment</p>	
<p><b>Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton Area:</b>            Alexander County            Burke County                Unifour Metropolitan Planning Organization boundary            Caldwell County                Unifour Metropolitan Planning Organization boundary            Catawba County</p>	<p>Nonattainment</p>	
<p><b>Charlotte-Gastonia-Salisbury Area:</b>            Cabarrus County            Gaston County            Iredell County                Davidson Township                Coddle Creek Township            Lincoln County            Mecklenburg County            Rowan County            Union County</p>	<p>Nonattainment</p>	

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Designated Area	Designation Type	Classification Type
<p><b>Greensboro-Winston-Salem-High Point Area:</b>                      Alamance County                      Davidson County                      Forsyth County                      Guilford County                      Caswell County                      Davie County                      Orange County                          Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization boundary                      Randolph County                          High Point Metropolitan Planning Organization boundary                      Rockingham County</p>	<p>Nonattainment</p>	
<p><b>Raleigh-Durham-Cary Area:</b>                      Chatham County                          Baldwin Township                          Center Township                          New Hope Township                          Williams Township                      Durham County                      Franklin County                      Granville County                      Johnston County                          Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization boundary                      Orange County                          Outside Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization boundary                      Person County                      Wake County</p>	<p>Nonattainment</p>	
<p><b>Fayetteville Area:</b>                      Cumberland County</p>	<p>Nonattainment</p>	

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Designated Area	Designation Type	Classification Type
<b>Rocky Mount Area:</b> Edgecombe County Nash County	Nonattainment	
<b>Greenville Area:</b> Pitt County	Unclassifiable	
<b>Rest of State</b>	Attainment	