



## Western Governors' Association Policy Resolution 08-17

### *Western Air Quality*

#### **A. BACKGROUND**

1. The Clean Air Act is based on the premise that the national government sets air quality standards and states develop plans to meet these standards. While these state plans rely on some national programs (e.g., motor vehicle and fuel standards), states have the responsibility for developing and implementing most of the programs in these plans.
2. The Western Regional Air Partnership (WRAP) has demonstrated the ability of Western states, tribes, industry, environmentalists, academia, local government, EPA, and federal land managers to work in partnership to develop comprehensive regional air quality programs that reduce air pollution in the West.
3. With the support of WRAP, Western states are implementing emissions control programs to improve visibility in Western national parks and wilderness areas.
4. In March 2008, EPA adopted a more stringent national air quality standard for ozone. More areas of the west, both urban and rural, will not attain the new federal ozone standard. Because ozone is a regional air pollutant and can be transported hundreds of miles, Western states must work together to understand the nature of ozone air pollution transport, assess the mitigation options for contributing sources, and implement the necessary controls.
5. Increased demand for energy in the west and nationwide is resulting in unprecedented expansion of oil and gas exploration, development and processing in the West, significantly increasing air pollution, particularly ozone, regional haze and fine particulate matter. Western states must collaborate to ensure that air quality is protected.
6. Regional analysis and strategy development for ozone should build on the WRAP's existing technical tools. Western state air quality officials will need to simultaneously consider control effectiveness for regional haze, ozone and fine particulate matter as many of the same sources contribute to all of these problems.
7. Strategies to effectively control pollutants that form haze, ozone and fine particulate matter may also effectively reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Western states must work together to analyze and implement multi-pollutant regional control strategies that reduce all air pollutants, including greenhouse gases.

**B. GOVERNORS' POLICY STATEMENT**

1. Western Governors believe it is appropriate for the federal government, in cooperation with the states as co-regulators, to establish national air quality goals and standards to protect the public health, welfare, and the environment.
2. Western Governors are keenly aware of the need to protect visibility in parks and wilderness areas across the West. We recognize the inherent spiritual value of the breathtaking vistas in the West and the importance of visibility to tourists and residents alike.
3. The work of the WRAP should serve as the model for consensus-based air quality initiatives and commitment to workable regional air quality solutions in the West.
4. Western Governors recognize that oil and gas development and the ensuing air pollution issues are unique in the West and will endeavor to develop solutions to address those problems. We recognize that policy solutions must be supported by solid scientific and technical analyses.
5. Western Governors call upon Congress and EPA to provide ongoing financial support for the WRAP and other efforts to address the regional nature of air quality problems across the West.
6. Western Governors believe solutions to air quality problems in the West must also reduce greenhouse gas emissions that are detrimentally affecting climate in the West and worldwide.
7. Western Governors believe that economic incentive approaches, such as market-based trading, should be utilized when appropriate to complement traditional command-and-control regulatory requirements.

**C. GOVERNORS' MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVE**

1. The Western Governors' Association (WGA) will transmit a copy of this resolution to the President, Administrator of the EPA, congressional committee leaders with air quality jurisdiction, Western Congressional Delegation, and to the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture.
2. WGA will work with EPA, state staff, tribes, federal land managers, business and industry, environmental groups, academia, and local governments to develop institutional and regulatory reforms that will better focus resources on addressing air quality issues.

*This resolution was originally adopted as Policy Resolution 99-012 in 1999, incorporates resolution 00-015, and was readopted as 02-06 in 2002 and as 05-16 in 2005.*