



707 North Robinson, P.O. Box 1677, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73101-1677

## News Release

---

For Immediate Release: February 19, 2010  
Contact: Judy Duncan, (405) 702-1040

### **Oklahoma Provides State Implementation Plan for Regional Haze**

As required by Federal law, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is providing a revision to Oklahoma's State Implementation Plan ("SIP") to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ("U.S. EPA") in order to address Regional Haze at Federal Class I Areas, such as the Wichita Mountains Wilderness Area. The purpose of this Federal requirement is to enhance the aesthetic quality of these areas by improving visibility.

A SIP is a State's plan for complying with the requirements of the Federal Clean Air Act and may consist of narrative, rules, technical documentation, permits, and administrative orders/agreements. The U.S. EPA has the authority and responsibility to approve or disapprove a SIP submission.

Regional Haze is the visibility impairment caused by air pollutants, such as: nitrogen oxides ("NOx"); sulfur dioxide ("SO<sub>2</sub>"); and Particulate (both "PM-10" and "PM-2.5"). Oklahoma's Regional Haze SIP is required to improve visibility at Federal Class I Areas to natural visibility conditions by 2064.

Dispersion Modeling indicates that six Oklahoma electric generating facilities may cause or contribute to visibility impairment at a Federal Class 1 Area and, therefore, are subject to the Best Available Retrofit Technology ("BART") requirement of the Federal Regional Haze Rule. This requirement mandates that these six facilities control the emissions of visibility impairing pollutants.

In regard to SO<sub>2</sub> emissions, DEQ has determined that the current use of low sulfur coal satisfies the requirements of the Federal Regional Haze Rule. This determination is based on the Federal provisions that mandate an analysis of the cost-effectiveness of additional controls.

In the event that the U.S. EPA disapproves of the low sulfur coal determination, Oklahoma's Regional Haze SIP provides an alternative that allows the subject sources the flexibility of installing scrubbers to remove SO<sub>2</sub> on all coal-fired units or achieve equivalent emissions (including the option of switching from coal to natural gas) by

2018. The Regional Haze SIP provides the additional flexibility of allowing the subject sources to install SO<sub>2</sub> scrubbers on half of the coal-fired sources and switch the other half to natural gas (or achieve equivalent reductions) by 2026.

Oklahoma's Regional Haze SIP provides flexibility beyond that specifically prescribed in the implementing regulations of the Federal Clean Air Act; however, utilizing such flexibility should achieve greater visibility improvement at Federal Class 1 Areas.

J.D. Strong, the Oklahoma Secretary of the Environment who is signing the SIP on behalf of the state, stated that "Our primary concerns have been environmental protection while mitigating the cost to rate payers in a difficult economy. DEQ's determination related to cost effectiveness has allowed us to make this a part of the SIP, while opening the door for the use of clean burning natural gas as a fuel source for the generation of electricity."

DEQ's Executive Director, Steve Thompson, said "In developing the SIP the DEQ has tried to provide the flexibility necessary to meet the unique needs of Oklahoma while meeting the requirements of the Clean Air Act."

The six Oklahoma electric generating facilities impacted by this SIP include one natural gas-fired and two coal-fired facilities owned by OG&E, and one coal-fired and two natural gas-fired facilities owned by AEP-PSO.