

The monthly WESTAR Council call began at 1:00 pm PDT/2:00 pm MST/3:00 pm CDT. Council members and delegates present included:

AK-Alice Edwards
AZ-Daniel Czecholinski
CA-
CO-Garry Kaufman
HI-Marianne Rossio
ID-Tiffany Floyd
MT-Dave Klemp, Liz Ulrich
NV-Sig Jaunarajs
NM-
ND-Jim Semerad
OR-Ali Mirzakhilili
SD-Kyrik Rombaugh
UT-Bryce Bird
WA-Kathy Taylor, Rob Dengel, Martha Hankins
WY-Nancy Vehr
WESTAR-Mary Uhl, Tom Moore, Jeff Gabler, Bob Lebens, Jackie Gadret

Agenda:

1. Fall Business meeting draft agenda, attached (Mary Uhl)

2. EPA ORD response to WESTAR letter, attached and discussion (Mary Uhl, Tom Moore)
3. Regional haze planning update (Tom Moore)
4. RWH NSPS update (Bob Lebens)
5. Other items as time and interest permits

Minutes:

1. Fall Business meeting draft agenda, attached (Mary Uhl)

Mary reviewed the draft fall business meeting agenda. There were no questions or comments.

2. EPA ORD response to WESTAR letter, attached and discussion (Mary Uhl, Tom Moore)

Tom summarized the EPA response which noted ways that EPA is collaborating with states (including ECOS) and the Health Effects Institute to do additional research in areas that WESTAR noted are critical to western air quality analysis. EPA noted that there is already work underway with Wyoming DEQ on oil and gas emission characterization. As well, EPA ORD is working on several fronts to resolve issues arising from wildfire smoke. EPA ORD is evaluating air sensor technologies, as was reported at the WESTAR/WRAP fall 2019 business meeting. At the end of the letter, there is note made that there is a regional science liaison at each EPA regional office. WESTAR could organize a conference call to discuss additional collaboration with ORD.

Garry thought that an enhanced relationship with EPA ORD, including as a regular participant in our meetings, would be helpful. Nancy agreed with the approach.

3. Regional haze planning update (Tom Moore)

Tom referenced the PowerPoint slide distributed. States were asked to verify the emissions used in the regional haze modeling that were extracted from EPA projections. Some states have found discrepancies. All states have verified the base and future year emissions used now; a “state changes” workbook will be distributed to all states. Representative baseline emissions state revisions are being confirmed and corrected to state assumptions made for 4-factor analyses. Once these emissions are confirmed, we’ll proceed with modeling by September 11. Most of work has been to correct the projections by reusing existing files. Once confirmed, projections modeling will be completed by September 11. Results should be posted by September 23. Source apportionment modeling, which will be helpful for states calculating the URP glidepath adjustments, should be completed in late September. There will be one additional controls modeling run conducted in early October. Hope to have final source apportionment modeling with detail by end of November. All state regional haze planners have been briefed on this schedule.

Dave Klemp asked about the fix for the EPA files—are there others using these files that need to be aware of this fix? Tom noted that OAQPS has been informed of the issues and provided documentation. The most fundamental issue was in oil and gas emissions data.

Martha asked about the glidepath adjustment tools and how these work. Tom responded that the glidepath adjustment is described in the regional haze rule and allows states to determine international and prescribed fire impacts and add these back to the glidepath to “adjust” for these uncontrollable emissions. States can opt to use this depending on their planning approach. Martha wondered if it would be applied uniformly. Tom noted that there are discernable impacts from international and prescribed fire at all Class I areas in the west. Some states are going to adjust glidepaths and some are not. Tom noted that there is a write-up on the WRAP webpage that covers glidepath adjustment.

4. RWH NSPS update (Bob Lebens)

Bob noted that not much has changed since our last Council call. EPA hopes to publish the final rule by mid-September. The rule has not yet been sent to OMB.

There is a significant effort underway at Alaska DEC to review EPA certifications of wood heating devices which may lead Alaska to reject federal certifications. Cindy Heil will brief the Council on the September call. Alice noted that Alaska has new state requirements effective September 1, 2020 and there will be several devices dropped from their acceptable list as a result of issues with test reports. Alice encouraged interested states to attend Cindy's presentation in September.

5. Other items as time and interest permits

Mary Uhl mentioned that WESTAR might form a workgroup to address EJ issues. Washington and Idaho thought such a workgroup would be helpful. Washington has done a lot of work on this with their VW settlement work; Colorado says EJ work is important and noted that NACAA has done some work in this area. There may be some opportunities for collaboration. Nancy Vehr noted that rural western areas might be a focal point for this work.

Jeff Gabler said that remote training hours and time zone issues, especially in WESTAR (5 time zones). Jeff is continuing to work through this; it may be good to discuss as a group as EPA works toward more online training. EPA has offered an AERMOD course that would run 5 hours per day for 5 days for the modeling community; this may be a training that would need to be tailored to each time zone so that staff are not working at odd hours. WESTAR in conversation with instructors for Control of VOCs and Intermediate NSR; RFPs will be issued for permitting course offerings. EPA has chosen cornerstone as the platform for the national learning management system. Jim Semerad said that training is important and a high priority; staff can generally attend training at somewhat inconvenient times.

The call duration was 51 minutes.