

Dear CASTNET Site Operator:

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CASTNET: Eye on Air Quality

Spring 2013 Newsbrief

NETWORK NEWS

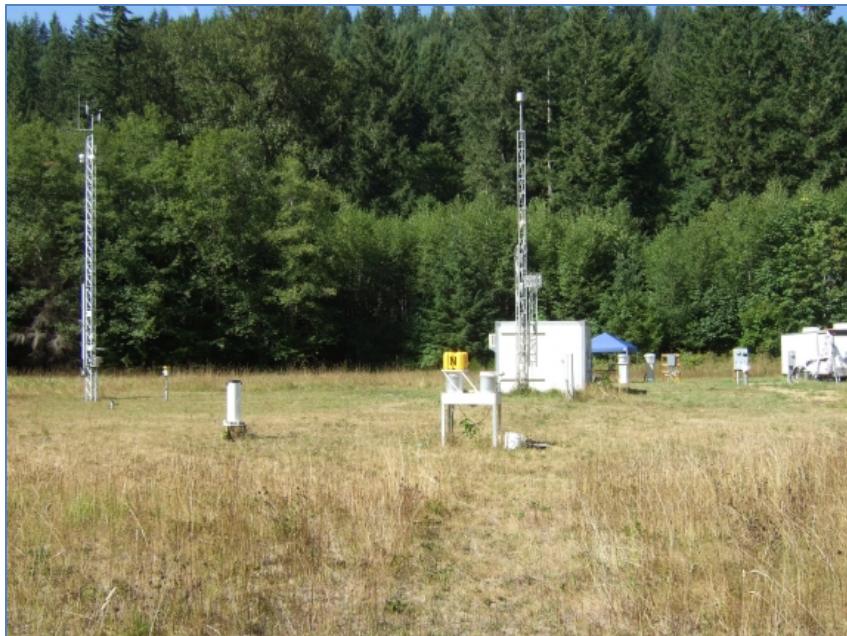
Nitrogen Flux Workshop

John Walker, (EPA) will be hosting a one day nitrogen flux workshop at the National Atmospheric Deposition Program (NADP) fall meeting that is scheduled for October 8-11, 2013 in Park City, UT. This workshop will discuss the state of the science and flux measurements. Atmospheric groups in the United States are not as well coordinated as their counterparts in Europe, so the focus of this workshop will be to bring together the groups that are making flux measurements. The workshop will have an option for workshop participants to present during a dedicated session of the symposium. Further details will be posted on the NADP Web site (<http://nadp.isws.illinois.edu/NADP/>) as they become available.

Sequestration

Sequestration is an across-the-board budget reduction in the amount of 5 percent for all Federal agencies. The sequester is in effect through September 30, 2013 or the end of the fiscal year. The budget reductions have been allocated differently by each agency. Fortunately, EPA does not anticipate that there will be any site closures due to the sequester in Fiscal Year 2013. However, a few changes were deemed necessary for the NPS CASTNET program. These changes include closing the CASTNET site at Mount Rainier National Park at the end of 2012 and distributing the Eye on Air Quality newsletter on a less frequent basis.

Mount Rainier National Park, WA (MOR409)



Recent Network Staff Changes

Changes at NPS

John Ray recently retired after 20 years working on the NPS monitoring program. He will be sorely missed. He brought tremendous expertise and enthusiasm to the program, always striving to interpret the data for what it means to park resources. While making sure that our routine monitoring was always of high quality, he also spearheaded a number of innovative monitoring projects to identify specific park needs like the SO₂ alert system at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park and over-snow vehicle emission testing at Yellowstone National Park. Initially, when it was determined that John was retiring, the plan was to have him come back part time to continue some analyses and to help transition the monitoring program over to new staff. Unfortunately, the constraints imposed by sequestration have prevented that from happening.

The NPS is working through the process to backfill two monitoring positions. In the meantime the main point of contact for NPS CASTNET and Gaseous Pollutant Monitoring Program (GPMP) questions is Kristi Morris at Kristi.Morris@nps.gov (303) 987-6941 or John Vimont at John.Vimont@nps.gov (303) 969-2808.

Changes at ARS

As of late April, John Faust is no longer with ARS. Mark Tigges, long time project manager of the optical portion of the NPS Visibility Program, has assumed oversight of the NPS GPMP (including all NPS CASTNET sites). Mike Slate is the new Technical Lead for CASTNET and GPMP. Mike is the primary contact for site operators. Mark and Mike can be reached at MTigges@air-resource.com and MSlate@air-resource.com, respectively.

Christian Kirk recently assumed the role of Quality Assurance Manager at ARS. He is supported by Shannon Halford, Administrative Assistant/Technical Writer. They can be reached at CKirk@air-resource.com and SHalford@air-resource.com, respectively.

Annual CASTNET Summit Meeting

In March, EPA, NPS, and their contractors (AMEC and ARS, respectively) met for a joint summit meeting in Golden, CO to discuss ways to further integrate the EPA and NPS sites, future upgrades to the network, data issues, and special study results. Some highlights from the meeting are described as follows.

CASTNET Reconciliation Committee

All EPA- and NPS-sponsored CASTNET ozone monitoring data continue to be submitted to EPA's Air Quality System (AQS) for use in calculating "design values" (i.e., the air quality status of a region relative to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, or NAAQS). Changes were made to both the EPA- and NPS-sponsored sites to remove any differences in the equipment setup and data quality assurance (QA) activities. In 2010, it had been noted that there was a slight bias in the collocated ozone data at the Rocky Mountain National Park collocated sites ROM406/ROM206. After changes implemented during 2011 and 2012, the bias was greatly reduced and nearly eliminated. EPA and NPS continue to work to reconcile both sides of the network to eliminate differences. A Reconciliation Committee has been created with the goal of creating equivalent data across all sites. During 2013, more changes will be implemented to standardize all sites and activities between the EPA- and NPS-sponsored sites. Note, even with the small bias in the data at ROM406/ROM206 site prior to recent changes, the data have continued to meet the 40 CFR Part 58 monitoring requirements.

As BLM-sponsored CASTNET sites are incorporated into the network, they will undergo similar review, and the reconciliation committee will include them in their efforts to eliminate differences between CASTNET sites.

CASTNET Regulatory Ozone Monitoring

To ensure ozone monitoring at CASTNET sites is consistent and meets mandated procedures, including performing the required ozone audits and submitting the proper paperwork to EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards (OAQPS), an annual network plan for ozone monitoring is prepared to outline these procedures. The CASTNET Plan for Part 58 Compliance Monitoring is updated annually and posted on the EPA CASTNET Web site at <http://epa.gov/castnet/javaweb/ozone.html>.

Nitrogen Oxides/Total Reactive Oxides Of Nitrogen (NO/NO_y)

To gain additional information about nitrogen pollutants, nitrogen oxides/total reactive oxides of nitrogen (NO/NO_y)

measurements were added to the existing CASTNET site at Huntington Wildlife Forest, NY (HWF187). Overall, measurements in this northeastern eco-region will include NO_y measurements, CASTNET filter pack measurements, NADP's Ammonia Monitoring Network (AMoN) concentration measurements, and NADP's National Trends Network (NTN) and Atmospheric Integrated Research Monitoring Network (AIRMoN) wet deposition measurements. These measurements will be used to determine the feasibility of using a multi-pollutant approach as defined in terms of an aquatic acidification index (AAI).

NO_y measurements will be added to existing CASTNET sites within the western eco-region during the spring as weather permits. NO_y measurements are expected to begin at the Pinedale, WY (PND165) site in late May 2013. The site at Rocky Mountain National Park, CO (ROM206) will be installed as soon as the snow has melted and weather permits site installation activities. NADP/NTN and AMoN sampling take place at or near the sites in this western eco-region, providing a multi-pollutant approach to measurements.

NO_y measurements will be added to a fourth existing CASTNET site that is located at Cranberry, NC (PNF126). The State of North Carolina is very interested in adding these measurements to the PNF126 site.

Please contact us with topics and tips of what you want us to explore next time in your **CASTNET: Eye on Air Quality** newsbrief.

For monitoring site assistance, please contact:

NPS CASTNET sites: contact Air Resource Specialists Telephone: 1-800-344-5423 (Mountain Time)
EPA CASTNET sites: contact AMEC Telephone: 1-888-224-5663 ext. 2602 or ext. 6620 (Eastern Time)