



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

JUN 30 2004

Mr. Raymond Halbritter
Nation Representative
Oneida Indian Nation
5218 Patrick Road
Vernon, New York 13478

Dear Mr. Halbritter:

Fine-particle pollution represents one of the most significant barriers to clean air facing our nation today. These tiny particles - about 1/30th the diameter of a human hair - have been scientifically linked to serious human health problems. Their ability to be suspended in air for long periods of time makes them a public health threat far beyond the source of emissions. An important part of our nation's commitment to clean, healthy air deals with reducing levels of this fine-particle or PM_{2.5} pollution.

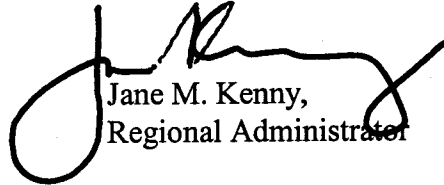
After a thorough review of the air quality in your area, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) intends to designate the Oneida Indian Nation's lands as attainment/unclassifiable for the health-based PM_{2.5} air quality standard. This means that across your tribal lands all areas meet the more protective, health-based fine-particle standard. That is truly good news for the residents of the Oneida Indian Nation.

We challenge you not only to maintain, but also to continue the progress you have made toward clean air. It is a commitment to no backsliding in the clean air status for fine particles that your Nation has achieved. You will hear from us again in November when EPA makes its final decisions on PM_{2.5} designations, determining those areas that meet or do not meet the fine particle standards.

The Bush Administration is addressing fine particle pollution with a comprehensive national clean air strategy. This strategy includes EPA's recent rule to reduce pollution from nonroad diesel engines, and the proposed rule to reduce pollution from power plants in the eastern United States. These two rules are important components of EPA's efforts to help tribes meet the more protective national fine-particle and 8-hour ozone air quality standards. Together these rules will help all areas of the country achieve cleaner air.

We look forward to a continued dialogue with you as we work together to implement the PM2.5 standards. Should you or your staff have any questions, I invite you to contact me at (212) 637-5000 or have your staff contact Walter Mugdan, Director of the Region 2 Division of Environmental Planning and Protection at (212) 637-3724. Again, we congratulate you on the clean air fine particle status that the Oneida Indian Nation has achieved.

Sincerely,



Jane M. Kenny,
Regional Administrator

cc: Brian Patterson, Oneida Indian Nation
Clint Hill, Oneida Indian Nation