

APTMD



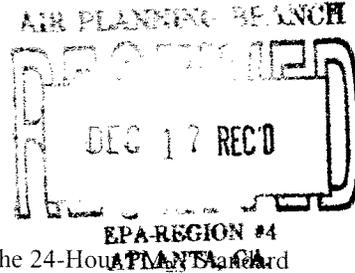
North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Michael F. Easley, Governor

William G. Ross, Jr., Secretary

December 10, 2007

James Palmer  
Regional Administrator  
USEPA Region 4  
Atlanta Federal Center  
61 Forsyth Street, SW  
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960



2007 DEC 13 P 3:11  
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

Re: State Recommendations for Air Quality Designation for the 24-Hour ~~PM<sub>2.5</sub>~~ Standard

Dear Mr. Palmer:

I am writing on behalf of Governor Michael F. Easley to recommend air quality designation status and related boundaries of areas in North Carolina to the 24-hour fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS), pursuant to Section 107 of the Clean Air Act as amended.

Based on the 2004 – 2006 ambient monitoring data, all counties in North Carolina are attaining the 24-hour PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard. Therefore, it is North Carolina's recommendation that all counties in North Carolina be designated as attainment. We understand the designations will be based on the 2005-2007 ambient monitoring data or potentially the 2006-2008 data, and we request the opportunity to revise this recommendation should an area violate the 24-hour PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS.

As you may be aware, in June 2002, the North Carolina General Assembly enacted the Clean Smokestacks Act, requiring coal-fired power plants to reduce annual sulfur dioxide emissions by about 50% by 2009 and about 75% by 2013. Additionally, these power plants must reduce their annual nitrogen oxide emissions by over 75% by 2009. One of the first state laws of its kind in the nation, this legislation provides a model for other states in controlling multiple air pollutants from older coal-fired power plants. Since sulfur dioxide is a major precursor to PM<sub>2.5</sub> in North Carolina, these continued reductions will ensure that PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels will continue to decrease in North Carolina.

North Carolina is committed to protecting the health of our citizens and solving our air quality problems. We believe that improving our air quality is critical to the health of our citizens and that our future growth, prosperity and quality of life will be threatened if we do not remain diligent. We look forward to continuing to work with USEPA to establish appropriate boundaries for nonattainment areas.

Sincerely,

William G. Ross, Jr.

WGR:lab

- cc: The Honorable Michael F. Easley
- Mr. Keith Overcash
- Mr. Dick Schutt
- Ms. Nacosta Ward

1601 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1601  
Phone: 919-733-4984/ FAX: 919-715-3060/ Internet: [www.enr.state.nc.us/ENR](http://www.enr.state.nc.us/ENR)

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