



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

APR 30 2012

THE ADMINISTRATOR

The Honorable Dennis Ramirez
Chairperson
Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria
125 Mission Ranch Boulevard
Chico, California 95926

Dear Chairperson Ramirez:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency today is taking the next step to address ozone air quality by issuing final area designations for the 2008 National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone. This action, required under the Clean Air Act, lets communities know if their outdoor air is meeting the national standards for ground-level ozone and which areas are violating, or contributing to violations of, the national standards.

The EPA strengthened the ozone standards on March 12, 2008, to increase protection of public health and the environment. Breathing air containing high levels of ozone, a key ingredient in smog, can reduce lung function, trigger respiratory symptoms and worsen asthma or other respiratory conditions. Ozone exposure also can contribute to premature death, especially in people with heart and lung disease. The new standards, which also protect against damage to sensitive vegetation and forested ecosystems, are a key part of the EPA's commitment to a clean, healthy environment.

As part of the designations process, the EPA worked closely with states, tribes and local governments to identify areas in the nation that meet the standards and those that need to take steps to reduce ozone pollution. After reviewing the most recent certified ozone air quality data and evaluating factors to assess contribution to nearby levels of ozone, the EPA is designating Indian country of the Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria nonattainment along with the surrounding state area. I appreciate any information that the Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria shared with the EPA throughout this process to assess ozone air quality.

History shows that cleaner air, better health and economic growth go hand-in-hand. For areas designated nonattainment, the EPA will work with tribes to ensure their participation in developing plans to improve ozone air quality expeditiously, as required by the Clean Air Act. Working closely with the states and tribes, the EPA is implementing the 2008 ozone standards using a common sense approach that protects air quality, maximizes flexibility and minimizes burden on state, tribal and local governments.

I recognize that the EPA shares the responsibility with the states and tribes for managing ozone air pollution. I also recognize that air pollution crossing state and tribal boundaries can contribute to downwind violations of the standards. Current and upcoming federal standards and safeguards,

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including pollution reduction rules for power plants, industrial facilities, vehicles and fuels, will ensure steady progress to reduce smog-forming pollution and will protect public health in communities across America.

The EPA will be assisting state, tribal and local air agencies by identifying currently available emission reduction measures as well as relevant information concerning their efficiency and cost-effectiveness. State, local and tribal agencies will be able to use this information in developing emission reduction strategies, plans and programs to attain and maintain cleaner air.

I look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff as we strive to advance our shared goal of clean air. Additional technical information on the ozone designations can be found at www.epa.gov/ozonedesignations. If you have questions, please contact me, or your staff may contact Laura McKelvey at (919) 541-5497 or mckelvey.laura@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa P. Jackson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lisa P. Jackson

cc: Mike Despain
Environmental Director