

REGIONAL HAZE

This page last reviewed December 1, 2008

[Public Workshop Announcement \(December 15, 2008\)](#)



Particulate pollution, including sulfates, nitrates, organics, soot, fine soil dust, and particles, contribute to the regional haze that impairs visibility, in addition to affecting public health. California's efforts to achieve State and federal air quality standards for health benefits will also improve visibility.

The Federal Clean Air Act of 1977 set a long-term goal of improving visibility to achieve natural conditions in selected national parks and wilderness areas of the United States, known as Class 1 Areas, by 2064. California has [29 mandatory Class 1 Areas](#) managed by either the National Parks Service or the U.S. Forest Service.

In 1999, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) promulgated a regional haze regulation that calls for states to establish goals and emission reduction strategies to make initial improvements in visibility at their respective Class 1 Areas. The ARB is preparing a Regional Haze Plan (RH Plan) for California demonstrating reasonable progress in reducing haze by 2018, the first benchmark year on the path to natural visibility by 2064.

U.S. EPA funded five Regional Planning Organizations throughout the country to coordinate regional haze rule-related activities between states in each region. California belongs to the Western Regional Air Partnership (WRAP), the consensus organization of western states, tribes, and federal agencies, which oversees analyses of monitoring data and preparation of technical reports regarding regional haze in the western United States.

Detailed information about California's Class 1 Areas, analysis of data collected, specific RH Plan tasks, technical reports, and public meetings are found at the links described below.

For more information about regional haze and California's activities to improve visibility, contact: Tina Suarez-Murias at csuarezm@arb.ca.gov or by phone at (916) 323-1495.

List serve sign-up: Go to the [Regional Haze Listserve page](#) to learn more about receiving information when changes are made to this website.

ON-GOING ACTIVITIES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Public Workshop

(December 15, 2008 Webcast from Sacramento)

You are invited to attend the December 15, 2008 workshop in person or participate via the live webcast. An agenda and presentation materials will be posted here prior to the workshop. For Webcast information, go to the [California EPA Webcast site](#).

- [Public Workshop Notice](#) (pdf - 74 KB)
- Agenda (*coming soon*)
- Presentation materials (*coming soon*)

DRAFT Regional Haze Plan

Coming Soon

BART requirement

(Best Available Retrofit Technology)

Industrial facilities in certain Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code categories, which have major sources of haze pollutants from emissions units that were approved, constructed, or brought on line between August 9, 1962 and August 9, 1977, may be required to retrofit those emissions units to reduce haze pollutants. The report [Identification of BART-Eligible Sources in the WRAP Region](#) describes this requirement and Appendix H lists the facilities in California that might have these older emission units. However, many older sources in California have already been retrofitted to BART level. ARB is currently working with the local air districts to confirm the retrofit status of these units.

IMPROVE Monitoring Network

(Interagency Monitoring of Protected Visual Environments)

There are 17 specialized monitors in or near California's Class 1 areas that measure levels of haze pollutants. The [Visibility Information Exchange Web System \(VIEWS\)](#) webpage stores all of the data nationwide, as well as that from California sites.

Causes of Haze and Possible Sources of Haze Pollutants

The WRAP Attribution of Haze Working Group produced a Phase 1 report entitled [Geographic Attribution for the Implementation of the Regional Haze Rule](#) that describes the haze pollutant species concentration at each IMPROVE monitor and how the combination of pollutants lead to light extinction that impairs visibility at nearby Class 1 areas. The report also shows how emission sources in the region and haze pollutants transported from other regions may contribute to impaired visibility at each Class 1 area. Go to the [California section](#) of the report to select a specific Class 1 area for further information.

PAST PUBLIC MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS

Status Report on Regional Haze Regulations (June 2000)

The Air Resources Board conducted a [public meeting](#) on June 22, 2000, at its Sacramento offices to present information on federal regional

Western States Public Workshops on Regional Haze Framework (June 2000)

haze requirements and how they will affect California.

In order to get the widest possible input from the affected public, the WRAP held a series of [workshops](#) throughout the West. The purpose of the workshops was to seek public comment on proposed alternatives for reducing sulfur oxides (SOx) emissions over the next 18 years, including the use of emissions trading as a backstop option. California is not participating in this program, the SO2 Annex, which applies primarily to coal-burning power plants and industries in some of the other western states. The Annex is a regional sulfur dioxide trading market for stationary sources in lieu of Best Available Retrofit Technology (BART).

[California State Implementation Plan](#)

The Board is one of six boards, departments, and offices under the umbrella of the California Environmental Protection Agency.
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