

Four Corners Air Quality Task Force
Cumulative Effects Workgroup Meeting
May 9, 2006

Participants: Kevin Golden, EPA; Mike George, NPS; Doug Blewitt, CO AQCC; Kevin Briggs, CO APCD; Joe Miller, Consultant for Southern Ute, 2 private citizens

The Cumulative Effects workgroup met on May 10 during the Farmington AQTF meeting. The group discussed the baseline information that had been provided by participants in the previous conference calls (and are available on the AQTF website) as well as the overall timeline for the AQTF. While the workgroup had no specific comments on either the background documents or the overall timeline, they have been reviewed by the workgroup and they will be considered in developing the overall workplan for the group.

The group discussed a process for developing a 2 to 4 page workplan and discussed technical options for evaluating air quality effects of potential control measures suggested by other AQTF workgroups. In general, the group felt that the workplan should provide two levels of analysis, one for evaluating individual control measures and a separate overarching analysis that would consider the cumulative effects of multiple measures. Both analyses would consider effects on acid deposition, visibility, NO₂, O₃, and PM. Other than characterizing emission changes from a specific measure the group decided that there are no viable technical methods available for addressing local scale effects of emissions on mercury deposition. PSD increments (particularly Class II increments) are also problematic to assess because they require specialized emissions inventories that are not currently available. However, several of the workgroup members would work with NM ENV which is developing a Four Corners PSD increment analysis independent of the AQTF process.

In evaluating specific mitigation measures the analyses would generally be based on calculating emissions changes associated with each measure and comparing those emission changes to current and projected emissions from other sources and source categories in the Four Corners region. WRAP would be requested to extract from their database a baseline inventory for the four corners area based on an area specified by the workgroup (specific coordinates for the requested area would be provided by the workgroup).

In evaluating cumulative effects, WRAP would be requested to perform model sensitivity tests to evaluate the air quality effects of across the board reductions in emissions from source categories or groups of sources in the Four Corners area (such as 20%, 40% and 60% reductions in NO_x). These modeled results would then be used to evaluate the overall effect of cumulative emissions changes suggested by the AQTF. The workgroup felt that the above approaches could be achieved, given the limited time and resources available to the AQTF. The workplan would also describe a "gold standard" for the best technical analyses that can be done, and will provide recommendations for future analyses.

Kevin Golden agreed to develop and send a draft workplan /outline via e-mail to other members for review and comment over the next few weeks, in an effort to start the workplan development process. The workgroup hopes to complete its workplan by early July. A tentative schedule for conference calls on June 8 and July 13 at 10 AM MST was set. The number and timing of these and possibly additional phone calls would depend on progress being made in developing the final workplan.