



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[EPA-HQ-OGC-2024-0149; FRL-11857-01-OGC]

Proposed Consent Decree, Clean Air Act Citizen Suit

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice of proposed consent decree; request for public comment.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Clean Air Act, as amended (“CAA” or “the Act”), the Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA” or “the Agency”) is providing notice of a proposed consent decree in *Sierra Club, et al. v. United States Environmental Protection Agency, et al.*, No. 1:23-cv-01744-JDB (D. D.C.). Plaintiffs Sierra Club, National Parks Conservation Association, and Environmental Integrity Project (collectively, “Plaintiffs”), brought suit in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia alleging that and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) and Michael Regan, in his official capacity as Administrator of the U.S. EPA (“the Administrator”) (collectively, “Defendants”), failed to take final action on the second planning period regional haze state implementation plan (“SIP”) revisions submitted by the following 34 states: Alaska, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. There are three intervenors in this action. PacifiCorp is acting as an intervenor-plaintiff and the State of North Dakota and the State of Nevada are acting as intervenor-defendants. The proposed consent decree would establish deadlines for the EPA to sign a notice of proposed rulemaking for certain SIPs included in this action and a notice of final rulemaking for each of the SIPs included in this action.

DATES: Written comments on the proposed consent decree must be received by [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: Submit your comments, identified by Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OGC-2024-0149, online at <https://www.regulations.gov> (EPA’s preferred method). Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

Instructions: All submissions received must include the Docket ID number for this action. Comments received may be posted without change to <https://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided. For detailed instructions on sending comments and additional information on the rulemaking process, see the “Additional Information about Commenting on the Proposed Consent Decree” heading under the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Yasmin Pérez Ortiz, Air and Radiation Law Office, Office of General Counsel, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; telephone: (202) 564-1077; email address: perez-ortiz.yasmin@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Obtaining a Copy of the Proposed Consent Decree

The official public docket for this action (identified by Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OGC-2024-0149) contains a copy of the proposed consent decree. The official public docket is available for public viewing at the Office of Environmental Information (OEI) Docket in the EPA Docket Center, EPA West, Room 3334, 1301 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC. The EPA Docket Center Public Reading Room is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. The telephone number for the Public Reading Room is (202) 566–1744, and the telephone number for the OEI Docket is (202) 566–1752.

The electronic version of the public docket for this action contains a copy of the proposed consent decree, and is available through <https://www.regulations.gov>. You may use <https://www.regulations.gov> to submit or view public comments, access the index listing of the contents of the official public docket, and access those documents in the public docket that are available electronically. Once in the system, key in the appropriate docket identification number

then select “search.”

II. Additional Information about the Proposed Consent Decree.

Plaintiffs initially filed a complaint in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia alleging that EPA failed to perform its nondiscretionary duty under CAA section 110(k)(2)-(4) to approve, disapprove, or conditionally approve, in whole or in part the second planning period regional haze SIP revisions for seven states, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Ohio, Texas, and Wisconsin, within 12 months of a determination of completeness by EPA or a submittal being deemed complete by operation of law. Plaintiffs then filed an Amended Complaint challenging the same failure from Defendants to perform a nondiscretionary duty under 110(k)(2)-(4) to approve, disapprove, or conditionally approve, in whole or in part the second planning period regional haze for 27 additional states, for a total of 34 states: Alaska, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming, within 12 months of a determination of completeness by EPA or a submittal being deemed complete by operation of law.

Under the terms of the proposed consent decree, no later than the dates set forth in the proposed consent decree, the Administrator or appropriate EPA official with delegated authority shall sign a notice of proposed rulemaking to approve, disapprove, conditionally approve, or approve in part and disapprove in part, pursuant to sections 110(k)(2)-(4) of the CAA, 42 U.S.C. 7410(k)(2)-(4), certain SIP submittals set forth in the proposed consent decree. In addition, under the terms of the proposed consent decree, no later than the dates set forth in the proposed consent decree, the Administrator or appropriate EPA official with delegated authority shall sign a notice of final rulemaking to approve, disapprove, conditionally approve, or approve in part and

disapprove in part, pursuant to sections 110(k)(2)-(4) of the CAA, 42 U.S.C. 7410(k)(2)-(4), the SIP submittals set forth in the proposed consent decree.

In accordance with section 113(g) of the CAA, for a period of thirty (30) days following the date of publication of this notice, the Agency will accept written comments relating to the proposed consent decree. EPA or the Department of Justice may withdraw or withhold consent to the proposed consent decree if the comments disclose facts or considerations that indicate that such consent is inappropriate, improper, inadequate, or inconsistent with the requirements of the Act.

III. Additional Information about Commenting on the Proposed Consent Decree.

Submit your comments, identified by Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OGC-2024-0149, via <https://www.regulations.gov>. Once submitted, comments cannot be edited or removed from this docket. The EPA may publish any comment received to its public docket. Do not submit to EPA's docket at <https://www.regulations.gov> any information you consider to be Confidential Business Information (CBI) or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. Multimedia submissions (audio, video, etc.) must be accompanied by a written comment. The written comment is considered the official comment and should include discussion of all points you wish to make. The EPA will generally not consider comments or comment contents located outside of the primary submission (i.e., on the web, cloud, or other file sharing system). For additional submission methods, the full EPA public comment policy, information about CBI or multimedia submissions, and general guidance on making effective comments, please visit <https://www.epa.gov/dockets/commenting-epa-dockets>. For additional information about submitting information identified as CBI, please contact the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this document. Note that written comments containing CBI and submitted by mail may be delayed and deliveries or couriers will be received by scheduled appointment only.

If you submit an electronic comment, EPA recommends that you include your name,

mailing address, and an e-mail address or other contact information in the body of your comment. This ensures that you can be identified as the submitter of the comment and allows EPA to contact you in case EPA cannot read your comment due to technical difficulties or needs further information on the substance of your comment. Any identifying or contact information provided in the body of a comment will be included as part of the comment that is placed in the official public docket and made available in EPA's electronic public docket. If EPA cannot read your comment due to technical difficulties and cannot contact you for clarification, EPA may not be able to consider your comment.

Use of the <https://www.regulations.gov> website to submit comments to EPA electronically is EPA's preferred method for receiving comments. The electronic public docket system is an "anonymous access" system, which means EPA will not know your identity, e-mail address, or other contact information unless you provide it in the body of your comment.

Please ensure that your comments are submitted within the specified comment period. Comments received after the close of the comment period will be marked "late." EPA is not required to consider these late comments.

Gautam Srinivasan,
Associate General Counsel.

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