



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Region 1

5 Post Office Square, Suite 100

Boston, MA 02109-3912

December 20, 2017

The Honorable Dannel P. Malloy
Governor of Connecticut
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

Thank you for your recommendation dated October 1, 2016, on air quality designations for the revised 2015 National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone throughout Connecticut. I appreciate the information you shared with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as we move forward to improve ozone air quality. This letter is to notify you of the EPA's preliminary response to your recommendations and to inform you of our approach for completing designations for the revised ozone standards.

On October 1, 2015, the EPA lowered the primary 8-hour ozone standard from 0.075 parts per million (ppm) to 0.070 ppm to provide increased protection of public health. The EPA revised the secondary 8-hour ozone standard, making it identical to the primary standard, to protect against welfare effects, including impacts on sensitive vegetation and forested ecosystems. Working closely with the states and tribes, the EPA is implementing the standards using a common sense approach that improves air quality and minimizes the burden on state and local governments. As part of this routine process, the EPA is working with the states to identify areas in the country that meet the standards and those that need to take steps to reduce ozone pollution.

As a first step in implementing the 2015 ozone standards, the EPA asked states to submit in the Fall of 2016 their designation recommendations, including appropriate area boundaries. In a first round of designations, published on November 16, 2017, consistent with states' recommendations, the EPA designated as Attainment/Unclassifiable most of the country. In addition, the EPA designated three counties in the state of Washington as Unclassifiable, consistent with the state's recommendation. Further, consistent with EPA's "Policy for Establishing Separate Air Quality Designations for Areas of Indian Country" (December 20, 2011), the EPA designated two areas of Indian country as separate Attainment/Unclassifiable areas.

As required by the Clean Air Act, the EPA will designate an area as Nonattainment if there are certified, quality-assured air quality monitoring data showing a violation of the 2015 ozone standards or if the EPA makes a determination that the area is contributing to a violation of the

standards in a nearby area. Areas designated attainment/unclassifiable are not measuring or contributing to a violation of the standards.

After considering your ozone designation recommendations, which were based on 2013-2015 air quality data, as well as other relevant technical information, the EPA intends to designate all of Connecticut as nonattainment and split, as before, into two separate nonattainment areas. The areas are the Greater Connecticut area which consists of: Hartford, Litchfield, New London, Tolland and Windham Counties; and the New York-N. New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-CT area which consists of: Fairfield, New Haven and Middlesex Counties in Connecticut, along with portions of New York and New Jersey. Technical Support Documents (TSDs) which provide detailed information about EPA's preliminary decisions are available at: www.epa.gov/ozone-designations/2015-ozone-standards-state-recommendations. In order for the EPA to consider more current (i.e., 2015-2017) air quality data in the final designation decisions for any area, the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) must submit certified, quality-assured 2017 air quality monitoring data for the area to the EPA by February 28, 2018.

The EPA will continue to work with state officials regarding the appropriate boundaries for the Nonattainment areas in Connecticut. If Connecticut has additional information that you would like the EPA to consider, please submit it to us by February 28, 2018. Please submit additional information by sending to the EPA's public docket for these designations, EPA-HQ-OAR-2017-0548, located at www.regulations.gov, and sending a copy to EPA Region 1. The EPA will also make its preliminary designation decisions and supporting documentation available to the general public for review and comment. We will be announcing a 30-day public comment period shortly in the *Federal Register*. After considering additional information, we receive, the EPA plans to promulgate final ozone designations in the spring of 2018.

The EPA is committed to working with the states and tribes to reduce ozone air pollution. We look forward to a continued dialogue with you and your staff as we work together to implement the 2015 ozone standards. Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me at or have a member of your staff contact David Conroy at 617-918-1661.

Sincerely,



Deborah A. Szaro
Acting Regional Administrator

cc: Rob Klee, Commissioner, CT DEEP
Anne Gobin, Air Management Bureau Chief, CT DEEP