

## Washington's Plan to Reduce Regional Haze

Have you ever looked out expecting to see a breathtaking view of Mount Rainier, the Olympic Mountains or the Pasayten Wilderness, and been disappointed to see an ugly brown or white haze ruining the view? It's called "regional haze," and it is air pollution.

The federal Clean Air Act requires states to reduce regional haze that affects visibility in 156 national parks and wilderness areas. Congress calls these "mandatory Class 1 Areas." Washington has eight mandatory Class I areas. They are: North Cascades National Park, Pasayten Wilderness, Glacier Peak Wilderness, Olympic National Park, Alpine Lakes Wilderness, Mt. Rainier National Park, Goat Rocks Wilderness, and Mt. Adams Wilderness.

### How will states reduce regional haze?

States must submit plans for reducing regional haze to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These plans are called State Implementation Plans (SIPs). The federal Regional Haze Rule sets planning periods for submitting SIPs. The planning periods take place during 2005 to 2064. A state must develop a Regional Haze SIP for each of the planning periods in the rule.

### What does a Regional Haze SIP do?

A Regional Haze SIP must show how the state will:

- Improve visibility on the "Most Impaired Days" (the haziest or worst 20% of days) in Class I areas.
- Protect existing visibility on the "Least Impaired Days" (the clearest or best 20% of days) in Class I areas.
- Address mandatory Class I Areas outside the state that are reasonably expected to be affected by emissions from within the state.

### Washington's Regional Haze SIP

Ecology is developing Washington's Regional Haze SIP. Washington's first SIP is for the initial (or foundational) planning period that extends from 2005 to 2018.

### WHY IT MATTERS

Regional haze reduces scenic views in national parks and wilderness areas. In the western U.S., haze has reduced views from an average of 140 miles down to 35-90 miles. In the eastern U.S., it has reduced views from an average of 90 miles down to 15-25 miles.

### Contact information:

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### Special accommodations:

If you need this publication in an alternate format, call the Air Quality Program at 360-407-6800. Persons with hearing loss, call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability, call 877-833-6341.

Washington's foundational SIP meets the basic requirements of the Regional Haze Rule. The SIP:

- Determines baseline visibility in each of the state's eight Class I Areas, using air quality data from 2000-2004.
- Provides inventories of visibility-impairing emissions from the state's sources.
- Analyzes natural and human-caused sources of haze affecting the state's Class I Areas.
- Sets reasonable progress goals for 2018 for the state's Class I Areas.
- Develops a long-term strategy for improving visibility.

Ecology worked closely with other states and organizations to write this plan, mostly through the Western Regional Air Partnership (WRAP) (<http://wrapair.org/>).

### How to comment on the draft SIP

Ecology is requesting public comments on the draft SIP. Input on the long-term strategy for returning visibility to natural conditions can be especially helpful as we begin implementing this plan. This input also will be particularly helpful as we revise the strategy in future planning periods.

Ecology will accept public comments from August 25 through October 6.

Submit comments to:

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Air Quality Program  
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[AQcomments@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:AQcomments@ecy.wa.gov)

### Where to find the documents for review

The proposed Regional Haze State Implementation Plan and related documents are available for review at the following locations:

Bellingham Public Library  
210 Central Avenue  
CS-9710  
Bellingham, WA 98227-9710  
360-778-7323

Mount Vernon City Library  
315 Snoqualmie Street  
Mt. Vernon, WA 98273  
360-336-6209

Seattle Public Library – Central Library  
1000 Fourth Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104  
206-386-4636

Port Townsend Public Library  
1220 Lawrence Street  
Port Townsend, WA 98368  
360-385-3181

Longview Public Library  
1600 Louisiana Street  
Longview, WA 98632  
360-442-5300

Wenatchee Library  
310 Douglas Street  
Wenatchee, WA 98801-2864  
509-662-5021

Twisp Library  
201 N Methow Valley Hwy.  
Twisp, WA 98856-0237  
509-997-4681

The Regional Haze SIP documents and other information are also available on Ecology's web site at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/airhome.html>

### **Public hearing**

Ecology will hold a public hearing on the Regional Haze SIP:

September 28, 2010

6:00 p.m.

Ecology Headquarters Building, Auditorium

300 Desmond Drive

Lacey, WA 98503

Ecology will provide a link to participate in the hearing via the Internet. Information about how to participate via the Internet will be available at the link below by September 21.

### **For more information**

Visit Ecology's web site at

[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/globalwarm\\_RegHaze/regional\\_haze.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/globalwarm_RegHaze/regional_haze.html)