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## Background

### I. Background on This Action

On October 23, 2002, EPA proposed in the **Federal Register**, approving certain portions of the proposed Washington Visibility SIP revision and taking no action on other provisions of the proposed SIP revisions. *See* 67 FR 65077, October 23, 2002. In that notice, EPA provided a 30 day review and comment period and solicited comments on our proposal. EPA received no comments. EPA is now taking final action on the SIP revision consistent with the published proposal.

### II. Background on Visibility

#### A. What Is Visibility Protection and Why Do We Have It?

Section 169A of the Federal Clean Air Act (CAA or Act) requires States to protect visibility in mandatory Class I Federal areas. Mandatory Class I Federal areas are specified large National Parks or Wilderness Areas. In Washington, there are 8 mandatory Class I Federal areas; the Mount Rainier National Park, North Cascades National Park, Olympic National Park, Alpine Lakes Wilderness Area, Glacier Peak Wilderness Area, Goat Rocks Wilderness Area, Mount Adams Wilderness Area, and Pasayten Wilderness Area. *See* 40 CFR 81.434. The Federal rules regulating visibility protection are set out in 40 CFR part 51, subpart P.

#### B. What Are the Main Visibility Protections Provided by the Federal Rules?

The Clean Air Act sets out a goal of preventing any future and remedying any existing impairment of visibility in mandatory Class I Federal areas. *See* 42 U.S.C. 7491. Employing a close coordination process among the state and the Federal Land Managers (FLMs), the Federal rules require monitoring of visibility in mandatory Class I Federal areas, as well as the development of a long-term strategy for making reasonable progress towards the national visibility goal. The visibility protection rules also provide for an assessment of visibility impacts from any new or major modification to a major stationary source that may affect mandatory Class I Federal areas. Additionally, in the event that a FLM certifies impairment of visibility in a mandatory Class I Federal area that could be caused, or contributed to, by an existing stationary facility, emission limitations representing Best Available Retrofit Technology (BART) may be imposed on the facility.

The Federal visibility rules were modified in 1999 to include provisions for addressing regional haze. *See* 64 FR 35714, July 1, 1999. Regional haze is visibility impairment which results from the cumulative impact of emissions from many point and non-point sources. All states are currently in the process of developing revisions to their SIPs to address the regional haze provisions. Therefore, the SIP submission under discussion in this action is not required to comply with the regional haze provisions of 40 CFR part 51, subpart P.

#### C. How Has Visibility Been Protected in Washington?

The initial proposed Visibility SIP for Washington was submitted by the State and approved in part by EPA on May 4, 1987, (52 FR 16243). EPA approved the Washington State Visibility Protection Program (with exceptions described below), certain provisions of 173–403 Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Implementation of Regulations for Air Contaminant Sources, and the 1983 Smoke Management Program. EPA disapproved section V.B., the new source review program, Appendix A, the Proposed Best Available Retrofit Technology (BART) rule, and the Proposed New Source Review Regulations.

### III. What Are the Required Provisions of a Visibility SIP?

40 CFR 51.302 provides the requirements for Visibility SIPs. These requirements and how the Washington Visibility SIP meets these requirements are summarized below.

#### A. Long-Term Strategy

The SIP needs to include a long-term (10–15 year) strategy that includes emission limitations, schedules of compliance, and other measures as deemed necessary to make reasonable progress toward the national goal. *See* 40 CFR 51.302(c)(2)(i). In general, Section VI of the proposed 1999 SIP revision provides a discussion of the long-term strategy, including measures for stationary sources, mobile sources, area sources, and interstate coordination. The long-term strategy must include:

- A strategy for evaluating visibility in mandatory Class I Federal areas by visual observation or other appropriate monitoring techniques. *See* 40 CFR 51.305(a). Section V of the proposed 1999 SIP revision provides for monitoring through the IMPROVE monitoring network and an assessment strategy.
- A provision for the available visibility data and a mechanism for its use in decisions required by the regulations. *See* 40 CFR 51.305(b). Section IX of the proposed 1999 SIP revision provides for the development and use of available data for SIP review and development.
- A strategy to address any existing impairment the FLM certifies to the State and integral vista of which the FLM notifies the State at least 6 months prior to plan submission. *See* 40 CFR 51.306(a)(1). Section I of the proposed 1999 SIP revision discusses certification of impairment in mandatory Class I Federal areas. Section III of the proposed 1999 SIP revision discusses integral vistas.
- A discussion, with reasonable specificity, why the long-term strategy is adequate for making reasonable progress. *See* 40 CFR 51.306(a)(3). Section VI of the proposed 1999 SIP revision discusses all source categories, the control measures that apply to them, and a qualitative assessment of how these are adequate for making reasonable progress. Section IX of the proposed 1999 SIP revision discusses the evaluation of progress toward achieving the national visibility goal.
- Coordination of the long-term strategy with other existing plans and goals, including those provided by affected FLMs. *See* 40 CFR 51.306(a)(3).