

labeled with emissions information in compliance with the EPA's snowmobile regulation. NPS will evaluate the need for additional measures as this rule is implemented. If NPS determines that additional measures are necessary, these could be required through the adaptive management framework of this rule. We also considered suggestions of installing remote sensing devices at each entrance, which would detect snowmobile emissions and indicate if they exceed the 15 and 120 g/kW-hr requirements. However, we believe instituting this system as it currently exists is impractical because of the burden on visitors and cost. The final regulation has also been clarified to include language that using a snowmobile or snowcoach which has been modified in such a way as to increase air or sound emissions is prohibited. This provision will provide NPS with sufficient assurance that snowmobiles will not be modified in ways that increase emissions.

*Issue:* There should be a date by which the park will identify makes, models and year of manufacture of snowmobiles meeting BAT.

*NPS Response:* The NPS wishes to be as flexible as possible and not have an arbitrary date for determining which snowmobiles are BAT compliant. We will certify snowmobiles as BAT when we have received sufficient information from snowmobile manufacturers concerning the emissions of machines. We recognize that potential customers want to know if a machine is BAT compliant before they order that machine for the upcoming winter season. Consumer demand may provide incentives to the snowmobile manufacturers to disclose emissions information early in the year, so potential customers will know which machines will be BAT and can make appropriate choices in determining which machines to purchase. We strongly encourage anyone who wishes to purchase a snowmobile for the parks to check with the manufacturer to insure it is BAT compliant.

#### **BAT Snowmobile Sound Emissions**

*Issue:* One commentator noted that the proposed rule sets BAT for snowmobiles at 73 dB(A) and the SAE J192 test procedures allows a +2 decibel error range. They claimed this represented no improvement over two-stroke snowmobiles, which typically perform at 75–78 dB(A). Another commentator suggested that we change the BAT requirement to 75 dB(A), since we already allow the 2 dB(A) error range.

*NPS Response:* The BAT sound requirements established by this rule are

noticeably quieter than conventional two stroke-snowmobiles; a 3–5 dB difference represents a doubling of sound emissions. Monitoring will provide NPS with additional data concerning noise impacts, and we may make changes under adaptive management. In addition, if improved technology becomes available, BAT sound requirements could be adjusted accordingly. We are continuing to use 73 dB(A) as our BAT requirement, as we wish to base it on SAE test procedures. If we changed this to 75 dB(A), we would need to eliminate the 2 dB(A) margin of error provided in the SAE J192 testing procedures.

*Issue:* Several commentators noted that the data NPS relied on to establish the proposed BAT sound requirement was not in full accordance with SAE J192 (March 1985) test method cited in the proposed regulation. Specifically, the atmospheric pressure during the test runs was outside the range specified in the test method. One commentator suggested that final BAT limits should be based on test data that fully complies with the applicable test method and that the test method be a standard SAE procedure. Another commentator recommended revising part 7.13 (I)(4)(ii) to disclose that the J192 test procedure was modified using Yellowstone elevations/barometric pressure.

*NPS Response:* We recognize that the test procedures used, in part, to determine the BAT sound requirement were based on testing done at Yellowstone National Park, where the atmospheric pressure is lower than the SAE J192 requirements due to the park's elevation. Initial testing data indicates that snowmobiles may test quieter at high elevation, and likewise be able to pass our BAT requirements at higher elevations but fail our requirements near sea level. Therefore, the NPS is initially allowing testing to be performed at reduced barometric pressure, recognizing that snowmobiles will be used in these conditions. The regulatory text has been clarified to note that snowmobile manufacturers may test at any barometric pressure above or equal to 23.4 inches Hg (uncorrected). We are interested in transitioning to the standard SAE J192 test as sufficient test data becomes available.

*Issue:* The test specified in the proposed rule (SAE J192, 1985 revision) was revised in March 2003. The BAT requirement should be based on this newer test.

*NPS Response:* We are continuing to use the SAE J192 test, 1985 revision, for several reasons. Most importantly, our BAT requirement was established using the 1985 test procedures along with

industry information and modeling. At the time this testing occurred, the J192 testing procedures that were used were the most up to date (revised 1985). However, after that initial testing and after the SEIS was finalized, the SAE updated J192 test procedures in March 2003. The changes from the 1985 procedures to the 2003 procedures could alter the results. For instance, because of technical changes to sound meter settings, snowmobiles may yield slightly quieter test results using the 2003 test procedures. In addition, the rolling start called for in the new procedure may also generate higher sound levels due to increased speed. Therefore, to be consistent with our BAT requirements, we must continue to use the 1985 test. We are interested in transitioning to the March 2003 J192 test because it is a more current procedure, and we will continue to evaluate this issue after these regulations are implemented.

*Issue:* One commentator recommended that the BAT sound requirement should be adjusted upward by 3 dB(A) to reflect the effects of different atmospheric pressures between Yellowstone and the SAE J192 test procedures.

*NPS Response:* We believe the BAT sound requirement of 73 dB(A) is appropriate and should not be altered. As noted above, we are allowing manufacturers to test at any barometric pressure above 23.4 inches Hg (uncorrected). Currently, there are two snowmobile manufacturers that have demonstrated compliance with this BAT requirement. Testing for one of these snowmobiles indicates that it is well within our BAT requirement even when tested in the Midwest at approximately 1,000 feet in elevation. This snowmobile yields sound emissions of 71.75 dB(A), well below our BAT requirements. If tested at higher elevation in Yellowstone National Park, we believe this snowmobile would yield sound emissions even below 71 dB(A). If the BAT requirement was increased by 3 dB(A), to 76 dB(A), it would only be 2 dB(A) quieter than the maximum snowmobile sound emissions allowed for any snowmobile. A BAT requirement of 76 dB(A) would be far too high to achieve our goal of insuring that soundscapes are protected.

*Issue:* One commentator suggested the SAE J2567 test be used for snowmobile sound.

*NPS Response:* We have no information at this time about the comparability of this test to the SAE J192 test, and the commentator does not provide any further data or information about this test. Accordingly, we have not made this change in the regulation.