

1 **Section 309 Regional Haze SIPs**

2 **Overview**

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4 The Section 309 Regional Haze SIPs developed by New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming and the
5 City of Albuquerque represent 20 years of work in the region to improve visibility at
6 Class I areas. The process began with the Grand Canyon Visibility Transport
7 Commission and continued with the work of the Western Regional Air Partnership.
8 States, tribes, local governments, industry, environmental groups, and Federal Land
9 Managers negotiated a consensus agreement to improve visibility that all of the
10 stakeholders could support.

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12 The States submitted Regional Haze SIPs in 2003 and have been implementing the
13 strategies for the last seven years. However, approval of the Section 309 SIPs was
14 delayed due to challenges to the federal requirements for Best Available Retrofit
15 Technology (BART). The States are considering changes to the stationary source
16 provisions to address the new BART requirements and to update the SO₂ milestones to
17 account for significant changes since the SIPs were adopted in 2003.
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19 **Summary of Changes From the 2003 SIP**

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- 21 • Arizona and Oregon are no longer participating in the Backstop Trading Program
22 and are instead focusing resources on developing a single SIP under Section 308
23 of the Regional Haze Rule. The Backstop Trading Program was designed to
24 accommodate changes and the milestone has been reduced to reflect the smaller
25 number of sources in the program.
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 - 27 • The base year for the milestones was updated to the year 2006, and emission
28 reductions between 2006 and 2010 have been included for individual plants,
29 effectively locking in the substantial emission reductions that have occurred since
30 the Annex was finalized in 2000.
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 - 32 • New source growth estimates for utilities have been reduced substantially to
33 account for changing projections for new coal-fired power plants in the region.
34 Coal will continue to be an important resource in the region, but new renewable
35 energy resources and efforts to improve efficiency have reduced projections for
36 new plants in the region. New plants will use state-of-the-art emission reduction
37 technologies with significantly lower SO₂ emissions than older facilities. The
38 new source growth estimate has been reduced to 2,600 tons of SO₂ for new plants
39 in the region by 2018.
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- 1 • All power plants that are subject to BART are assumed to meet the presumptive
2 BART emission rate of 0.15 lb/MMBtu. This assumption is appropriate because
3 the Backstop Trading Program was designed to achieve reasonable progress from
4 all stationary sources of SO₂, with BART as a secondary goal.
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- 6 • After seven successful years of implementing the program, there is greater
7 certainty about regional emissions. Therefore, the headroom/uncertainty factor is
8 no longer needed.
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- 10 • A tribal set-aside of 2,500 allowances is included in the program. This set-aside
11 is “below the line” and is available as a special allocation if the program is
12 triggered.
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- 14 • When the Annex¹ was finalized in 2000, additional incentives were needed to
15 encourage zero emission technologies. Since that time there has been tremendous
16 growth in renewable portfolio standards. Greenhouse gas regulations are further
17 encouraging renewable energy. The renewable energy credit is no longer
18 included in the program because these other incentives are achieving the goal.
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20 The proposed 2018 milestone represents a 60% reduction in SO₂ emissions since 1990 in
21 the 3-state region. Substantial improvement can be seen in the sulfate contribution to
22 visibility in the Class I areas along the Colorado Plateau. The improvement is especially
23 apparent on the cleanest days that are not impacted by emissions from wildfires.
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¹The Annex to the Grand Canyon Visibility Transport Commission Recommendations provided the framework for the SO₂ Milestones and Regional Backstop Trading Program that was envisioned as part of the 1996 Recommendations from the Commission. The current Backstop Trading Program is based on that framework but has been adjusted during the intervening years to reflect the number of states participating in the program and changes in future projected emissions in the region.