Advancement of Western Air Planning in the WRAP

The Western Regional Air Partnership (WRAP) is a voluntary partnership of states, tribes, federal land managers, local air agencies and the U.S. EPA whose purpose is to understand current and evolving regional air quality issues in the West. The WRAP Board (Board) directs and provides oversight of the activities performed by the WRAP. [The WRAP Charter](https://www.wrapair2.org/pdf/WRAP%20Charter%20approved%20by%20the%20WRAP%20Membership%20July%202014.pdf) outlines the purposes of the WRAP and memorializes the powers and duties of the Board, including that the Board:

*“establish a Technical Steering Committee from the membership to oversee and direct the technical and analytical work of WRAP staff, contractors, and work groups*”

The [WRAP Strategic Plan](https://www.wrapair2.org/pdf/WRAP%20Strategic%20Plan%20final%20March_2015.pdf) presents five goals to meet the vision of the WRAP membership, which is to be the leading technical and planning information source for air quality management in the West:

1. Provide a forum for regional collaboration on technical and planning topics of common interest to the members.
2. Share and act on the current and future priority technical support needs of the members.
3. Provide timely and efficient access to needed technical information that is credible, current, comprehensive, and consistent for air quality management decisions.
4. Deliver technical support, training, products, and other services that meet the priority needs of the members.
5. Advocate and advance western technical issues for resolution.

The Technical Steering Committee (TSC) has oversight of the technical tasks that are performed within the WRAP. In particular, the Board approved the TSC-drafted [WRAP workplan](http://wrapair2.org/pdf/2018-2019%20WRAP%20Workplan%20update%20Board%20Approved%20April.3.2019.pdf) which specifically defines the tasks to be completed by the WRAP, the timeframes for completion, and the work groups and subcommittees responsible for the completion of these tasks. The Workplan represents a comprehensive plan of those tasks necessary for the advancement of western regional efforts, particularly for western regional haze planning. However, as WRAP progresses towards future planning efforts it is important that the Board and TSC identify those areas that could benefit from additional technical analyses and further research. These efforts may include but are not limited to continued western US regional haze planning support, ozone planning support, international impacts on western State air quality, oil and gas considerations, fire and smoke planning, etc. For these topics, the TSC, under Board oversight, may be in a unique position to advance knowledge or research in order to benefit western organizations as they continue planning efforts for these topics.

With continued completion of the 2018-2019 WRAP workplan tasks, and in the absence of a subsequent year workplan, it is important for the Board to establish the structure by which WRAP will continue to provide western organization support on topics that impact western air quality. This document outlines steps by which the TSC could review available information and technical efforts in order to identify knowledge or research gaps for western air quality topics of interest. In those instances where the TSC identifies gaps, it may be appropriate for TSC staff to pursue supplemental efforts to improve these gaps.

1. The TSC identifies a topic or issue of interest
2. TSC Co-Chairs secure an expert to discuss the topic at a future TSC meeting
3. The topical expert presents background information on the topic and identifies knowledge gaps, when they occur and are known
4. TSC members ask clarifying questions of the topical expert in order to bound the issue
5. TSC members discuss additional analyses, if they exist, for which TSC members or an external contractor could improve knowledge gaps
6. TSC members determine feasibility of future work based on the follow questions:
   1. Does a knowledge gap exist, if so, what additional work would benefit this gap?
   2. Would further research into this knowledge gap benefit western state, local, tribal, or federal planning efforts?
   3. Are there resources available (either WRAP members or contractors) to further research the gap?
7. Where the TSC determines that additional work is warranted and can be supported by the TSC, a project lead should be identified
8. The project lead should then scope the project needs and provide those to the TSC at the following meeting
9. The TSC will present this project to the Board for potential Board feedback and approval
10. Upon Board approval, the TSC and/or the appropriate Work Group will provide assistance to the project lead as needed to ensure project advancement
11. The project lead will provide the TSC and/or the appropriate Work Group with updates at subsequent meetings in order to ensure project advancement and support of project needs