

Jurisdiction and Agency Coordinating Committee Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

MEMORANDUM

TO: Martin E. Nohe, Chairman
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

Members
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

FROM: Monica Backmon, Acting Chairman
Jurisdiction and Agency Coordinating Committee
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

SUBJECT: Update on Regional Air Quality (Agenda Item 6.E.)

DATE: January 12, 2012

This memorandum is intending to provide the NVTa with a brief update on regional air quality activities.

- The 2011 Ozone Season began on April 15, 2011. As of September 23, 2011, there have been 2 Code Red Days and 19 Code Orange days. There have been 21 days which exceeded the 75 parts per billion federal standards for ozone. In addition, there have been no violations of the federal particulate matter standard of 35 micrograms per cubic meter. The ozone season runs until September 30, 2011.
- The TPB was briefed on the draft conformity analysis of the 2011 CLRP. The analysis shows that mobile emissions are well within the mobile budgets for ozone season VOC and NOx, as well as wintertime CO, and are well below the 2002 base year levels for the PM2.5 pollutants. The results, based upon analyses contained in the technical report, Air Quality Conformity Determination Of the 2011 Constrained Long Range Plan for the Washington Metropolitan Region. The conformity assessment and draft plan were released for public comment on October 13, 2011. The public comment period will end on November 12, 2011. The TPB adopted the plan and conformity assessment at its November 16, 2011 meeting.

The new emissions estimates from these test runs indicate that estimates of emissions from the region's CLRP/TIP would comply with the approved (Ozone) and submitted (PM2.5) emissions budgets in the region's State Implementation Plans (SIPs) in the outer years (2020 and beyond). The test runs also indicate that the region would not comply with the approved (Ozone) and submitted (PM2.5) emissions budgets in some of the years between 2011 and 2020. Normally such a situation would require updating the emissions budgets in the SIP and/or adopting transportation emissions reductions measures. At this time, however, the

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EPA has proposed (in an action not related to MOVES model) certain changes affecting the procedures for conducting air quality conformity analyses for the CLRP and TIPs including the years for which such analyses is to be conducted for. Should these proposed changes be finalized, it is likely that the TPB will be able to select an earlier than 2020 year in which CLRP/TIP emissions estimates would comply with the approved/submitted emissions budgets. Additionally members of the MOVES Task Force, working with the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) and AASHTO, have requested the EPA to consider extending the deadline for using MOVES in regional transportation conformity analyses. The EPA has agreed that such an action is merited and is currently examining the process for granting such an extension.

- On January 6, 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed strengthening the 8-hour national ambient air quality standards for ground-level ozone. The current standard is 75 parts per billion (ppb). The EPA proposed tightening the standard by lowering the design hour value to between 60 to 70 ppb. In addition, the EPA is also proposing to establish a seasonal secondary standard to protect sensitive vegetation and ecosystems. The EPA conducted public hearings on its proposed standards in several locations around the country. EPA expected to issue final standards on August 31, 2010; however, the new standard has not been issued yet. Based on the original issue date, EPA expected to make final regional non-attainment designations by July 2011. If designations are made in July 2011, non-attainment areas will have until December 2013 to complete their State Implementation Plans (SIPs). New regulations would need to be in place by 2014. EPA states that it intends to maintain the original target dates, but changes in some of these dates is likely given the amount of work involved in the different phases of this process.

JACC members and I will be available at the Authority meeting on January 12, 2012, to answer questions.

Cc: Members, NVTAA Jurisdiction and Agency Coordinating Committee