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April 8, 2013

Regional Administrator Susan Hedman
U.S. EPA Region 5 Administrator
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Mail Code: R-19J
Chicago, IL 60604-3507

Subject: Proposed Sulfur Dioxide Nonattainment Areas for Wisconsin

Dear Regional Administrator Hedman:

On behalf of Governor Scott Walker, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed nonattainment designations for the 1-hour Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2) National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS), as documented in a February 6, 2013 letter. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) conducted additional technical evaluations and based on their information, I offer the following for you to consider.

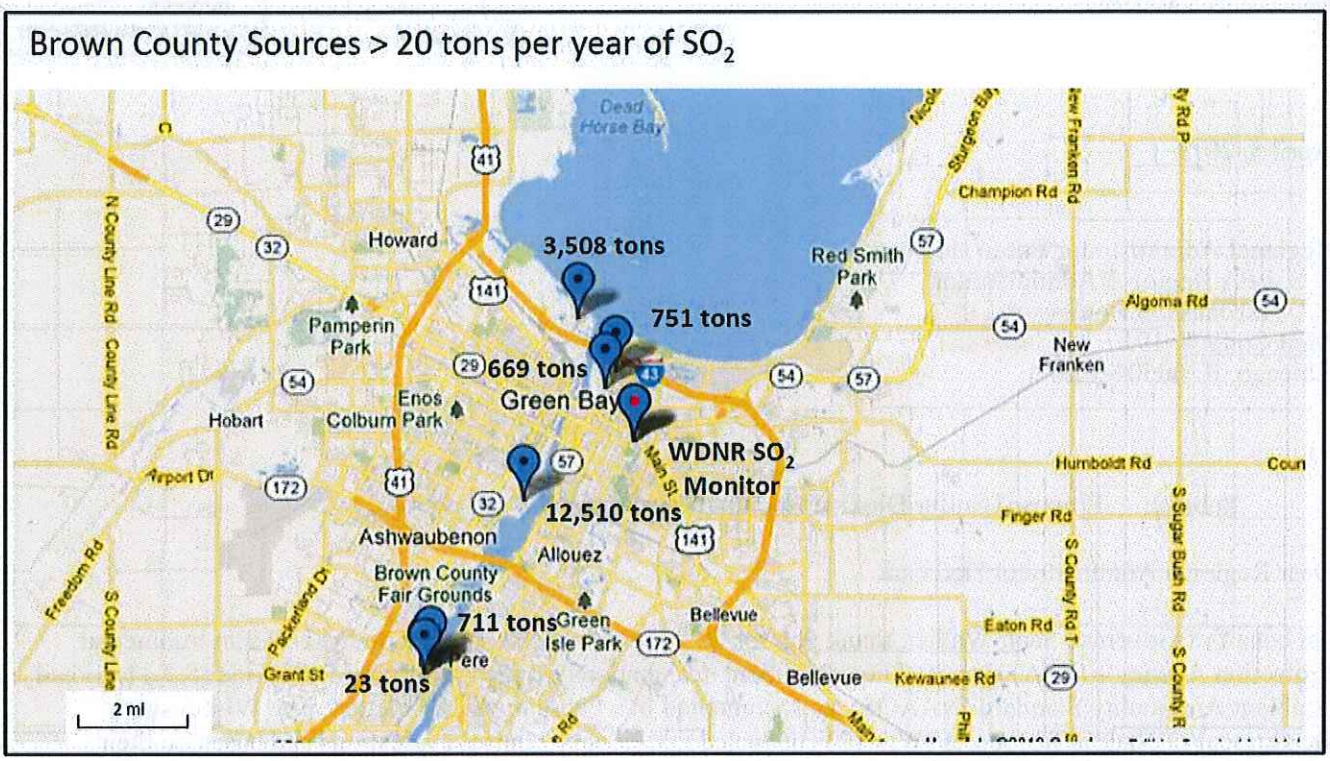
Oneida County

The U.S. EPA proposed one SO_2 nonattainment area for the State of Wisconsin. This is the area that was initially recommended in a letter to U.S. EPA Region 5 on May 26, 2011. On January 23, 2013, however, the source responsible for the elevated SO_2 concentrations submitted an application with the WDNR to install a natural gas boiler at their facility. Given this development, the U.S. EPA should delay finalization of the one nonattainment designation in Wisconsin at this time. This is the major source of SO_2 in the area and the WDNR believes the area will achieve attainment when the source reduces its emissions. Consequently, attainment status should be granted once the cause of the nonattainment is removed or reduced.

Regardless of the U.S. EPA's action regarding finalization of the nonattainment designation, the remainder of Oneida County should be designated attainment since only two other sources exist in the county, both located in the proposed nonattainment area. In addition, the sources only reported 7.99 and 0.02 tons per year of SO_2 emissions in 2011.

Air Monitoring Information

Brown and Forest Counties in Wisconsin have consistently had design values below the SO_2 NAAQS since 2005 and 2009, respectively. These counties should be designated to attainment status on actual monitored SO_2 concentrations. In fact, there were no sources that reported SO_2 emissions in Forest County to the WDNR in 2011. In addition, the map on the next page shows the location of the current air monitor in Brown County. All SO_2 emission sources above 20 tons per year in 2011 in Brown County are located in close proximity to the air monitor and yet the monitor still measures attainment of the NAAQS.



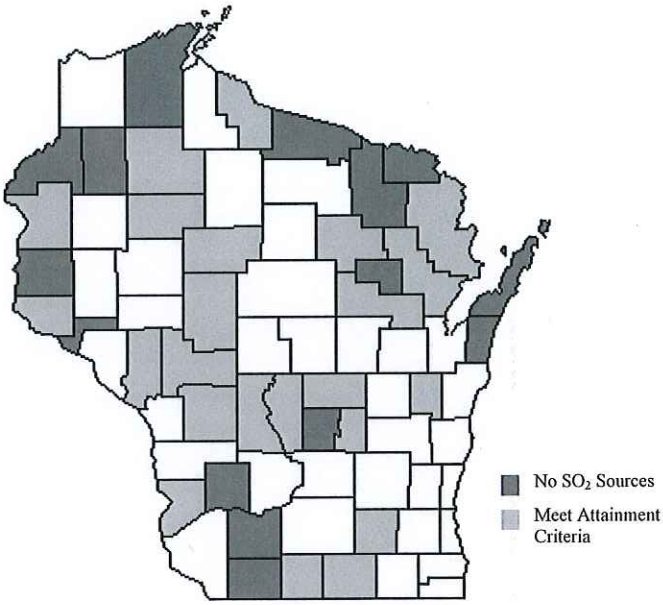
Additional Attainment Criteria

The WDNR appreciates the U.S. EPA's efforts to better define implementation for other areas, excluding nonattainment areas, across the country for the SO_2 NAAQS. The recently issued white paper on February 7, 2013 is a positive step. Although the WDNR understands the proposed approach, the U.S. EPA should designate some areas in Wisconsin as attainment areas now based on the following criteria:

- County has less than 20 tons per year of total reported SO_2 emissions, and
- County has no individual source with greater than 20 tons per year of reported SO_2 emissions.

The emission thresholds for attainment are based on previous SO_2 modeling that was conducted by the WDNR. Please note that the 20 tons per year threshold was not selected as a bright line between attainment and nonattainment, but is simply based on substantive technical work completed in the past by the WDNR. Consequently, other counties with low emissions may also deserve to be designated attainment. Thirty-eight counties in Wisconsin meet the suggested attainment criteria based on reported 2011 SO_2 emissions, as shown on the following page. I strongly believe that counties without any SO_2 emission sources should be designated as attainment during this designation process and U.S. EPA should extend attainment status to other counties with low reported point source SO_2 emissions.

Counties Requested For Attainment Based On Reported Emissions



County	Total SO_2 Emissions	# Srcs	Max SO_2 Source
Rusk	19.59	2	19.58
Green	19.10	1	19.10
Pierce	14.69	1	14.69
Green Lake	14.08	2	14.04
Sawyer	14.80	4	13.48
Calumet	8.55	2	8.48
Marinette	13.30	2	8.35
Jefferson	8.46	4	6.27
Rock	12.48	9	5.82
Jackson	3.01	5	2.76
Waushara	1.27	1	1.27
Oconto	1.12	1	1.12
Adams	1.04	1	1.04
Iron	1.12	3	0.61
Shawano	0.57	1	0.57
Juneau	0.50	1	0.50
Crawford	0.21	2	0.19
Clark	0.30	3	0.17
Monroe	0.26	4	0.17
Polk	0.08	1	0.08
Langlade	0.05	1	0.05
Trempealeau	0.09	4	0.05
Taylor	0.03	2	0.02
Bayfield	0.00	0	0.00
Burnett	0.00	0	0.00
Door	0.00	0	0.00
Florence	0.00	0	0.00
Forest	0.00	0	0.00
Iowa	0.00	0	0.00
Kewaunee	0.00	0	0.00
Lafayette	0.00	0	0.00
Marquette	0.00	0	0.00
Menominee	0.00	0	0.00
Pepin	0.00	0	0.00
Richland	0.00	0	0.00
Saint Croix	0.00	0	0.00
Vilas	0.00	0	0.00
Washburn	0.00	0	0.00

Thank you for strongly considering the requests made in this letter for attainment for several counties in Wisconsin. Designation as attainment for these counties provides regulatory certainty for them with respect to the SO_2 NAAQS. If you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to contact Bart Sponseller, Air Management Bureau Director, at (608) 264 – 8537 or Bart.Sponseller@wisconsin.gov.

Sincerely,

Cathy Stepp, Secretary
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources