

Joint Statement by the Governments of Canada and the United States of America on Bilateral Cooperation to Improve Air Quality

April 12, 2007

Canadian Minister of the Environment John Baird and United States Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Stephen Johnson met in Washington, D.C. on April 12, 2007, and announced that Canada and the United States will start negotiations on a Particulate Matter Annex to the 1991 U.S.-Canada Air Quality Agreement. Particulate matter can cause significant health effects in adults and children, and is linked to other environmental problems such as haze in national parks and acidic deposition. A Particulate Matter Annex also would complement the annex negotiated in 2000 addressing ground-level ozone, as well as the original annexes on acid rain and scientific cooperation.

Minister Baird and Administrator Johnson underscored their strong commitment to reducing cross-border air pollution. Both countries have already achieved emission reductions in sulfur dioxide and oxides of nitrogen sooner than expected. However, levels of fine particles still exceed Canadian and U.S. standards in some urban areas near the eastern border and contribute to elevated levels and haze in other areas along the western and central border regions.

They agreed with the binational Air Quality Committee's assessment that the joint technical and scientific analyses published in 2004 provide the scientific foundation for a Particulate Matter Annex that would help in developing the necessary programs and strategies to address the serious environmental and health problems associated with the transboundary transport of particulate matter.

The U.S.-Canada Air Quality Agreement serves as the primary mechanism for binational cooperation to address transboundary air pollution issues.

Information on the joint technical and scientific analyses on particulate matter:

http://www.msc.ec.gc.ca/saib/smog/transboundary/transboundary_e.pdf

More information about the U.S.-Canada Air Quality Agreement: <http://www.epa.gov/usca>