



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 5  
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD  
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

FEB 16 2016

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:

The Honorable Bruce Rauner  
Governor of Illinois  
207 State House  
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Rauner:

Thank you for your recommendations dated September 18, 2015 on air quality designations for the State of Illinois for the 2010 revision to the primary National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>). Reducing levels of SO<sub>2</sub> pollution is an important part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's commitment to a clean, healthy environment. Exposure to SO<sub>2</sub> can cause a range of adverse health effects, including narrowing of the airways which can cause difficulty breathing and increased asthma symptoms. This letter is to notify you of EPA's preliminary intentions regarding your recommended designations.

On June 3, 2010, EPA strengthened the health-based or "primary" standard for SO<sub>2</sub> by establishing a standard for 1-hour average SO<sub>2</sub> concentrations at a level of 75 parts per billion. Within one year after a new or revised standard is established, the Clean Air Act requires the Governor of each state to submit to EPA a list of all areas in the state, with recommendations for whether each area meets the standard. Through an interactive process, EPA considers the recommendations and then promulgates designations for all areas across the country. On July 25, 2013, EPA designated 29 areas in 16 states as nonattainment based on monitored violations, but did not at that time designate other areas. Pursuant to a March 2, 2015, court-ordered schedule,<sup>1</sup> EPA must complete the remaining SO<sub>2</sub> designations by three specific deadlines: July 2, 2016, December 31, 2017, and December 31, 2020.

This current round of designations, to be completed by July 2, 2016, addresses two groups of areas: (1) areas that have newly monitored violations of the 2010 SO<sub>2</sub> NAAQS based on the most recent three calendar years of certified monitored ambient air quality data, and (2) areas that contain any stationary source that had not been announced as of March 2, 2015, for retirement and that according to EPA's Air Markets Database emitted in 2012 either (i) more than 16,000 tons of SO<sub>2</sub> or (ii) more than 2,600 tons of SO<sub>2</sub> with an annual average emission rate of at least 0.45 pounds of SO<sub>2</sub>/MMBTU.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Sierra Club v. McCarthy*, No. 3-13-cv-3953 (SI) (N.D. Cal. Mar. 2, 2015).

After carefully considering Illinois' recommendations and other available technical information, EPA intends to designate as nonattainment or unclassifiable/attainment the following areas, including the following counties or portions of counties:

Intended Nonattainment Area

Alton Township

Williamson County\*

Intended Nonattainment Counties

Madison County (p)

Williamson County

Intended Unclassifiable/Attainment Area

Wood River Township

Massac County

Putnam/Bureau Counties

Jasper County

Intended Unclassifiable/Attainment Area Counties

Madison County (p)

Massac County

Putnam and Bureau Counties

Jasper County

The asterisk (\*) indicates a modification to the designation that you have recommended. The (p) indicates only a portion of the county will be designated.

The enclosed Technical Support Document provides a detailed analysis that supports our intended designation decisions. If your state has additional information that EPA should consider prior to finalizing these designations, please submit it to us by April 19, 2016. We also will be publishing a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing a 30-day period for the public to provide input on EPA's intended designation decisions. We will promulgate the designations for these areas by July 2, 2016. We will designate all other previously undesignated areas in the state on a schedule consistent with the prescribed timing of the court order, i.e., by December 31, 2017, or December 31, 2020.

We look forward to a continued dialogue with you and your staff as we work together to complete the area designations and implement the 2010 primary SO<sub>2</sub> standard. For additional information regarding designations under the SO<sub>2</sub> standard, please visit our website at [www.epa.gov/so2designations](http://www.epa.gov/so2designations). Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me, or have your staff contact me at 312-886-3000, or George Czerniak, Director, Air and Radiation Division, at 312-353-2212 or [czerniak.george@epa.gov](mailto:czerniak.george@epa.gov).

Sincerely,



Robert A. Kaplan  
Acting Regional Administrator

Enclosure

cc: Lisa Bonnet, Director,  
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

Julie Armitage, Chief,  
Bureau of Air  
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency