



ROY COOPER
Governor

MICHAEL S. REGAN
Secretary

MICHAEL A. ABRACZINSKAS
Director

September 26, 2017

Advance Program
c/o Ms. Laura Bunte
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, C304-01
109 T.W. Alexander Drive
Research Triangle Park, N.C. 27711
advance@epa.gov

RE: Request to Include the State of North Carolina in the Ozone and PM Advance Program

Dear Ms. Bunte:

The North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Air Quality (DAQ) requests to join the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Advance program. North Carolina meets all eligibility requirements for the Ozone and Particulate Matter (PM) Advance program, as the entire state is currently in attainment for ozone and PM_{2.5} National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). It is important over the next few years that ozone and PM_{2.5} emissions continue to remain constant or decline so that the NAAQS can be maintained. The DAQ submits this letter of interest to partner with EPA to meet its mission to improve ambient air quality for the health, benefit and economic well-being of all our citizens.

The DAQ operates the state's air quality program in 97 counties. The remaining three counties are served by Mecklenburg County Air Quality (MCAQ), Forsyth County Office of Environmental Assistance and Protection and Western N.C. Regional Air Quality Agency. The DAQ commends MCAQ for recently joining the Ozone Advance program, and plans to fully support its efforts to maintain existing programs and expand voluntary and incentive-based programs to reduce ozone-forming emissions in Mecklenburg and surrounding counties. The DAQ will assist MCAQ in achieving its goals by providing staff and other resources as it collaborates with stakeholders and the public.

Our long-term vision is to expand and implement the Advance program in other ozone and PM sensitive regions of the state (e.g., Triad, Triangle, and Catawba maintenance areas). The DAQ already works closely with local air agencies, councils of government, non-profits, and various stakeholders. We believe that the EPA Advance program will serve as a catalyst for new partners to join efforts to reduce air pollution. The N.C. Air Awareness program, DAQ's education and outreach program, will assist with the coordination of Advance projects in the counties identified in each Ozone and PM region.

We look forward to your acknowledgement of receipt into EPA's Advance program, at which point we will provide additional information as requested. Please contact Sushma Masemore at 919-707-8700, or via e-mail at sushma.masemore@ncdenr.gov, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Michael A. Abraczinskas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michael A. Abraczinskas, Director
Division of Air Quality, NCDEQ

cc: Kelly Sheckler, EPA
Jane Spann, EPA
Leslie Rhodes, MCAQ
Megan Green, MCAQ
William Barnette, Forsyth County Office of Environmental Assistance and Protection
David Brigman, Western N.C. Regional Air Quality Agency
Sushma Masemore, DAQ
Robin Barrows, DAQ