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Assessment of Qualification for Treatment under the Arizona Natural and Exceptional Events Policy for the High Particulate (PM₁₀) Concentration Events in the Nogales, Arizona Area on March 15, 2007

Background

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) operates monitors at the Post Office in Nogales, Arizona for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} and at the Fire Station in Nogales, Sonora for PM₁₀. Federal Reference Method (FRM) filter based samples are collected at both locations. A Beta-Attenuation Monitor System (BAMS) collects hourly concentration data at the Post Office site.

During the evening of March 15, 2007, a strong night-time temperature inversion set up in the Nogales area. With no significant ventilating winds available to break up the surface inversion, the inversion intensified and set up a drainage flow from the higher terrain to the south in Mexico through Nogales, Sonora, and into Nogales, Arizona.

The event brought significant elevated ambient concentrations of PM₁₀ that exceeded the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) at the ADEQ Nogales

Post Office monitors (BAMS). The fact that ambient concentrations exceed the NAAQS satisfies the criteria in 40 CFR 50.1(j) that the event “affects air quality.”

Preliminary indications were that emissions from sources in Mexico, which are not subject to control by the Arizona state implementation plan (SIP), may have contributed to the event.

A PM₁₀ SIP exists for Nogales, Arizona. All appropriate SIP control measures were in place during the event demonstrating, per 40 CFR 50.1(j), that the event “is not reasonably controllable or preventable,” if in fact emissions from Mexico caused the exceedance.

Elevated PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations were measured in the Nogales area. The following are the key PM monitor readings for the monitors examined in this report:

Monitor (Operator/Type)	AQS ID*	24-hr Avg PM ₁₀ or PM _{2.5}	1-hr Max PM ₁₀ or PM _{2.5}	Time of Max 1-hr	Flag**
NOGALES AREA					
Nogales AZ Post Office PM₁₀ (ADEQ/BAM)	04-023-0004 (3)	175	728	2100	RL
Nogales AZ Post Office PM_{2.5} (ADEQ/BAM)	04-023-0004 (3)	8	30	2100	None

* EPA Air Quality System Identification Number

** 24-hr PM₁₀ concentration influenced by exceptional event (international transport) to be flagged.

Type Abbreviations: BAM – Beta-Attenuation Mass Monitor (Continuous monitor)

The preliminary findings from this analysis were presented at a stakeholders meeting on June 11, 2008, in Phoenix, Arizona, and on June 17, 2008, in Nogales, Arizona. Public comment was solicited on the preliminary findings from May 28 through June 26, 2008. During that time, no comments were received from the public. ADEQ has

finalized this demonstration, which was made available for public comment from August 11, 2008, through September 10, 2008. Any comments that were received were forwarded to EPA with this demonstration pursuant to 40 CFR 50.14(c)(3)(i).

Assessment of March 15, 2007 event (Cont.)

Assessment Under the Technical Criteria Document (TCD)

1. Properly qualify and validate the air quality measurement to be flagged. As this was not a filter sampling date (1-in-6 run day), only data from the continuous analyzers were examined. The air quality monitoring data were reviewed by ADEQ, the agency responsible for operation of the monitor. All hourly PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} readings from the Nogales BAMS monitors were found to be valid for March 15th. No specific local sources were reported as significantly contributing to the air quality episode.

2. Review suspected contributing sources. The event began on the evening of March 15th. There was not a significant fraction of PM_{2.5} measured during this episode. This is typical for the arid southwest, except when smoke from smoldering fires can be a significant source of PM_{2.5}. Lack of any significant transport winds would indicate that the emissions are from nearby the monitor. The plot of hourly PM₁₀ concentration data in the upper right corner of Figure 1, in conjunction with the wind direction data, confirms the identical timing of the transport from the south across the border when the elevated PM concentrations began. It is clear from the PM_{2.5} data presented in the table in the Background section of this report that smoke was not a major contributor to this event.

3. Examine all air quality monitoring information. Data from all monitors in the network were reviewed. Monitors from the Nogales area are summarized in the table in the Background section of this assessment. Pursuant to 40 CFR 50.14(c)(3)(iii)(C), the "Historical Distribution" Table in Figure 1 has been included to demonstrate that the event is associated with measured concentrations in excess of normal historical fluctuations, including background (i.e., concentrations greater than the 95th percentile).

4. Examine the meteorological conditions before and during the event. Figure 1 includes a map showing the terrain and drainage patterns of the Nogales area. Cold air forming in the mountains south of the border will flow northward into the Santa Cruz River Drainage Basin. National Weather Service data from the Nogales Airport,

northeast of the city, showed calm to light and variable winds in the evening hours from the east or south. The data from ADEQ's wind monitor are included in the PM daily report sheet (see attachments). At the Post Office, winds shifted to being from the south at approximately 7:00 p.m. at 1-2 miles per hour. The concentrations picked up on the evening of March 15th when the winds shifted and started moving out of the south. It appears the source is coming from Mexico, since there are no sources in the United States between the monitor and the U.S./Mexico border.

5. Perform a qualitative attribution to emission source(s). All evidence indicates the elevated PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations in the Nogales, Arizona area can be attributed to dust emissions from sources south of Nogales, Arizona, in Nogales, Sonora. The data available for this analysis do not allow for development of a source-specific emission allocation. The hourly concentration data do not show any significant source other than the drainage dust and smoke associated with the event.

6. Estimation of Contribution from Source or Event. The primary source appears to be drainage dust from Mexico for which there is no effective or efficient method to estimate the relative contributions from specific sources. The demonstration analysis contained in this report establishes the linkage between the measurements to be flagged and the event, thus satisfying the requirement in 40 CFR 50.14(c)(3)(iii)(B). Pursuant to 40 CFR 50.14(c)(3)(iii)(D), the "Event Contrib. Analysis" Table in Figure 1 has been included to demonstrate that there would have been no exceedances or violations but for the event (i.e., the contribution during the event overwhelmed the 24-hour average).

7. Determination that a Natural or Exceptional Event Contributed To an Exceedance. Based on this analysis, the event satisfies the requirement in 40 CFR 50.1(j) that the elevated concentration at Nogales Post Office monitor was attributed to an exceptional event caused by international transport of emissions into the United States.

Conclusion

International transport of emissions. The elevated PM₁₀ event on March 15, 2007, in Nogales, Arizona was the result of emissions from Mexico which were transported into the United States in a slow moving drainage flow originating in the mountains south of Nogales, Sonora.

The fact that all appropriate SIP control measures were in place and emissions from international transport caused the exceedance demonstrates that, per 40 CFR 50.1(j), that the event "is not reasonably controllable or preventable."

The "other" flag (RL) was applied to the PM₁₀ measurements, as the monitors would have been below the NAAQS but for the contribution of the event.

U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration

**QUALITY CONTROLLED LOCAL
CLIMATOLOGICAL DATA
(final)
HOURLY OBSERVATIONS TABLE
NOGALES INTERNATIONAL ARPT (03196)
NOGALES , AZ
(03/2007)**

National Climatic Data Center
Federal Building
151 Patton Avenue
Asheville, North Carolina 28801

Elevation: 3908 ft. above sea level
Latitude: 31.421
Longitude: -110.846
Data Version: VER2

Date	Time (LST)	Station Type	Sky Conditions	Visibility (SM)	Weather Type	Dry Bulb Temp		Wet Bulb Temp		Dew Point Temp		Rel Humd %	Wind Speed (MPH)	Wind Dir	Wind Gusts (MPH)	Station Pressure (in. hg)	Press Tend	Net 3-hr Chg (mb)	Sea Level Pressure (in. hg)	Report Type	Precip. Total (in)	Alti-meter (in. hg)
						(F)	(C)	(F)	(C)	(F)	(C)											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
15	0054	12	CLR	10.00		54	12.2	38	3.5	15	-9.4	21	5	090		26.07			29.94	AA		30.10
15	0154	12	CLR	10.00		51	10.6	37	2.5	14	-10.0	23	0	000		26.07	0	004	29.94	AA		30.10
15	0254	12	CLR	10.00		49	9.4	36	2.1	15	-9.4	26	0	000		26.06			29.93	AA		30.09
15	0354	12	CLR	10.00		46	7.8	34	1.2	15	-9.4	29	0	000		26.06			29.94	AA		30.09
15	0454	12	CLR	10.00		46	7.8	34	1.3	16	-8.9	30	3	080		26.07	5	000	29.95	AA		30.10
15	0554	12	CLR	10.00		43	6.1	33	0.4	16	-8.9	34	6	060		26.08			29.98	AA		30.12
15	0654	12	CLR	10.00		43	6.1	33	0.4	16	-8.9	34	3	190		26.09			30.01	AA		30.13
15	0754	12	CLR	10.00		51	10.6	37	3.0	17	-8.3	26	0	000		26.11	3	015	30.03	AA		30.15
15	0854	12	CLR	10.00		61	16.1	42	5.7	17	-8.3	18	0	000		26.12			30.03	AA		30.16
15	0954	12	CLR	10.00		69	20.6	46	7.9	18	-7.8	14	0	000		26.12			30.02	AA		30.16
15	1054	12	CLR	10.00		77	25.0	49	9.7	16	-8.9	10	0	000		26.11	0	001	30.00	AA		30.15
15	1154	12	CLR	10.00		79	26.1	50	9.9	14	-10.0	8	3	VR		26.08			29.97	AA		30.12
15	1254	12	CLR	10.00		81	27.2	50	10.1	11	-11.7	7	0	000		26.06			29.93	AA		30.09
15	1354	12	CLR	10.00		83	28.3	51	10.7	13	-10.6	7	3	VR		26.03	6	026	29.91	AA		30.06
15	1454	12	CLR	10.00		85	29.4	52	11.0	10	-12.2	6	11	290		26.02			29.89	AA		30.05
15	1554	12	CLR	10.00		84	28.9	51	10.5	7	-13.9	5	8	280		26.01			29.89	AA		30.04
15	1654	12	CLR	10.00		85	29.4	52	10.9	9	-12.8	5	7	VR		26.02	5	004	29.90	AA		30.05
15	1754	12	CLR	10.00		81	27.2	50	9.7	6	-14.4	5	9	330		26.03			29.92	AA		30.06
15	1854	12	CLR	10.00		74	23.3	46	8.0	6	-14.4	7	6	030		26.04			29.95	AA		30.07
15	1954	12	CLR	10.00		71	21.7	46	7.5	9	-12.8	9	7	030		26.06	3	012	29.96	AA		30.09
15	2054	12	CLR	10.00		66	18.9	43	6.2	10	-12.2	11	7	030		26.07			29.96	AA		30.11
15	2154	12	CLR	10.00		61	16.1	41	4.9	10	-12.2	13	5	360		26.08			29.97	AA		30.12
15	2254	12	CLR	10.00		56	13.3	39	3.6	11	-11.7	17	6	040		26.10	3	016	29.98	AA		30.14
15	2354	12	CLR	10.00		52	11.1	37	2.5	11	-11.7	19	0	000		26.11			29.99	AA		30.15

Dynamically generated Tue Sep 04 11:47:48 EDT 2007 via <http://cdo.ncdc.noaa.gov/qclcd/QCLCD>



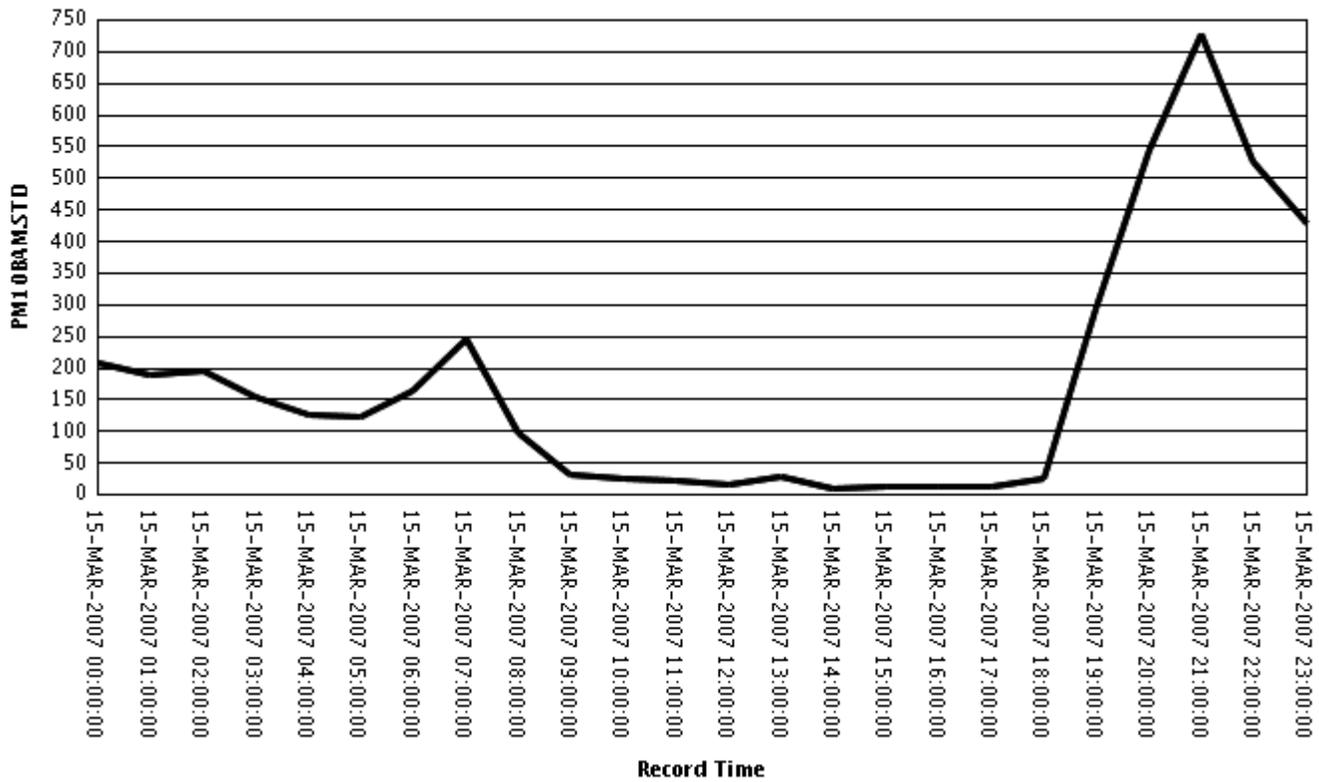
AIR QUALITY DIVISION
PM10BAM.STD Daily Concentration Report (ug/m3)

08/31/2007

For 03/15/2007
Preliminary Data QA LEVEL - 2

Place ID: 16511

Name: NOGALES POST OFFICE



Record Time	PM Average	Wind Speed (MPH)	Wind Direction	Temperature(F)	Relative Humidity
15-MAR-2007 00:00:00	208	1.3	169		
15-MAR-2007 01:00:00	190	1.1	171		
15-MAR-2007 02:00:00	196	.9	174		
15-MAR-2007 03:00:00	153	.7	65		
15-MAR-2007 04:00:00	126	.7	182		
15-MAR-2007 05:00:00	123	.2	257		
15-MAR-2007 06:00:00	164	.7	110		
15-MAR-2007 07:00:00	246	.9	57		
15-MAR-2007 08:00:00	98	1.6	9		
15-MAR-2007 09:00:00	33	1.8	1		
15-MAR-2007 10:00:00	26	2.5	14		
15-MAR-2007 11:00:00	23	4.3	4		
15-MAR-2007 12:00:00	16	4.3	8		
15-MAR-2007 13:00:00	27	5.1	331		
15-MAR-2007 14:00:00	10	6	333		
15-MAR-2007 15:00:00	12	6.3	344		
15-MAR-2007 16:00:00	14	5.6	345		
15-MAR-2007 17:00:00	12	5.6	340		
15-MAR-2007 18:00:00	25	4.3	342		
15-MAR-2007 19:00:00	294	1.1	180		
15-MAR-2007 20:00:00	544	1.8	163		
15-MAR-2007 21:00:00	728	2	177		
15-MAR-2007 22:00:00	527	2.2	200		
15-MAR-2007 23:00:00	428	1.8	197		