



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 4
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
61 FORSYTH STREET
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8960

DEC 20 2017

The Honorable Nathan Deal
Governor of Georgia
203 State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Dear Governor Deal:

Thank you for your recommendation dated September 23, 2016, on air quality designations for the revised 2015 National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone throughout Georgia. I appreciate the information Georgia shared with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as we move forward to improve ozone air quality. This letter is to notify you of the EPA's preliminary response to Georgia's recommendations and to inform you of our approach for completing designations for the revised ozone standards.

On October 1, 2015, the EPA lowered the primary 8-hour ozone standard from 0.075 parts per million (ppm) to 0.070 ppm to provide increased protection of public health. The EPA revised the secondary 8-hour ozone standard, making it identical to the primary standard, to protect against welfare effects, including impacts on sensitive vegetation and forested ecosystems. Working closely with the states and tribes, the EPA is implementing the standards, using a common sense approach, that improves air quality and minimizes the burden on state and local governments. As part of this routine process, the EPA is working with the states to identify areas in the country that meet the standards and those that need to take steps to reduce ozone pollution.

As a first step in implementing the 2015 ozone standards, the EPA asked states to submit in the Fall of 2016, their designation recommendations, including appropriate area boundaries. In a first round of designations published on November 16, 2017, consistent with states' recommendations, the EPA designated as attainment/unclassifiable most of the country. In addition, the EPA designated three counties in the state of Washington as unclassifiable, consistent with the State's recommendation. Further, consistent with the EPA's "Policy for Establishing Separate Air Quality Designations for Areas of Indian Country" (December 20, 2011), the EPA designated two areas of Indian country as separate attainment/unclassifiable areas.

As required by the Clean Air Act, the EPA will designate an area as nonattainment if there is certified, quality-assured air quality monitoring data showing a violation of the 2015 ozone standards, or if the EPA makes a determination that the area is contributing to a violation of the standards in a nearby area. Areas designated attainment/unclassifiable are not measuring or contributing to a violation of the standards.

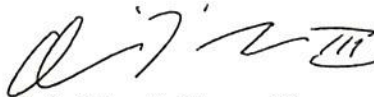
After considering Georgia's September 23, 2016, ozone designation recommendations, which were based on 2013-2015 air quality data (and preliminary 2014-2016 air quality data), as well as other relevant technical information (including subsequently certified 2014-2016 air quality data), the EPA

intends to designate the area listed in Enclosure 1 as nonattainment, and to designate all other areas in Georgia not previously designated in November 2017, as attainment/unclassifiable. The EPA's intended designations are consistent with the state's recommendation. The enclosed Technical Support Document provides a detailed analysis to support our preliminary decisions for the areas of the State not previously designated. In order for the EPA to consider more current (i.e., 2015-2017) air quality data in the final designation decisions for any area, Georgia must submit certified, quality-assured 2015-2017 air quality monitoring data for the area to the EPA by February 28, 2018.

The EPA will continue to work with state officials regarding the appropriate boundaries for the nonattainment areas in Georgia. If Georgia has additional information that you would like the EPA to consider, please submit it to us by February 28, 2018. Please submit additional information to the EPA's public docket for these designations, EPA-HQ-OAR-2017-0548, located at www.regulations.gov, and sending a copy to EPA Region 4. The EPA will also make its preliminary designation decisions and supporting documentation available to the general public for review and comment. We will be announcing a 30-day public comment period shortly in the *Federal Register*. After considering additional information we receive, the EPA plans to promulgate final ozone designations in spring of 2018.

The EPA is committed to working with the states and tribes to reduce ozone air pollution. We look forward to a continued dialogue with you and your staff as we work together to implement the 2015 ozone standards. Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me at (404) 562-8357 or have a member of your staff contact Beverly Banister at (404) 562-9326.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Onis 'Trey' Glenn, III". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Onis "Trey" Glenn, III
Regional Administrator

Enclosure

cc: Richard Dunn, Director
Environmental Protection Division (EPD)

Karen Hays, Branch Chief
EPD, Air Protection Branch