UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590
FEB 06 2013

The Honorable Rick Snyder
Governor of Michigan
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, Michigan 48909

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:

Dear Governor Snyder:

I am writing to inform you of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's response to the State of Michigan's air quality designation recommendations for the 2010 revision to the primary National Ambient Air Quality Standard for sulfur dioxide (SO_2). As you may know, the Clean Air Act requires EPA to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards for pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment. Reducing SO_2 emissions is an important part of EPA's commitment to a clean, healthy environment. Exposure to SO_2 can cause a range of adverse health effects, including difficulty breathing and increased asthma symptoms.

On June 3, 2010, EPA strengthened the health-based or "primary" standard for SO_2 by establishing a standard for 1-hour average SO_2 concentrations at a level of 75 parts per billion. The Clean Air Act requires EPA to complete the initial designations process within two years of promulgating a new or revised standard. If EPA has insufficient information to make these designations, EPA has the authority to extend the designation process by up to one year. On July 27, 2012, EPA announced that it had insufficient information to complete the designations for the 1-hour SO_2 standard within two years and extended the designations deadline to June 3, 2013.

At this time, EPA is proceeding with nonattainment designations for most areas where 2009-2011 monitoring data indicate violations of the 1-hour SO_2 standard. EPA intends to address the designations for all other areas in separate future actions. After carefully considering Michigan's recommendations and the associated technical information, including air quality data from 2009-2011, EPA intends to designate the following areas, including the following counties or portions of counties, as nonattainment for the 2010 SO_2 standard:

Nonattainment Area	County
Detroit	Wayne County, MI (Area bounded on the east by the Michigan-Ontario border, on the south by the Wayne County-Monroe County border, on the west by Interstate 75 to Southfield Road to Interstate 94, and on the north by Michigan Avenue to Woodward Avenue and an extending line to the Michigan-Ontario border)

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The enclosed Technical Support Document provides a detailed analysis that supports these preliminary nonattainment area decisions.

With input from a diverse group of stakeholders, EPA has also developed a comprehensive strategy for implementing the 1-hour SO_2 standard that focuses resources on identifying and addressing unhealthy levels of SO_2. The strategy is available at: http://www.epa.gov/airquality/sulfurdioxide/implement.html. EPA will continue to work closely with our partners at the state, tribal, and local levels to ensure health-protective, commonsense implementation of the 1-hour SO_2 standard.

EPA will continue to work with the state regarding the appropriate boundaries for the areas in Michigan. If the state has additional information for EPA to consider, please submit it by April 8, 2013. We also will be publishing a Federal Register notice announcing a 30-day period for the public to provide input on EPA's preliminary nonattainment designation decisions. We intend to promulgate these designations for areas with monitored violations of the 2010 SO_2 standard by June 2013. We are not yet prepared to propose designations action or seek public comment on other areas.

We look forward to a continued dialogue with the state as we work to implement the 2010 primary SO_2 standard. For additional information regarding initial designations on the SO_2 standard, please visit www.epa.gov/so2designations. If you have any questions, please contact me at 312-886-3000, or your staff may contact George Czerniak, Director of EPA Region 5's Air and Radiation Division, at 312-353-2212 or czerniak.george@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Susan Hedman
Regional Administrator

Enclosure

cc: Dan Wyant
Director, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

G. Vinson Hellwig
Chief, Air Quality Division
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality