

The Honorable Lisa Jackson, Administrator
United States Environmental Protection Agency
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

May 5, 2011

Dear Administrator Jackson,

The undersigned recreation and conservation organizations are very concerned about air pollution, particularly ozone, a respiratory irritant that is especially damaging to the lungs of children and those who work and recreate outside. We applaud the EPA for moving ahead with a process for re-consideration of the 2008 Ozone NAAQS, in recognition that the previous Administration did not heed the science in making their decision. We believe that the science to strengthen the ozone health standard to an 8-hour 60 ppm level and to instate a strong secondary standard of 7 ppm-hr, protective of sensitive plants and ecosystems, is clear, and we urge you to act now.

Our organizations are comprised of members that prioritize getting outdoors as individuals and with our families. Considering the state of our nation's health, outdoor recreation and preservation of healthy landscapes must play a key role in restoring the wellbeing of America's future generations, a reality recognized by this Administration through efforts like America's Great Outdoors. At odds with these worthy efforts are poor air quality days, high childhood asthma rates, and ecological degradation from air pollutants.

We know that even healthy individuals can have declines in lung function at ozone levels well below the current 8-hour standard, as observed in a study of day hikers visiting rural Mount Washington, NH. So, while many of our members seek refuge from urban smog in the mountains, expecting to enjoy the outdoors on a healthy hike, the transport of ozone can result in even these remote landscapes to be laden with unhealthy air. By reducing the NAAQS levels you can clean up our urban parks and our national parks, ensuring that the health benefits of getting outside to recreate, exercise, and connect with nature are not compromised by poor air quality.

The economic benefits of cleaner air are clear. Our nation's health and its ability to appreciate the outdoors are at stake. We implore you to carry out this pivotal opportunity to reduce ozone pollution to levels that protect the public health and welfare.

Cc: Robert Persiassepe
Regina McCarthy

Appalachian Mountain Club
Access Fund
Adirondack Mountain Club
American Canoe Association
American Hiking Society
American Whitewater
Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Colorado Mountain Club
Friends of Acadia
International Mountain Bike Association
National Parks Conservation Association
New York-New Jersey Trail Conference
Outdoor Alliance
Winter Wildlands Alliance