

CLEAN AIR 4 PARKS

HAZE FACT SHEET

The Regional Haze Rule

The Regional Haze Rule is the blueprint to reduce—and eventually eliminate—human-caused air pollution in America’s most iconic 48 national parks, and 108 wilderness areas. Once a decade, states revise plans to lower air pollution in these places, aiming for naturally clean air.

The implementation of the Regional Haze Rule over the past five years has resulted in real, measurable and noticeable improvements in national park air quality, benefiting the health of parks, their visitors, and local communities.

Recent amendments to the rule include:

- Clarification of state analytical requirements and expectations for compliance;
- 3 year extension to 2021 for states to submit next round of plans;
- Increased integration of federal land manager input;
- Easing of state administrative requirements for 5-year interim reports.

Top: Couple takes in views of Shenandoah National Park from a roadside overlook.
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A Clean Air Tool for Parks and People

National parks and wilderness areas should have clean air, but sadly many struggle with unhealthy air pollution and hazy skies. In spite of recent progress, many protected areas are still centuries away from achieving naturally clean air quality.

The Struggle for Clean Air

Yosemite, Everglades, Acadia and Joshua Tree national parks. Shining Rock and John Muir wildernesses. These are just a few of our nation’s greatest wild places that experience widespread impacts from air pollution even if sometimes they don’t appear to be polluted.

- Three out of four of our most iconic national parks have air quality that’s periodically unhealthy, with 36 out of the 48 having at least “moderate” ozone levels at times, meaning that pollution makes the air unhealthy to breathe for some populations.

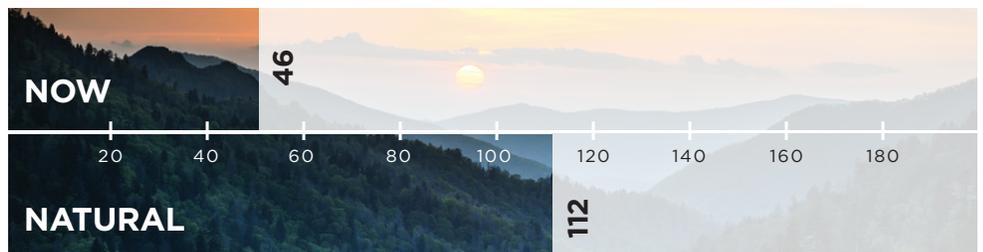
- Haze pollution cuts down on how far you can see. On average, visitors miss out on 50 miles of scenery—a distance equivalent to the length of Rhode Island.

- The same sources of pollution that deteriorate views affect the respiratory health of visitors and park staff and have a negative impact on wildlife and ecosystems.

We need your help to ensure that new amendments to the Regional Haze Rule are protected and implemented in order to deliver significant air quality benefits for national parks, wilderness areas, and the millions of people who visit them.

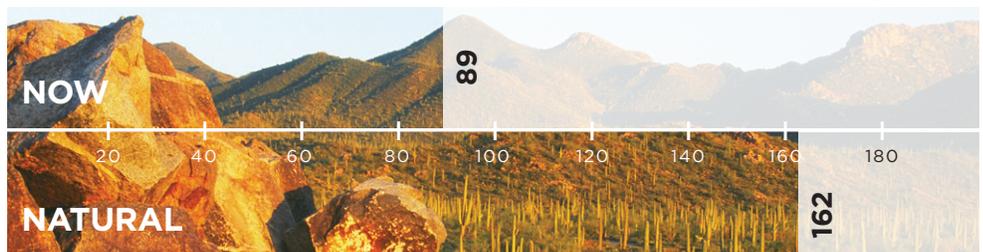
Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Visibility in Miles



Saguaro National Park

Visibility in Miles



Data Source: IMPROVE © Dndavis



What is Haze?

Haze is made of tiny airborne particles, called particulate matter, and gases that block light, reducing visibility while jeopardizing public health. The air pollution that causes haze comes from a variety of sources, including coal-fired power plants, oil and gas operations, and vehicles.

Emissions from these and other sources are regulated under the Regional Haze Rule. With adequate state implementation and enforcement, we can anticipate reductions in:

- **Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) & Sulfur Dioxide (SO2):** Both are direct and indirect sources of particulate matter, also known as soot.
- **Ozone:** NOx is a component of ozone, also known as smog, so reducing NOx means less ozone and smog pollution.
- **Carbon Dioxide, Mercury and Other Toxic Emissions:** When haze pollution is reduced or eliminated, these pollutants also often decrease.

Above: Cars pack the 10 lane Interstate 80 near Berkeley, California. ©Minesweeper | Wikipedia
Left: Oil Pump ©Andrey Burmakin • The Navajo Generating Station, the nation's eighth largest coal-fired plant, is just outside Glen Canyon National Recreation Area and only 12 miles from Grand Canyon National Park. ©Frontpage | Shutterstock

The Regional Haze Rule in Action

Pollution from the Four Corners Generating Station, a coal plant on the Navajo Nation, contributes to poor air quality at more than 18 national parks and wildernesses in the U.S. Southwest. So, the EPA required the plant to install strong controls to reduce its haze pollution.

The plant's owner opted to close three of the coal units and install controls on the other two units by 2018, leading to reduction of thousands of tons of health-harming pollutants. When the first units closed, people in the region observed noticeably clearer skies!

These victories are what we work for and can be achieved in the future with diligent implementation of the Regional Haze Rule.



“Experiencing the rush of clean, cool, fresh air and beautiful views is so important to visitors of national parks. If pollution and marred views is what children and first-time visitors see then we risk losing the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts, conservationists, and advocates for protecting these natural wonders.”

— MARK MAGAÑA, President of GreenLatinos

Above: A family at Zion National Park ©Tetra Images | Alamy **Infographic (Top, Left to Right):** Planet Earth ©Xneo | Dreamstime • Volunteers scout a new wilderness trail at Petrified Forest National Park. ©Kevin Dahl | NPCA • Sunset at Snake River Overlook of Grand Tetons National Park ©Dean Fikar | Big Stock • Butterfly on wildflowers in Great Smoky Mountains National Park ©David Platt

CONTACT INFO

Visit the CleanAir4Parks.org website to learn more about what you can do.

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