

Minutes

70th Meeting of the Joint Advisory Committee for the Improvement of Air Quality in the Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua / El Paso, Texas / Doña Ana County, New Mexico Air Basin

Location:
Thomas Branigan Memorial Library
Roadrunner Conference Room
200 E. Picacho Ave.
October 5, 2017

JAC Members Attending (Absences and alternates indicated)	
U.S.	México
Guy Donaldson, USEPA	M.I. Ana Patricia Martínez, SEMARNAT
Lorinda Gardner, TCEQ	*Dr. Gustavo Rubio, PROFEPA
Michael Baca, NMED	**Mtro. Darío Cárdenas, COESPRIS
Jacob Kidd, City of Las Cruces	Dr. Gilberto Wenglass, SDUE de Chihuahua
Karl Rimkus, City of El Paso	*Gibrán Solís, CANACINTRA Juárez
*Rajesh Bhakta, Freeport-McMoRan Copper and Gold	*Claudia Medina, Dirección de Ecología de Ciudad Juárez
Elaine Barron, M.D., Citizen	*Ing. Vicente López, IMIP
**Alberto Correa, Capítulo Paso del Norte	René Franco, Franco y Asociados
David Dubois, NMSU	Dra. Alba Yadira Corral, UACJ
Wen-Whai Li, Ph.D., P.E., UTEP	*Ing. Jorge Hernández, COCEF
**Claudia Valles, El Paso MPO	
Carlos A Rincón, US EPA- Liaison	Biól. Gerardo Tarín, SEMARNAT- Liaison
Gina Posada, TCEQ –Liaison	
* Alternate	** Not Present

Welcome and Presentations: The 70th JAC meeting commenced with Gina Posada welcoming everyone, especially thanking Jakob Kidd of City of Las Cruces for hosting the event. House rules were provided.

Guy Donaldson of USEPA welcomed everyone and thanked the City of Las Cruces for the support in setting the meeting and hosting the event. He emphasized progress under the JAC in addressing air quality and remaining challenges. He looked forward to the day's presentations and new information that would be presented. He expressed appreciation to everyone who participated in organizing the meeting.

M.I. Ana Patricia Martinez of SEMARNAT greeted everyone and thanked the City of Las Cruces for hosting the event. She cited the full agenda and extended a cordial welcome to all. She followed with a request for each person to self-introduce.

After self-introductions, Dr. Carlos Rincon declared a quorum at this meeting. The JAC members approved the meeting agenda and minutes from the previous meeting. Dr. Carlos Rincon noted an agenda change, since Evaristo Cruz will not be presenting. Dr. Barron moved to approve the minutes, and Guy Donaldson seconded the motion. JAC members approved both the agenda and minutes.

Public comments- no comments from the public.

Report on the Air Quality in the El Paso del Norte-presented by Dr. Carlos Rincon of the USEPA.

Please see the report at www.cccjac.org.

Comments and questions on the AQ Report: Dr. Li posed a question regarding the ozone design value. He observed that ozone values are not in compliance with the current standard. He asked how can the JAC respond to this.

Guy Donaldson stated the EPA Administrator makes non-attainment decisions and has not yet decided. There are regulatory steps that will have to take place before a non-attainment decision is made. He reported that TCEQ petitioned for one of the days in 2015 to be an exceptional event because of wild fires contributing to high ozone levels. EPA is considering that request and has not made a decision.

Michael Baca mentioned the ozone standard changed in 2015 from 75 to 70. Mr. Donaldson mentioned that ozone levels have improved over time.

Buen Ambiente-Buena Salud: Educational Strategies for Addressing Air Quality on the Border presented by Bill Hargrove, Ph.D. of UTEP-CERM.

Please see Dr. Hargrove's presentation at www.cccjac.org

Comments and questions on the presentation:

Karl Rimkus asked if all the modules were available to view and share with others, Dr. Hargrove mentioned that all modules are available for free on the website to anyone who wants to use them; not only can persons access the modules, but they can learn from them, as there are tips on how to use the modules.

Dr. Fitzgerald mentioned a program called the El Paso Weather Cam, which is part of a network of weather cams in the nation. For the last five years she has worked with this program to motivate students to study the natural sciences and weather and increase public awareness on air pollution issues. The students attend field trips and conferences with speakers.

M.I. Ana Patricia Martinez congratulated Dr. Hargrove and Dr. Li for their environmental education efforts, which can provide support and continuity to programs. Ana Patricia indicated that the air quality program is for all, not only for persons who work on environmental sciences. She applauded the educational efforts to involve citizens to improve air quality and meet environmental goals.

Dr. Hargrove responded to Dr. Fitzgerald by saying collaboration would be valuable. He thanked her for her comment. He thanked EPA for providing funds for education.

How Upper Boundary Air Winds Affect Ozone and Particulate Matter Concentrations in the Paso del Norte presented by David Sullivan, Ph.D. of UT-CEER (remote participation)

Please see Dr. Sullivan's presentation at www.cccjac.org

Comments and questions on the presentation:

Dr. Fitzgerald wanted to know if Dr. Sullivan is using blb to calculate pdl heights. She mentioned ceilometers are essential because in the past it had been hard to validate models for pdl heights, which are important for transport and air pollution studies. She indicated that ceilometers allow validation of pdl heights. Dr. Sullivan confirmed Dr. Fitzgerald's comment and elaborated by saying they have put together a funding proposal to collaborate on a comparison study. An advantage of the ceilometer is that it is less expensive than a wind profiler to characterize upper boundary air heights.

Dr. Dave Dubois asked when would the data from this study be available, as Dr. Dubois is currently doing a study for the TCEQ and could benefit from the findings of this study. Dr. Sullivan stated the wind profiler data is good to share now.

Dr. Wen-Whai Li asked if the data support high ozone and PM 2.5 as the result of transport in El Paso. In this case Dr. Sullivan said the dust came from the SW of Juarez. He has not looked at other data sources, but it is possible there are other factors to be considered. The ozone case where the data in Socorro showed higher concentrations was due to a local event because it only affected one monitor. The June 27th case is probably due to transport because it affected all sites on the same date. Guy Donaldson stated the presentation was impressive and illustrated how complicated air quality data can be for identifying pollution sources.

Karl Rimkus Requested a Vote on Initiating Process of JAC New Members Seats

The topic of new JAC members was brought up a year ago in NM. This refers to the City-County Environmental District dissolution in 2007-08. The City of El Paso absorbed most of the air pollution control duties, air quality monitoring and enforcement. Since then the County has not been represented on the JAC. Now with the ozone standard possibly in non-attainment, Mr. Rimkus stated that it is important to have county representation on the JAC to keep the County Commissioners' Court involved, engaged and informed. One of the challenges is to find the Mexican equivalent to a county. Another pending matter is the request to add Ysleta del Sur Pueblo as a voting member.

Dr. Carlos Rincon reported on the administrative process to follow. In the US, following Appendix One of Annex V of the La Paz Agreement, a resolution needs to be written, agreed to, voted on, and then submitted to the EPA Office of International and Tribal Affairs. In México, a request goes through the international group (Unidad Coordinadora de Asuntos Internacionales) of SEMARNAT, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Comments and questions on the discussion:

Dr. Barron supported this choice of bringing in the county. She was the last chair to serve on the City County Environmental District and perceives air quality as an economic challenge for both city and county. She supports the idea of bringing in the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo and El Paso County, as it is essential for environmental justice to work for all citizens in this area.

M.I. Ana Patricia Martinez from SEMARNAT stated that she will consult with the Mexican state and federal governments to identify the ideal agencies to represent those seats. This will be an action item for the next meeting.

Update on JAC Website presented by Gina Posada of TCEQ

Please visit the website at www.cccjac.org

Comments and questions on the website development:

M.I. Ana Patricia Martinez suggested adding the link for Sistema Nacional de Información de la Calidad de Aire- Instituto Nacional de Ecología y Cambio Climático (SINAICA-INECC) on the JAC website.

There was a consensus on the documents to be uploaded to the website using PDFs. The committee recommended a PDF link as a friendlier version for cell phones, iPads, computers and other devices. JAC members also agreed they no longer wanted print-outs of presentations, with an exception for the agenda, as all materials will be on the website.

JAC members recommended adding any air quality journal articles already published for this region.

Final Report on Phase II of the Juárez Air Quality Monitoring Project presented by Eddie Moderow of TCEQ

In summer 2017 the air quality network was rebuilt in Ciudad Juárez with contributions from EPA/TCEQ funds. Sutron was contracted to provide technical expertise. Sutron and Juárez have been able to rebuild the monitoring sites. Special thanks to Ricardo Aragón, Pedro Salcido, and David García (not present). The Co-Chairs presented Ciudad Juárez with a plaque for their dedication and efforts towards improving air quality in the region. Carlos Rincon stated have also trained personnel in Ojinaga. Lic. Claudia Medina accepted the award on behalf of Ing. Ganser. She thanked both New Mexico and Texas for their collaboration, and Municipal President Cabada for matching the funds of \$250,000.

National Air Quality Strategy presented by M.I. Ana P. Martínez of SEMARNAT

Please see M.I. Ana Patricia Martínez's presentation at www.cccjac.org

Comments and questions on the presentation:

Carlos Rincon asked how the Energy Reform is going to be verified nationally.

M.I. Ana Patricia Martínez responded by saying that SEMARNAT regulates the formulations. The Industrial Environmental Safety Agency (Agencia de Seguridad, Energía y Ambiente-ASEA) was created to regulate hydrocarbon extraction.

Ing. René Franco suggested decentralizing ASEA and provide representatives in the states.

M.I. Ana Patricia Martinez acknowledged the presence of ASEA in various states.

Update on the Chihuahua ProAire presented by Dr. Gilberto Wenglas of SEDUE

Please see Dr. Wenglas' presentation at www.cccjac.org

Comments and questions on the presentation:

The CANACINTRA representative stated that some of the same issues exist, such as the brick kilns.

Dr. Gilberto Wenglas stated that the ProAire is looking to resolve the issue of the brick kilns and is working on this challenge.

Ing. René Franco suggested regionalized emission factors with the help of EPA.

M.I. Ana Patricia Martínez informed those present that SEMARNAT is working on a guide of area sources at the national level.

Dave Dubois presented an Update on the 2017 El Paso Ozone Transport Field Program

Please see Dr. Dubois's presentation at www.cccjac.org

Comments and questions on the presentation:

Carlos Rincon asked if their data can be used.

Dr. Dubois replied it would be nice to have forecasting skills as well. There are no funds to redo the study; this was a unique study, but there was learning experience gained. Outcomes for the study can be used for monitoring and modeling changes in population in the northeast El Paso, or like Santa Teresa, that is part of the MPO but is its managed by NM. For instance, a short-term study on dust storms in

Columbus, NM, and would benefit the people living there to learn their exposure. There was a statistical significance correlating high ozone and high temperatures in a study done by Dr. Grineski between increase hospital ER visits when the ozone was high.

Reports from Subcommittees-

Gilberto Wenglas already gave a presentation on ProAire.

Carlos Rincon offered to have an update on the next meeting in Ciudad Juárez but will circulate information before then to the JAC members.

Public Comments:

Jagan Buttler from the Border Environmental Health Coalition (BEHC) suggested promoting environmental literacy. There is a lack of awareness of what people can do to improve air quality. He recommended providing the tools of education to this new generation from a holistic approach.

NMSU Professor Michael DeAntonio discussed how elevated ozone days affect respiratory health. He suggested working with the health community by reaching out to adults, especially in the health industry: help them understand how environment affects health, and the wonderful work done at the JAC. They need to know about the JAC, to become advocates for environmental health and to reach out to hospitals and doctors in the area.

Dr. Barron suggested packaging the work Dr. Hargrove has completed in education and provide it to the medical schools in the area.

Closing Remarks:

Guy Donaldson stated that he was impressed with the presentation on education. He also appreciated how the big picture of Dr. Sullivan, Dr. Dubois, and the start of the air quality monitors in Ciudad Juárez helped manage regional air quality. He expressed appreciation for the efforts from Mexico at the national, state and local levels and the steps taken to improve air quality in the region. He offered the help of EPA.

M.I. Ana Patricia Martinez was also impressed with all the important information presented. She committed to confirm representatives for the tribal and the county seats on the Mexican side. As she recurrently heard the health issue come up, she proposed a presentation for the May meeting on air quality health impacts. She asked for all to check the JAC website and help Gina with this task.

Seven people connected through GoToMeeting.

Five connected through the ZipDX English channel.

None connected through the ZipDX Spanish channel.

36 people signed in at the meeting.

The next meeting will be at the Ciudad Juárez Municipal Council chambers on January 18, 2018.