

Executive Summary - Minutes
21st Meeting of the
Joint Advisory Committee for the Improvement of Air Quality in the
Cd. Juárez, Chihuahua / El Paso, Texas / Doña Ana County, New Mexico Air Basin
Santa Teresa Country Club - Santa Teresa, New Mexico
13 April, 2002

Welcome and Introductions

Ing. Sergio Sanchez (SS) was introduced by Bill Luthans (BL) as the Co-Chair representing the Mexican Delegation on the JAC. As representative from the MX federal gov't he looked forward to having a good discussion on local air quality issues. SS is Head of Air Basins for SEMARNAT. He introduced and welcomed members of the Mexican delegation such as the SEMARNAT Delegado for the State of Chihuahua, Ing. Jose Treviño, Cd. Juarez Mayor Jose Reyes Ferriz; Cd. Juarez Ecology Department Director Pamela Franco, Representing the State of Chihuahua Ecology Dept, Cesar Nuñez, and several others.

JAC Members Present:

Mexico

Ing. Sergio Sanchez - Co-Chair, SEMARNAT

Quim. Pilar Leal, PROFEPA

Ing. Cesar Nuñez, State of Chihuahua Ecology Department

Pamela Franco Ruiz - Cd. Juarez Ecology Department

Quim. Adrian Vazquez - UACJ

Ing. Rene Franco Ruiz - MEM

Ing Francisco Alfaro, Alternate for Dr. Enrique Suarez, FEMAP

United States

Mr. Bill Luthans, Co-Chair, Environmental Protection Agency

Mr. Vince Vigil, State of New Mexico Environment Department

Mr. Arch Clouse - TNRCC

Dr. Carlos Rincon- Environmental Defense

Wen-Whai Li, PhD - UT-El Paso

Mr. Bob Currey

Mr. Mark Rodriguez, El Paso Electric

Mr. Jesus Reynoso, EPCCHED

Mr. George Avalos, Doña Ana County Transportation Department

A Quorum Exists

Presentation and approval of current agenda.

The agenda was accepted. BL proposed moving the order of presentations given the Mayor of Juarez needed to attend another event. The Cd. Juarez Mass Transit and El Paso International Mass Transit Initiatives were moved forward.

Approval of the minutes of the December meeting

The minutes were approved. BL commented that all who had an action item that was on the consent agenda needed to submit a written update to Victor Valenzuela (VV).

Announcements

BL informed the committee that Bob Currey accepted an invitation from the Good Neighbor Environmental Board (GNEB) to give a talk on the activities of the JAC. The presentation should take place on the first week in May.

5) Consent Agenda and Written Updates

Old Business

Agreements from the previous meeting:

- A) Archie Clouse will look into possible funding thru the EPA Border grant and other grant mechanisms to see how the proposed PM10 network in Juarez can be supported. CENICA can also be a source.
- B) The AQ report for the 3rd qtr-2001 needs to be sent to everyone.
- C) El Paso Electric will provide information re: brickkilns to brickkiln technical commission members.
- D) Strategic Plan - The JAC Strategic Plan Technical Commission will meet to update the document. One-pagers (“fichas”) need to be sent to Carlos and Maria del Pilar Leal.
- E) Address attainment redesignation resolution to JAC. A discussion is scheduled.
- F) Elaine Barron reminded all about the Children’s Environmental Health Symposium work through Health Technical Commission.
- G) A letter will be sent from the JAC to Jorge Bolanos Cacho to follow up w/ PEMEX to assure the distribution of oxygenated gasoline this coming winter season. The letter will be signed by the JAC Co-chair on the Mexican side.
- H) The JAC needs to follow up on all work taking place with the brick makers to provide more information on this technology as requested by SB 749.
- I) Clean Air Investment Fund Technical Commission continues development of the requirements for operating a CAIF.

6) Regular Agenda

A. Cd. Juarez Mass Transit Initiatives

To reduce mobile source emissions Cd. Juarez is initiating a mass transit program that increases ridership in mass transit systems as well as reduces roadway congestion. Cd. Juarez Mayor Jose Reyes Ferriz reported that given the environmental effects of motor vehicles emissions Cd. Juarez is developing the Red Municipal de Transporte (Municipal Transportation Network). This project will cost \$15M to modernize the Cd. Juarez public transit system and networks. The current Cd. Juarez mass transit system is based on older vehicles such as used US school buses. Once the school bus has realized its useful life in the U.S. it is usually sold to Juarez, and now Juarez has over 1,800 used school buses that make up the mass transit system. The major problem w/ the Juarez transit system is that all buses go toward the center of the city. This causes pollution levels to increase within the central zone of the city. Data indicate pollution levels are higher in the central zone than other parts of the city where this region has elevated levels of CO, NOx, and PM.

The new transit system design is based on several systems used in Brazil and Colombia. Rather than use vehicles over rail or tracks the proposed system uses buses on rubber tires which will use dedicated mass transit lanes. We will have 5 principal routes. The first route covers the central zones (Juan Gabriel) w/ a trunk system that can handle 200+ persons. The 2nd route is an artery that goes E-W and covers the southern part of the city. This feeder system provides service to the part of the city that is growing. The most important part of this design is that it transfers people to the trunk system at a faster rate. Currently the trip-time of a person that transits from say the south zone to the center is about 1hr. With the new system the person takes the trunk system using the dedicated lane and can transfer and travel in about 15 minutes to the downtown area. The End of the Line is between the Santa Fe and Lerdo Bridges so that a person can transfer to an international bus line to cross into El Paso. A dedicated line has been worked out w/ Aduana (Mexican Customs) and SCT (the Secretariat of Communications and Transportation) to allow transit of a dedicated bus on the international bridges. It is expected that this would be a more efficient method of transporting people between the 2 countries. The winning bid for buses was submitted by Volvo. The new bus will have doors that open at the center side of the bus rather in the front or back.

CR recommended that the JAC support a recommendation or resolution so that we not only have a dedicated mass transit lane on the international bridges, but also recommend that US Immigration Department inspections at the int'l bridges are expedited for mass transit systems users. BL commented that certainly the D.C.L. is a great way of moving many people across the border. CR would head this initiative.

Rene Franco added that he checked the minutes of previous JAC meetings and since the first meeting there were proposals on the MX side that supported mass transit initiatives across the international bridges. This project adds to that earlier proposal and stated he would head up a committee to draft the recommendation to support mass transit systems as well as the Mayor's mass transit initiative.

B. El Paso Transportation Initiatives

Congestion on El Paso roadways continues to be a problem for both commuters and air quality in the Paso del Norte. Stuart Ed, Sun Metro, discussed several initiatives to reduce congestion on the international bridges by promoting mass transit. He discussed an alternate proposal that may link up the Juarez transit system to Sun Metro's system. Sun Metro in conjunction w/ Mayors office is addressing congestion issues at the border and working w/ MPO to consolidate efforts to come up w/ a seamless transit network between EP and Jz. Sun Metro proposes international bus service using the PdN (Santa Fe) bridge where buses cross into EP to San Jacinto Plaza, travel down Kansas St. and cross into Jz using the Lerdo bridge. The end of the line is Ave. Malecon. Several issues still need to be worked out.

The first major issue is developing an intergovernmental agreement between Jz and EP that needs to be worked out. Another issue is developing a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane at the BOTA and a D.C.L. for buses on the Santa Fe bridge. The 3rd issue is developing an immigration priority for moving people who use the D.C.L. Mass Transit Lane. If you have to go to the back of the line at Immigration to get processed this doesn't help move people using

Mass Transit. The next item is developing an Oregon St. Pedestrian Mall. Other issues such as accident resolution, safety investigations, evacuation procedures, medical procedures, etc. need to be considered when planning this type of project. Once congestion issues on the bridges is resolved we can perhaps improve international mass transit. The City of EP has dedicated \$10M for a transit system from Sta. Fe to San Jacinto Plaza. This bus rapid system known as the "Smart Starter Line" could be electrified and become a high-density people mover for the future which features an optically guided bus that follows a painted line. Time line for the "Smart Starter Line" sees construction starting at the end of this year and lasts about 1 yr. 2nd phase extends service to UTEP w/ an electrified system. The 3rd phase includes an electrified international connection. The Federal Highway Administration (FHA) has provided \$43M for development of the international service. To marry up the Jz and EP system into a seamless system the critical component is construction of an international terminal. El Paso City Council approved a \$31.6M grant application that has \$10M-\$11M for the international terminal w/ 600 parking spaces, and docking for larger interstate bus lines that can pick up passengers for longer trips. To perhaps expedite immigration we're working w/ U.S. Immigration to process a traveler at a separate site rather than on the bridges.

CR asked about the red buses and any possible obstacles. Ed replied the City is primarily working w/ Cd. Juarez and to deal w/ all private companies would be an extensive undertaking. AC asked about the D.C.L. bus line using a 40-45 passenger bus line and if a D.C.L. would increase congestion on the bridges. Removing a lane from Sta Fe could increase congestion, however while the line of vehicles could become at least 1 lane longer, the movement of vehicles could increase since 3 lanes would separate into 8 stations. BL asked if there is a net air quality benefit and there won't be unless there is a bus moving thru the D.C.L.. Ed replied that there will be a bus every 10 minutes and there could be an improvement. Francisco Alfaro asked if this D.C.L. for Mass Transit line has considered using the currently existing Dedicated Commuter Line on the Stanton (Lerdo) bridge for passenger vehicles. Ed replied that this hasn't been considered.

C. Air Quality Report

-Victor Valenzuela presented the Air Quality report for the 3rd and 4th quarter 2001. During the 3rd Q there were 2 O₃ exceedances in Juarez and 1 O₃ exceedance. Juarez had 1 PM₁₀ exceedance in August. During the 4th Q Juarez had 4 PM₁₀ exceedances of the 24 hr standard. Two of those exceedances reached Unhealthy levels (Red on the AQI) and 1 of the exceedances reached Very Unhealthy Levels (Maroon on the AQI). Regarding the PM_{2.5} standard for El Paso, 1 exceedance of the 24 hr standard (65µg/m³) was observed at Socorro during the 2nd Q of 2001. El Paso has not exceeded the Annual Mean (15µg/m³) and perhaps will not Violate the PM_{2.5} NAAQS. Neither EP nor Juarez exceeded the CO NAAQS for their respective country. Doña Ana County removed the CO monitors during 2001. Next VV presented the 24 hr. air quality conditions during a typical El Paso sandstorm using a transmissometer and a TEOMs PM₁₀ monitor. Data indicate an inverse correlation exists between PM₁₀ concentrations and visibility. Wind gusts on this particular day reached 40MPH. A satellite image for the same day showed a cloud of dust that stretched from just south of Juarez and covering almost ½ of Doña Ana County.

B. Cd. Juarez Air Quality Monitoring Network

-Gerardo Tarin, Manager of the Cd. Juarez Air Quality Department reported the Cd. Juarez Ambient Monitoring Network appears to be suffering from age and deterioration. Several CO and O3 monitors no longer function and funds are desperately needed to maintain the equipment. Gerardo indicated the 20-30 Club has not functioned since June 2001 when a lightning strike knocked out all the equipment at this station. This incident was reported to EPCCHED at that time. At SEC only a CO monitor is functional. In effect, only 50% of the Cd. Juarez Monitoring network is operational at this time.

Carlos Rincon (CR) made a recommendation for the institutions involved in air quality such as CENICA, INE, SEMARNAT and Cuencas Atmosfericas get involved as soon as possible to get the stations operating again. Rene Franco asked if the mobile station CR mentions is from one particular station and if this equipment should be repaired or replaced. Luis Carlos Salmeron replied that the Dasibi equipment has provided many years of service, and given its age it should be replaced since the problem was caused by a lightning strike. BC added one of the easiest ways to improve the problem is to break all the equipment then we won't have any data to cause the problem. Perhaps Gerardo, EPCCHED, NMED, TNRCC, and Jz can work together to obtain the needed equipment and improve our air quality collection capabilities. BC recommended we form a Technical Commission to discuss what we need to do to update and improve the air quality monitoring network. AC stated that the TNRCC LEADs network is considered one of the best in the nation. We need to have technicians who can repair the equipment and get on the phone to have the equipment fixed if the tech can't.

Pilar Leal stated that last year the Environmental Secretaries from both countries toured the region and mentioned that one of the priorities was improvement of the air quality network in the region. The JAC as the point of the spear can be the group that leads this effort to make sure the network is updated and operational. RF added the vehicle inspection program could not work if all the stations had their own equipment or methods. What are the systems that need to be improved, and what funds can be provided to improve the network? The authorities that make the purchases can make sure there is uniformity in the network. AC stated its not a choice in what we do. Our program has a support structure and has the equipment technicians who are available, and we need a stable system. BC recommended we remove barriers for gathering and sharing data; we remove all state barriers on data reporting and sharing and develop a coordinated effort of sharing this data across all interested parties. Chuy Reynoso added that the system has been working since the monitoring network started in 1990. At that time we inherited old equipment, and the problem occurred when a lightning storm hit the 20-30 Club. EPCCHED obtains help from EPA to upgrade/improve the network, and funds obtained from EPA will go to improve the network. CR recommended establishing a Technical Commission to discuss this issue more often and more thoroughly. The new Co-chairs are looking at a regional scope for the workgroups and we can bring this to the table under the upcoming Border Program. Sergio Sanchez suggested we develop a longterm plan to assure a good air quality monitoring network is installed and these recommendations everyone is making can be developed. Victor Valenzuela indicated the Dasibi monitors are configured to integrate into the LEADs system that TNRCC is preparing to deploy in Juarez this summer so we're tied to a Dasibi-based monitoring network.

C. Cd. Juarez Oxyfuels Program

Luis Carlos Salmeron reported NORMA 085 identifies properties of fuels distributed in different regions of Mexico. Testing of Cd. Juarez fuels was conducted at 73 gasoline stations during the last week of March to help determine if oxygenate continues to be used in Cd. Juarez during the wintertime season in order to reduce CO concentrations. The EPCCHED lab provided assistance in the analysis. Data indicate that MTBE is used as the oxygenate and with the exception of 1 sample all samples were within the Mexican regulatory levels for oxygenated gasoline distributed during the wintertime. The regulatory level is in the range of 1.0% oxygen content. At this time Juarez is not under Federal Mandate to distribute oxygenated gasoline. However, one of the JAC's early achievements was requesting that PEMEX distribute oxyfuels in Juarez given the JAC was certain that distribution of oxygenated gasoline would reduce CO emissions and ambient concentrations. During the years oxyfuels have been distributed the number of CO exceedances has dropped tremendously.

D. El Paso Summertime Fuels and Wintertime Oxyfuels Programs

A special formulation of gasoline is distributed in El Paso in order to reduce the evaporation rate of gasoline distributed in El Paso during the Summer. During Wintertime oxygenated gasoline is distributed to reduce CO concentrations. Chuy Reynoso reported last years program was successful. 8 violations were issued to gasoline stations and 4 violations were issued to transporters. EPCCHED had some problems at its laboratory, and we began testing almost 1 month late. This problem reflects in the lack of violations. The program will pick up May 15 to begin testing for RVP (low Reid vapor pressure gasoline).

E. BECC/NADBank Update

Scott Storment provided a brief overview of recent actions to modify the mandate at BECC/NADBank. Modifications to the mandate may be beneficial to the activities of the JAC in regards resources available for air quality improvement projects. NADBank is in the initial phase of developing air quality related projects especially in Jz. The U.S. and Mexican Presidents met in Monterrey and developed several major proposals which included merger of BECC/NADBank - no timeline on that; 2) proposal to expand geographic zone in MX to 300 KM and remain at 100KM in the US. This would add Chihuahua, Tampico, Hermosillo, and Monterrey - we don't know when that will be approved; 3) increase the amount of low interest rate funds for infrastructure development. That capital will probably be constrained to the 100km limit. There were proposals to set up grant funds to conduct water conservation work. NADBank is currently undertaking an air quality study to assess project opportunities along the U.S. - MX Border. Two methods are under development: 1) Reactive - fix problems and 2) Opportunistic - projects that can be undertaken to address PM10, CO, O3. What sectors can be looked at? What is the source of a problem, such as PM10? What are projects that we can look at to reduce ozone precursors from Tijuana, Juarez, and Laredo? Perhaps we'll have some projects move forward. The dynamic at BECC has changed. A community comes to the BECC, asks for a grant when a small loan program isn't the prevailing reality. There are projects that can be environmentally viable that are bankable. Future is based solely on funds provided by governments. Preliminarily we're looking at Tijuana mobile source projects. There are projects we're interested in. We met w/ Municipio of Juarez, the City of EP's mass transit initiative, and retrofitting brickkilns. We're also checking to see if these projects are viable and who can or should apply for funds.

Arch Clouse (AC) asked in terms of projects that qualify for funding such as air quality equipment in Juarez, does this fall w/in the criteria for funding by NADBank. Absolutely. There's discussions that can be provided. If you don't have a method of paying for a project it may be difficult to obtain funds. BECC can provide some assistance on these types of projects. In a technical assistance manner this isn't really a form of providing funds. Matthew Witosky (MW) asked how do we keep tabs on progress of BECC projects and what can be done to help. CR has been providing a lot of support regarding air quality work being done by the BECC. He'll be happy to provide data on a quarterly basis to the JAC. The fact that the JAC meets quarterly provides continuous attention and helps maintain focus on air quality issues. SS asked if BECC has grants and what is the method of obtaining these funds. BECC has grant funds for these projects and is able to invest in these types of projects. He can speak w/ SS regarding the process to access these funds.

F. Border Technology Partnerships (BTP) Program

Applied Sciences Laboratory, Inc. is actively involved in projects to improve air quality in the Paso del Norte Airshed as well as other initiatives to improve the quality of life along the U.S. - Mexico Border. Richard Jimenez (RJ), President of ASL, reported the job of ASL is to deploy DOE sponsored projects in cooperation with border region industries and municipalities to stimulate investment. Programs are driven by problem statements developed by stakeholders in the BTP program.. About \$1M goes to UTEP, and the bulk of work goes to technology development and management of hazardous waste streams.

The entire program has funding of \$3M/yr . There was an outcry from Emergency Responders to address industrial accidents. ASL is also involved in brickkilns efforts in Juarez following-up on work done by Los Alamos National Labs (LANL) in clay filtration of air borne emissions to try to reduce health care costs (which can approach \$15M) among brickmakers due to respiratory problems caused by exposure to brick kiln emissions. Other ongoing projects that are part of the BTP include a tire gasification project and Electromagnetic Resonance Imaging to locate and ID subsurface hazardous plumes. ASL focuses on technology that can reduce exposure to hazardous waste in case there is an on-road accident since about 40% of truck transport carries hazardous cargo. ASL developed their version of "Quick Slab" which is a dense-gas dispersion model which provides notification of the direction and concentration of dense gas plumes in about 7 minutes.

Comments: Rene Franco commented that the air quality impact caused by brick kiln emissions (based on the emissions inventory) is minimal since less than 1% of all emissions come from the brickkilns. RJ indicated the \$15M of health based costs may be an inaccurate value, but it is based on Harvard School of Public Health estimates of health care costs due to exposure to varied concentrations of Particulate Matter. The Border Health Commissions has stated that one of the main problems is pollution generated by the Maquilas. When we look at the maquila industry which is ½ owned by U.S. corporations, and pollution problems in Mexico are a U.S. generated problem, this means that American entities should participate in finding solutions to environmental pollution in Mexico. Since these are a Joint US/MX problem, we should invest because US and Mexican industry are partners that impact US and Mexican citizens.

Archie asked Rene Franco and Luis Carlos Salmeron what are the sources of emissions data

from brickkilns. The WGA is working w/ SEMARNAT to develop an EI for Juarez and this is where the numbers come from. BL stated the comment indicating the 1% is unimportant shouldn't underestimated the degree of the problem since that 1% still is causing a health impact. SS indicated that studies to research morbidity and mortality due to exposure to air pollution are helpful, but results from these types of studies and from observations made by health groups have to be taken very conservatively. We've had to look at the studies in general, consider the consistency of the study, and consider the limits of the study to make the necessary decisions.

G. El Paso Gasification Project

The City of El Paso, Texas, and EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response are investigating the possibility of building an Integrated Gasification Combined Cycle (IGCC) plant (a highly efficient waste-to-energy system) in the border region to convert municipal and industrial solid waste materials into synthesis gas. Larry Gonzalez from EPA presented a description of the project concept, discussion on the operation of gasification systems, projected environmental impacts, and project status. LG reported EPA is undertaking a study on emissions and financial feasibility from a Waste to Energy facility. Perhaps there is need for more outreach on the benefits of this project. He has been working on this project out of the Office of the Mayor for the City of El Paso for the past 2 years.

The concept is simple. Construct a waste to energy system that converts organic material to energy capable of processing municipal waste, industrial waste, tires, sewage, and contaminated media into an energy resource. There are systems capable of processing this waste and take it as a whole to process. We want to produce syn-gas and we want this to be a very low emissions process since we are aware there are exhaust emissions generated from producing energy from waste streams.

What is gasification? Where are gasifiers used? What do they produce? New processes have been developed to disassemble organic molecules, heat up long-chain organics with thermal input to generate a gas. If you oxidize using a limited oxygen environment, you produce CO. Through a slow-oxidation process you can produce CO₂ and liberate heat. You want elemental forms of these atoms that go into organic material. Gasifiers are used in chemical petroleum refining, electric power generation, and the fertilizer industry to name a few. Gas fires are very robust systems. Eastman Chemical Co. in 1983 installed 2-acetate reactors processing bituminous coal that operate 24/7/365. Impacts of gasifiers are they eliminate landfills and conserve resources, while maintaining an ability to process a variety of organic materials such as municipal and industrial waste, sewage sludge, tires, coal, lignite, etc. This project also has a limited risk exposure for the City which has a technology vendor that's willing to carry risk of the project and will provide power the city will use which is about 140-150MW/yr.

J. Air Quality Tour of Cd. Juarez

Ralph Gruebel (RG), Air Quality Director at NMED reported NMED toured a variety of sites in Cd. Juarez to scope out a level of binational cooperation between New Mexico and Cd. Juarez, Chihuahua to reduce pollution levels in Southern Doña Ana County, particularly Sunland Park. Air quality data for this region indicate it is developing an emerging PM problem. There has been a major increase in the number of exceedances of the PM₁₀ NAAQS observed at SLP monitoring sites particularly during low wind conditions in the 1-2mps (meter per second)

range primarily during evening inversions. PM10 and PM2.5 monitors in Desert View, Sunland Park City Yard (SPCY) are reporting the elevated levels. The monitors are located near Anapra which is located to the South. Data indicate peaks appear at 5pm which coincides with the evening rush hour. Very low wind speeds from the south are associated with the elevated PM levels.

TEOMs samplers at SPCY have reported 9 exceedances with 205 hrs in 2001 above the standard and a high PM10 concentration of $>250 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ and wind speeds of $<1\text{mps}$. The PM2.5 to PM10 ratio is .2 so we're looking at dust type of particulates most likely from unpaved roadways and not much soot generated by wood burning. The Desert View school site is not much affected. At Anthony (NM/TX line) we also report very few exceedances. Looking at this from a basin perspective there is a need to consider a level of cooperation between Mexico and New Mexico to help establish a monitoring network in Anapra. This could help us determine if this area is or is not contributing to the PM problem that is emerging in SLP. Obviously this is an evening event and we're wondering if based on topography and we're getting a drainage flow from the higher elevations in Anapra towards the monitors at the SPCY. We need to look at population growth to see if with population growth comes a corresponding increase w/ PM.

Current met data indicates winds from come from the south southwest. We are also looking up the valley at sources that could be traveling south towards the SPCY monitors. Its hard to determine validity of met data so we're looking at open burning of agricultural crops and tree burning. Some activities proposed by NMED are increased PM monitoring network in SLP and expanding into Anapra, developing a county-wide PM EI, Modeling of transport, cold-air drainage, conducting collaborative university research (speciated analysis of PM) and other projects such as providing public information and conducting health studies. RG proposed placing a low-wind PM10 exceedance evaluation on the Strategic Plan Priority list; work w/ the NMED Air Quality Bureau to evaluate the problem; form a working group to develop a proposal for PM controls for presentation to the BECC for their endorsement; and submission to the NADBank for funding these efforts. NMED would like to work w/ the Cd. Juarez Ecology Dept. and to find a property that is available for setting up a monitoring network in Anapra. NMED will develop a workplan to move these proposals forward.

K. SB749 Brickkiln Report

As a result of passage of SB749 during the 77th legislature the TNRCC is required to prepare a report on Brickmaking activities along the Texas Mexico Border to the State Legislature. Steve Niemeyer requested that all the JAC members and interested parties working on the brickmakers Technical Commission to provide their information to him or Victor Valenzuela who needs to develop a draft. He reminded all of the time-line that was handed out during the Dec. JAC meeting in December and the information needs to be validated before submitting it to the State Legislature. The JAC can keep this item on the consent agenda until this project is completed.

K. Proposed Redesignation of El Paso's Nonattainment Classification

Gerry Wolfe from the Strategic Assessment Division provided an update on activities and issues surrounding redesignation of El Paso's Nonattainment Classification as an Area in Attainment of the NAAQS. Last week at the AWG meeting there was an issue on impacts on Emissions trading. BL indicated there would be no impact to this program. Gerry reported that we have

not had a violation of the NAAQS in El Paso during the previous 4 years, and this indicates success that should help EPA make a determination when TNRCC requests redesignation. However, the TNRCC is requesting that the JAC weigh-in on the request for redesignation by agreeing to the resolution that is proposed for submittal to the Agency.

L. JAC Resolution on Redesignation

A JAC Technical Commission on the proposed redesignation of El Paso as an area in attainment of the NAAQS has been drafting a resolution stating the opinion of the JAC on this issue. Arch Clouse (AC) commented that requesting redesignation indicates we have success in EP and we've accomplished a great deal. The purpose of the JAC is to improve air quality, and we have made significant improvements over several years and investment in significant and costly control programs. This has been a collaborative effort, and control programs have demonstrated success. He added that improvements in Juarez will also come as a significant effort is made to invest in control strategies. Redesignation is a win-win for both communities. The system provides for redesignation. AC rhetorically asked: Are we wasting money? Is the strategy flawed? Our air quality status should reflect the real world therefore El Paso should be redesignated. We can seize the opportunity or ignore it because we have bad feelings about redesignation. The resolution states that we support redesignation. It does not mention money or funds. Those have already been invested. The resolution has been worked on and agreed to by many members on the JAC.

Sergio Sanchez stated he has not had a chance to review the resolution since this is his first JAC meeting. Jesus Contreras' (the previous JAC CO-Chair) email was not functioning during the past couple of months due to changes going on at the SEMARNAT offices in Mexico, D.F. so he was not obtaining updates of the resolution by either email or fax. Bob Currey (BC) stated when we left the last meeting we had on Jan 15, we had a resolution agreed on with colleagues from Mex. Rene Franco stated we (the Mexican side) made a comment given that AC's comments indicate that he doesn't know if Juarez is considered in nonattainment. We must look at this and ask why Section 179B of the U.S. Clean Air Act protections can be used to blame Juarez once EP is in attainment and if a violation occurs then the blame is placed on Jz. Luis Carlos Salmeron stated he sent to VV an email stating why if EP has a violation Juarez will be blamed. Also, Juarez is not mentioned as a partner in improving air quality. The resolution should state this. Biologa Alma Leticia Figueroa added given the EI for Jz indicates the brickmakers are not a problem and Steve Niemeyer states he doesn't know why we're working w/ the brickmakers, except that he has to, why work on projects that aren't even a problem. The problem in Juarez is junk cars and older vehicles. We have an opportunity to do this and bring up those issues that go in a maintenance plan.

AC reiterated that we need a formal commitment from the JAC members to not have this type of situation. Given the debate it may be prudent to have a discussion on this resolution at a later date. CR added that we as JAC members must be more responsible as this process evolves. The response is minimal regarding the requests that are made. What has been achieved is historic and Juarez doesn't have an attainment / nonattainment designation in place. We will have a maintenance designation. This is a first that will be of binational character. Fundamental in all this will be the upcoming work so that we can continue using economic incentives from all sectors in the transfer of resources into Mexico. 2 weeks should be enough time to make this

process work on the Mexican side and provide a recommendation on the resolution. We can have a conference call to answer any questions Mexico may have. We should have signature w/ in 2 weeks and have a conference call to resolve any issues. SS stated this is a single air shed, and we have our work cut out for us. It was agreed to table the discussion and wait 2 weeks for the Mexican side to debate the resolution and provide recommendations.

Agreements

- 1) Carlos Rincon recommended that the JAC support a recommendation or resolution which not only provides for a dedicated mass transit commuter lane on the international bridges, but also calls for an expedited inspection process for travelers using a dedicated mass transit commuter lane. He will write the resolution.
- 2) Rene Franco recommended we support the Mass Transit Initiatives developed by Cd. Juarez which calls for dedicated Mass Transit Lanes and Trunking systems. Rene will write this resolution / recommendation.
- 3) Gerardo Tarin recommended that an elevated level of effort needed to take place in order to get the Cd. Juarez Continuous Ambient Monitoring Network back to normal since several monitors malfunctioned back in June, 2001.
- 4) Bob Currey recommended we form a Technical Commission to discuss what we need to do to update and improve the air quality monitoring network in the entire Paso del Norte Air Basin.
- 5) Ralph Gruebel asked that we place the evaluation of low-wind PM10 exceedances on the Strategic Plan Priority list and consider methods of funding and monitoring transboundary air pollution between the New Mexico - Chihuahua International boundary.
6. The Delegation from Mexico will review the JAC resolution on the proposed request by the TNRCC to EPA for redesignation of El Paso as an area in attainment of the NAAQS.

Next Meeting:

20 Jun in El Paso.