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MANE-VU

Mid-Atlantic/Northeast Visibility Union

IMPROVED VISIBILITY IS FOCUS OF NEW EFFORT BY STATES AND TRIBES IN MID-ATLANTIC AND NORTHEAST REGION

(Newport, Rhode Island) Eleven states, the District of Columbia, two Indian tribes, and the Federal government today announced they will work together to reduce regional haze, which adversely affects national parks and wilderness areas. The newly organized Mid-Atlantic/Northeast Visibility Union (MANE-VU) will address the causes of regional haze and ways to reduce related pollutants, thereby improving visibility in the atmosphere. MANE-VU was initiated to support its members as they address the requirements of the Federal regional haze rule, finalized in 1999, to improve visibility at national parks and wilderness areas.

At MANE-VU's first meeting held here today, Christopher Recchia, Chair of the new organization and Deputy Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Environmental Protection stated "Regional haze is a major air quality problem in our region. "Improving visibility by reducing air pollution will have public health and economic benefits as well as improved scenic vistas."

At its first meeting, MANE-VU released a new Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management (NESCAUM) report describing the potential reductions of haze forming particles by implementing "Best Available Retrofit Technology" to major contributing sources. The report, entitled "A Basis for Control of BART-Eligible Sources," identifies sulfur oxides and nitrogen oxides emissions from major sources in the eastern United States. The report recommends integrating BART with existing regulatory programs that control sulfur oxides and nitrogen oxides emissions in order to minimize control costs and reduce administrative complexity for both regulators and affected industry. The report estimates the application of BART controls to nearly 400 potentially eligible units over the eastern United States could achieve reductions of over five million tons annually of sulfur dioxide emissions and two million tons of nitrogen oxides emissions. The report can be found at www.nescaum.org.

Regional haze limits visibility in the most scenic areas of the country, as well as in urban areas. It is caused by fine particles suspended in the air that, at high concentrations, can cause significant detrimental human health effects. Sources of pollution contributing to regional haze include burning of fossil fuels and emissions of volatile organics. Current data suggests that the pollutants that cause regional haze can be transported long distances over state and tribal borders, thereby making regional cooperation essential. The pollutants that cause regional haze are also linked to other regional air pollution problems, such as ground-level ozone, acid and nutrient deposition, as well as fine particles.

Participating State and Tribal members include Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, the Penobscot Indian Nation, Rhode Island, the St. Regis-Mohawk Tribe, and Vermont. Participating Federal members include the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Forest Service.