



Joint Statement of the Ozone Transport Commission and Mid-Atlantic/Northeast Visibility Union on the Importance of Federal Support for Air Quality Science

The Ozone Transport Commission (OTC) and Mid-Atlantic/Northeast Visibility Union (MANEVU) use the best available science in furtherance of their respective missions to reduce ground-level ozone across the region and improve visibility in our national parks and wilderness areas. To accomplish this, the OTC and MANEVU rely on advances in air quality science pioneered through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Research and Development (ORD).

Of special note, for over 25 years EPA ORD has led the development of the Community Multiscale Air Quality (CMAQ) photochemical air quality model, a foundational modeling tool that we use to create and evaluate effective air quality strategies. CMAQ also is a key component of our region's daily air quality forecasts that inform the public when air quality is expected to be poor. It generates critical forecasts that provide advance warning to those most susceptible to the health effects of air pollution, such as children, the elderly, and those with cardiovascular issues and respiratory diseases such as asthma.

Formation and transport of air pollution are influenced by a range of complex physical, chemical, and meteorological processes. The science is constantly evolving, and EPA ORD regularly incorporates emerging scientific knowledge into CMAQ to continuously improve the model's performance. EPA ORD's creation of CMAQ and the updates to it across the years have provided the OTC and MANEVU with a sophisticated and modern analytical tool that our state agencies would not have had the capacity to build and maintain themselves.

EPA ORD also provides a range of other scientific support for our state environmental agencies to aid in protecting public health and the environment. Examples include:

- ORD develops instruments and methods essential for accurate measurement of ambient air pollutant levels. These measurements are used for a variety of purposes, including demonstration of attainment with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone and other criteria pollutants, determining compliance with other regulatory requirements, and providing the public with information they need to minimize their exposure to pollution.

- ORD develops emissions testing methods for air pollutants, which is particularly salient in recent years for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). These measurements are essential for evaluating how PFAS air emissions enter into our drinking water through surface deposition. Furthermore, ORD has been at the forefront of evaluating the effectiveness of PFAS destruction techniques.
- ORD develops and updates air dispersion and deposition models used in permitting processes to evaluate the impacts of proposed emissions sources on surrounding air, land, and water.
- ORD develops tools and information needed to evaluate and reduce exposures to smoke from wildfires and controlled or prescribed burns.
- ORD compiles and evaluates scientific data on the health effects of air pollutants to support the periodic reviews of the NAAQS required by the Clean Air Act and to support risk assessments used to evaluate the effectiveness of EPA and state regulations, policies, and decisions.

OTC and MANEVU gratefully acknowledge the important work of EPA ORD in contributing to the knowledge base and analytical tools we need to protect the public from air pollution and other environmental harms. In the spirit of cooperative federalism, we call upon this Administration to continue the long-standing federal support for air quality research that underpins effective state air quality and public health programs under the Clean Air Act. We further call upon the Administration to fulfill the federal government's key role in ensuring that all Americans have clean air by providing EPA with the necessary resources and organizational structure to achieve that laudable goal.

Adopted by the Commission and MANEVU June 11, 2025

Note: This statement is by the OTC and MANEVU state and DC members only, and does not necessarily reflect endorsement by the MANEVU Tribal and federal partners.