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10
11 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**
12 **FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**
13

14 _____)
15)
16 CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY,)
17 CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH,)
18 and SIERRA CLUB,)

19 Plaintiffs,)

20 v.)

21 SCOTT PRUITT,)

22 in his official capacity as)
23 Administrator of the United States)
24 Environmental Protection Agency,)

25 Defendant.)
26 _____)
27)
28)

Civ. No.

**COMPLAINT FOR INJUNCTIVE
AND DECLARATORY RELIEF**

(Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 7401 *et.*
seq.)

INTRODUCTION

1
2 1. This is a Clean Air Act “deadline suit” against Scott Pruitt for his failure to protect
3 people, ecosystems and wildlife from dangerous exposure to sulfur oxides (SOx). SOx, in even
4 very short exposure time periods—such as five minutes—has significant health impacts,
5 including decrements in lung function, aggravation of asthma, and respiratory and cardiovascular
6 morbidity. EPA has also determined that exposure to SO₂ pollution can aggravate existing heart
7 disease, leading to increased hospitalizations and premature deaths.
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9 2. SOx also contribute to the formation of acid rain, which damages trees, crops, historic
10 buildings, and monuments and alters the acidity of both soils and water bodies. Acute and
11 chronic exposures to SOx lead to foliar injury, decreased photosynthesis, and decreased growth
12 of vegetation. EPA’s draft Integrated Review Plan acknowledged that SOx have a potential to
13 negatively affect endangered species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has already
14 identified many federally protected species that are negatively affected by atmospheric pollution
15 from SOx.
16

17 3. In addition, because SOx emissions may be transmitted long distances, they contribute to
18 visibility impairment problems in many national parks and wilderness areas. EPA has previously
19 found “that current levels of oxides of nitrogen and sulfur are sufficient to cause acidification of
20 both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, nutrient enrichment of terrestrial ecosystems and
21 contribute to nutrient enrichment effects in estuaries that could be considered adverse[.]” 77 Fed.
22 Reg. 20,218, 20,241-42 (April 3, 2012).
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24

25 4. SOx also facilitate mercury methylation. This creates the form of mercury which is
26 especially dangerous to humans and wildlife.

27 5. To better protect the public from the damage caused by SOx, the United States
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1 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) promulgated a SO_x National Ambient Air Quality
 2 Standard (NAAQS) in 1971 and again in 2010. The promulgation of these SO_x NAAQS creates
 3 various mandatory duties which EPA must perform in order to effectively implement those SO_x
 4 NAAQS. As detailed below, EPA is in violation of numerous Clean Air Act mandatory duties
 5 with regard to the SO_x NAAQS.
 6

7 6. Specifically, EPA has a mandatory duty to take final action on state implementation plan
 8 (SIP) submittals within 12 months of those SIP submittals becoming administratively complete.
 9 42 U.S.C. § 7410(k)(2)-(4). EPA is in violation of this mandatory duty for the nonattainment
 10 areas and SIP elements listed in Table 1 below.
 11

12 **TABLE 1**

AREA & STATE	ELEMENT(S)	COMPLETION DATE	FINAL ACTION DUE DATE
Indianapolis, IN	Attainment Demonstration, Contingency Measures, Emission inventory, Nonattainment New Source Review (NSR), Reasonably Available Control Measures/Reasonably Available Control Technology (RACM/RACT), Reasonable Further Progress (RFP).	2/25/2016	2/25/2017
Morgan County, IN	Attainment Demonstration, Contingency Measures, Emission inventory, Nonattainment NSR, RACM/RACT, RFP.	2/25/2016	2/25/2017
Southwest, IN	Attainment Demonstration, Contingency Measures, Emission inventory, Nonattainment NSR, RACM/RACT, RFP.	2/25/2016	2/25/2017
Terre Haute, IN	Attainment Demonstration, Contingency Measures,	2/25/2016	2/25/2017

	Emission inventory, Nonattainment NSR, RACM/RACT, RFP.		
Muscatine, IA	Attainment Demonstration, Contingency Measures, Emission inventory, Nonattainment NSR, RACM/RACT, RFP.	11/26/2016	11/26/2017
Detroit, MI	Attainment Demonstration, Contingency Measures, Emission inventory, Nonattainment NSR, RACM/RACT, RFP.	11/30/2016	11/30/2017
Jackson County, MO	Attainment Demonstration, Contingency Measures, Emission inventory, Nonattainment NSR, RACM/RACT, RFP.	2/25/2016	2/25/2017
Lake County, OH	Attainment Demonstration, Contingency Measures, Emission inventory, Nonattainment NSR, RACM/RACT, RFP.	10/03/2015 for attainment demonstration. 2/25/2016 for other elements.	10/3/2016 for attainment demonstration. 2/25/2017 for other elements.
Muskingum River, OH	Attainment Demonstration, Contingency Measures, Emission inventory, Nonattainment NSR, RACM/RACT, RFP.	10/03/2015 for attainment demonstration. 2/25/2016 for other elements.	10/3/2016 for attainment demonstration. 2/25/2017 for other elements.
Steubenville, OH- WV, OH	Attainment Demonstration, Contingency Measures, Emission inventory, Nonattainment NSR, RACM/RACT, RFP.	10/03/2015 for attainment demonstration. 2/25/2016 for other elements.	10/3/2016 for attainment demonstration. 2/25/2017 for other elements.
Steubenville, OH- WV, WV	Attainment Demonstration, Contingency Measures, Emission inventory, Nonattainment NSR, RACM/RACT, RFP.	10/2/2016	10/2/2017
Rhineland, WI	Attainment Demonstration, Contingency Measures, Emission inventory, Nonattainment NSR, RFP.	2/25/2016	2/25/2017
Hillsborough County, FL	Nonattainment NSR	10/3/2015	10/3/2016
Nassau County, FL	Nonattainment NSR	10/3/2015	10/3/2016

Jefferson County, MO	Nonattainment NSR	12/5/2015	12/5/2016
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7. EPA also has a mandatory duty to make a finding that a state has failed to submit a required SIP submittal within six months of when that SIP submittal is due. 42 U.S.C. § 7410(k)(1)(B). EPA has violated this mandatory duty to make a finding of failure to submit nonattainment SIPs for the nonattainment areas listed in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2

AREA & ELEMENT(S)	SUBMITTAL DEADLINE (No later than)
Hayden, AZ 1971 primary SO ₂ SIP	5/15/1992
New Jersey portion of the Northeast Pennsylvania-Upper Delaware Valley Interstate AQCR (part) 1971 primary SO ₂ SIP.	5/15/1992

8. Accordingly, Plaintiffs CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH and SIERRA CLUB bring this action against Defendant SCOTT PRUITT, in his official capacity as EPA Administrator, to compel him to perform his mandatory duties with respect to the SO_x NAAQS.

JURISDICTION

9. This case is a Clean Air Act citizen suit. Therefore, the Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 (federal question jurisdiction) and 42 U.S.C. § 7604(a)

1 (Clean Air Act citizen suits).

2 10. An actual controversy exists between the parties. This case does not concern federal
3 taxes, is not a proceeding under 11 U.S.C. §§ 505 of 1146, and does not involve the Tariff Act of
4 1930. Thus, this Court has jurisdiction to order declaratory relief under 28 U.S.C. § 2201. If the
5 Court orders declaratory relief, 28 U.S.C. § 2202 authorizes this Court to issue injunctive relief.
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8 **NOTICE**

9 11. Plaintiffs mailed to EPA by certified mail, return receipt requested, written notice of
10 intent to sue regarding the violations alleged in this Complaint. EPA received the notice letter by
11 no later than March 19, 2018. More than sixty days have passed since EPA received this notice
12 letter. EPA has not remedied the violations alleged in this Complaint. Therefore, a present and
13 actual controversy exists between the parties.
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16 **VENUE**

17 12. Defendant EPA resides in this judicial district. This civil action is brought against an
18 officer of the United States acting in her official capacity and a substantial part of the events or
19 omissions giving rise to the claims in this case occurred in the Northern District of California.
20 One of the claims in this Complaint concerns EPA's failure to perform mandatory duties with
21 regard to Arizona. EPA Region 9, which is responsible for Arizona, is headquartered in San
22 Francisco. Thus several of the events and omissions at issue in this action occurred at EPA's
23 Region 9 headquarters in San Francisco. In addition, Plaintiffs Center for Environmental Health
24 and Sierra Club are headquartered in Oakland. Accordingly, venue is proper in this Court
25 pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(e).
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INTRADISTRICT ASSIGNMENT

13. A substantial part of the events and omissions giving rise to the claims in this case occurred in the County of San Francisco. Accordingly, assignment to the San Francisco Division or the Oakland Division is proper pursuant to Civil L.R. 3-2(c) and (d).

PARTIES

14. Plaintiff CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation incorporated in California. The Center for Biological Diversity has approximately 63,000 members throughout the United States and the world. The Center for Biological Diversity’s mission is to ensure the preservation, protection, and restoration of biodiversity, native species, ecosystems, public lands and waters, and public health through science, policy, and environmental law. Based on the understanding that the health and vigor of human societies and the integrity and wildness of the natural environment are closely linked, the Center for Biological Diversity is working to secure a future for animals and plants hovering on the brink of extinction, for the ecosystems they need to survive, and for a healthy, livable future for all of us.

15. The Center for Biological Diversity and its members include individuals with varying interests in wildlife species and their habitat ranging from scientific, professional, and educational to recreational, aesthetic, moral, and spiritual. Further, the Center for Biological Diversity’s members enjoy, on an ongoing basis, the biological, scientific, research, educational, conservation, recreational, and aesthetic values of the regions inhabited by these species, including the regions at issue in this action. The Center for Biological Diversity’s members observe and study native species and their habitat, and derive professional, scientific,

1 educational, recreational, aesthetic, inspirational, and other benefits from these activities and
2 have an interest in preserving the possibility of such activities in the future. The Center for
3 Biological Diversity and its members have participated in efforts to protect and preserve natural
4 areas, including the habitat essential to the continued survival of native species, and to address
5 threats to the continued existence of these species, including the threats posed by air pollution
6 and other contaminants.
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8 16. Plaintiff the CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH is an Oakland, California
9 based non-profit organization that helps protect the public from toxic chemicals and promotes
10 business products and practices that are safe for public health and the environment. The Center
11 for Environmental Health works in pursuit of a world in which all people live, work, learn, and
12 play in healthy environments.
13

14 17. Plaintiff SIERRA CLUB is the oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization
15 in the United States, with more than 795,000 members nationally. Sierra Club's mission is to
16 explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the Earth; to practice and promote the responsible
17 use of the Earth's resources and ecosystems; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore
18 the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these
19 objectives. Sierra Club performs this mission through advocacy, litigation, and educational
20 outreach to its members and state chapters. Sierra Club and its members are greatly concerned
21 about the effects of air pollution on human health and the environment and have a long history of
22 involvement in activities related to air quality.
23
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25 18. Plaintiffs' members live, work, recreate, travel and engage in other activities throughout
26 the areas at issue in this complaint and will continue to do so on a regular basis. Pollution in the
27 affected areas threatens and damages, and will continue to threaten and damage, the health and
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1 welfare of Plaintiffs' members as well as their ability to engage in and enjoy their other
2 activities. Pollution diminishes Plaintiff's members' ability to enjoy the aesthetic qualities and
3 recreational opportunities of the affected area.

4 19. EPA's failure to timely perform the mandatory duties described herein also adversely
5 affects Plaintiffs, as well as their members, by depriving them of procedural protection and
6 opportunities, as well as information that they are entitled to under the Clean Air Act. The
7 failure of EPA to perform the mandatory duties also creates uncertainty for Plaintiffs' members
8 as to whether they are exposed to excess air pollution.
9

10 20. The above injuries will continue until the Court grants the relief requested herein.

11 21. Defendant SCOTT PRUITT is the Administrator of the United States Environmental
12 Protection Agency. In that role Administrator Pruitt has been charged by Congress with the duty
13 to administer the Clean Air Act, including the mandatory duties at issue in this case.
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16 **LEGAL BACKGROUND AND FACTS**

17 22. Congress enacted the Clean Air Act to "speed up, expand, and intensify the war against
18 air pollution in the United States with a view to assuring that the air we breathe throughout the
19 Nation is wholesome once again." H.R.Rep. No. 1146, 91st Cong., 2d Sess. 1,1, 1970 U.S.Code
20 Cong. & Admin. News 5356, 5356. To promote this, the Act requires EPA to set National
21 Ambient Air Quality Standards for certain pollutants, including SOx. National Ambient Air
22 Quality Standards establish maximum allowable concentrations in the air of these pollutants.
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25 23. Each National Ambient Air Quality Standard must be stringent enough to protect public
26 health and welfare. Effects on welfare include, but are not limited to, effects on soils, water,
27 vegetation, manmade materials, wildlife, visibility (*i.e.*, haze), climate, damage to property,
28

1 economic impacts and effects on personal comfort and well-being.

2 24. EPA set a primary and secondary SO_x in 1971. 36 Fed. Reg. 8,186 (Apr. 30, 1971).

3 EPA set an additional primary SO_x in 2010. 75 Fed. Reg. 35,520 (June 22, 2010).

4 25. Due to both the more stringent numerical limit and shorter averaging time as compared to
5 the previous SO_x NAAQS, the 2010 SO_x NAAQS is far more protective of human health than
6 the prior SO_x NAAQS and promises huge health benefits. EPA estimated that 2,300 to 5,900
7 premature deaths and 54,000 asthma attacks a year will be prevented by the new standard.
8

9 26. Timely implementation of the new NAAQS is critical. Considering the scientific
10 evidence, each year implementation of the one-hour SO₂ NAAQS is delayed, up to 5,900 more
11 people will die prematurely and 54,000 asthma attacks will occur unnecessarily. Further, EPA
12 estimates that the net benefit of implementing the 75 ppb SO₂ NAAQS is up to \$36 billion
13 dollars. Those individuals who suffer from health impacts caused by exposure to SO_x levels
14 above the NAAQS will have greater medical costs with each year implementation is delayed
15 and, as a result, the monetized benefits of implementing the one-hour SO_x NAAQS will go
16 unrealized. Further, the ability of those individuals to enjoy everyday activities such as exercise,
17 school, and work will continue to be negatively impacted.
18

19 27. The Clean Air Act requires EPA to determine whether any state implementation plan
20 submittal is administratively complete. *See* 42 U.S.C. 7410(k)(1)(B). If a state fails to submit
21 any required state implementation plan by the deadline for its submittal, there is no submittal that
22 may be deemed administratively complete and EPA must make a determination stating that the
23 state failed to submit the required state implementation plan. 42 U.S.C. § 7410(k)(1)(B). This is
24 referred to as a “finding of failure to submit.”
25

26 28. If a state does submit a SIP submittal, EPA has a mandatory duty to take final action on
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1 the submittal by approving it, disapproving it or approving it in part and disapproving it in part
2 within 12 months of when the submittal is deemed administratively complete. 42 U.S.C. §
3 7410(k)(2)-(4).

4 29. If EPA disapproves a SIP submittal or makes a finding that a state has failed to submit a
5 SIP submittal by the deadline for submittal, EPA has a mandatory duty to promulgate a Federal
6 Implementation Plan (FIP) no later than two years after disapproving a SIP submittal. 42 U.S.C.
7 § 7410(c).
8

9
10 **CLAIMS FOR RELIEF**

11 **CLAIM ONE**

12 **(Failure to take final action on SIP submittals)**

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14 30. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference all paragraphs listed above.

15 31. It has been more than 12 months since the states listed in Table 1 above have submitted
16 the 2010 SO_x NAAQS nonattainment SIP elements listed in Table 1 above for the 2010 SO_x
17 NAAQS nonattainment areas listed in Table 1 above.
18

19 32. EPA has not taken final action, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 7410(k)(2)-(4), on the 2010 SO_x
20 NAQS nonattainment SIP elements listed in Table 1 above.

21 33. Accordingly, EPA is violation of its mandatory duty under 42 U.S.C. § 7410(2)-(4) to
22 take final action on SIP submittals listed in Table 1 above within 12 months of them being
23 administratively complete.
24

25 **CLAIM TWO**

26 **(Failure to issue findings of failure to submit**
27 **for 1971 SO_x NAAQS Nonattainment SIPs)**

28 34. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference all paragraphs listed above.

1 35. EPA set a primary and secondary SO_x NAAQS in 1971. 36 Fed. Reg. 8,186 (Apr. 30,
2 1971). States were required to submit nonattainment SIPs for the 1971 SO_x NAAQS by May 15,
3 1992. *See*

4 https://www3.epa.gov/airquality/urbanair/sipstatus/reports/so2_1971_elembynaqs.html#so2_1971_375
5

6
7 36. Thus, EPA has a mandatory duty to make findings of failure to submit for the 1971 SO_x
8 NAAQS nonattainment SIPs by November 15, 1992.

9 37. The states listed in Table 2 above, have not submitted nonattainment SIPs for the
10 nonattainment areas listed in Table 2 above.

11 38. It is more than six months after these nonattainment SIP submittals were due.

12 39. Yet, EPA has not issued findings of failure to submit 1971 SO_x NAAQS nonattainment
13 SIPs for the nonattainment areas listed in Table 2 above.
14

15 40. Therefore, EPA is in violation of its mandatory duty to issue findings of failure to submit
16 pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 7410(k)(1)(B) for the nonattainment areas listed in Table 2 above.
17

18 **REQUEST FOR RELIEF**

19 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs respectfully request that the Court:

- 20
- 21 A. Declare that the Administrator is in violation of the Clean Air Act with regard to his
22 failure to perform each mandatory duty listed above;
 - 23 B. Issue a mandatory injunction requiring the Administrator to perform his mandatory duties
24 by certain dates;
 - 25 C. Retain jurisdiction of this matter for purposes of enforcing and effectuating the Court's
26 order;
 - 27 D. Grant Plaintiffs their reasonable costs of litigation, including attorneys' and expert fees;
- 28

1 and

2 E. Grant such further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

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4 Respectfully submitted,

5
6 /s/Victoria Tejada

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17 Dated: June 14, 2018