

**NOTICE OF 30-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD REQUESTING TO EXCLUDE
SEVERAL DAYS OF AIR QUALITY MONITORING
DATA FROM PM_{2.5} CALCULATIONS FOR PINEHURST**

PROPOSED ACTION: The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is requesting concurrence from the US Environmental Protection Agency to exclude high concentrations of fine particulate (PM_{2.5}) as Exceptional Events for a high wind dust event on September 15 and 16, and other 2013 Wildfire impacts on PM_{2.5} Monitor Values in Pinehurst Idaho. DEQ has reviewed all the days during the 2013 wildfire season and wind events for Pinehurst and is including all days that meet the requirements for exceptional events.

The reports “Exceptional Events Demonstration Requesting Exclusion of PM_{2.5} Monitor Values Impacted by Wildfires at Pinehurst, Idaho, in 2013” and “Exceptional Events Demonstration Requesting Exclusion of PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ Monitor Values at Pinehurst, Idaho, Impacted by September 15–16, 2013, High Wind Dust Event” demonstrates applicability of the federal Exceptional Events Rule (40 CFR 50 and 51[72 FR 13560]) promulgated on March 22, 2007, due to natural causes. The rule allows states to flag air quality data as exceptional and exclude those data from use in determining compliance with the NAAQS due to events that are not reasonably controllable or preventable – pending EPA concurrence.

The exclusion of these additional days is necessary to ensure the most appropriate design value is used when developing the State Implementation Plan for the West Silver Valley Nonattainment Area.

BACKGROUND: DEQ submitted a “Request for EPA Concurrence as Exceptional Events for 2012 Wildfire Impacts on PM_{2.5} Monitor Values at Salmon and Pinehurst Idaho” on December 6, 2013, to EPA to exclude high concentrations of PM_{2.5} recorded during the 2012 wildfire season in Pinehurst and Salmon from calculations used to designate attainment status with the annual National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for PM_{2.5}. Due to limited resources, DEQ only included monitor values that ensured the Pinehurst design value (for 2010–2012 data) was below the standard. Since that original submittal, EPA issued final designations for the annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS based on 2011–2013 data. As a result, the West Silver Valley was designated a nonattainment area on January 15, 2015 (effective April 15, 2015).

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: DEQ has scheduled a period from July 29, 2016, through August 29, 2015, to receive public comments on the proposed request. The document will be available for public review on DEQ’s website at www.deq.idaho.gov/public-comment-opportunities and upon request at DEQ’s State Office in Boise on July 29, 2015.

SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS ASSISTANCE ON TECHNICAL QUESTIONS: Anyone may submit written comments regarding this proposed request on DEQ’s website or by mail or e-mail to Anne Drier, Department of Environmental Quality, 1410 N. Hilton, Boise, ID 83706, or anne.drier@deq.idaho.gov. For technical assistance or questions concerning this request, contact Mike Edwards at mike.edwards@deq.idaho.gov or (208) 373-0438.

When sending comments or requesting information, please reference the 2013 reports title listed above. Comments should focus on whether Idaho has properly demonstrated that the monitor values impacted by the 2013 wildfire season and dust event be excluded as exceptional events.

All written comments concerning this proposal must be received on or before 5 p.m., MDT, August 29, 2016.