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About the Cover

The cover provides a visual air quality comparison of the average best and worst visibility days at Great Smoky Mountain National Park from 1992 to 1995. The image was generated using software called WinHaze. WinHaze, developed by Air Resource Specialists of Fort Collins, Colorado, uses visual range parameters to degrade a pristine image, thus simulating what a scene would look like with the given visibility parameters. Images such as these are helpful in defining and communicating the visibility problem and assessing any progress made. Additional information on visibility can be found in Chapter 3 of this report.

Disclaimer

This report has been reviewed and approved for publication by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards. Mention of trade names or commercial products are not intended to constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.

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Preface

This is the twenty-fourth annual report on air pollution trends in the United States issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The report is prepared by the Air Quality Trends Analysis Group (AQTAG) in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina and is directed toward both the technical air pollution audience and other interested parties and individuals.

The report, complete with graphics and data tables, can be accessed via the Internet at http://www.epa.gov/oar/aqtrnd96/. AQTAG solicits comments on this report and welcomes suggestions regarding techniques, interpretations, conclusions, or methods of presentation. Comments can be submitted via the website or mailed to:

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For additional air quality data, readers can access the Aerometric Information Retrieval System's (AIRS) executive software at http://www.epa.gov/oar/airs/aewin.

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Acronyms

AIRS	Aerometric Information Retrieval System
CAA	Clean Air Act
CAAA	Clean Air Act Amendments
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CASAC	Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee
CEMs	Continuous Emissions Monitors
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CMSA	Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area
DST	Daylight Savings Time
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HAPs	Hazardous Air Pollutants
IMPROVE	Interagency Monitoring of PROtected Environments
MACT	Maximum Achievable Control Technology
MARAMA	Mid-Atlantic Regional Air Management Association
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAMS	National Air Monitoring Stations
NARSTO	North American Research Strategy for Tropospheric Ozone
NESCAUM	Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management
NMOC	Non-Methane Organic Compound
NO_2	Nitrogen Dioxide
NO_x	Nitrogen Oxides
NTI	National Toxics Inventory
O_3	Ozone
OTAG	The Ozone Transport Assessment Group
PAHs	Polyaromatic Hydrocarbons
PAMS	Photochemical Assessment Monitoring Stations
Pb	Lead
PCBs	Polychlorinated Biphenyls
PM_{10}	Particulate Matter of 10 micrometers in diameter or less
$PM_{2.5}$	Particulate Matter of 2.5 micrometers in diameter or less
POM	Polycyclic Organic Matter
ppm	Parts Per Million
PSI	Pollutant Standards Index
RFG	Reformulated Gasoline
SLAMS	State and Local Air Monitoring Stations
SNMOC	Speciated Non-Methane Organic Compound
SO_2	Sulfur Dioxide
SO_x	Sulfur Oxides
TRI	Toxic Release Inventory
TSP	Total Suspended Particulate
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
VOCs	Volatile Organic Compounds