UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

December 3, 2003

Reply To
Attn Of: OAQ-107

Certified Mail - Return Receipt Requested

The Honorable Frank H. Murkowski
Governor of Alaska
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Re: EPA Acknowledges Alaska's Recommendation for 8-Hour Ozone Area Designation

Dear Governor Murkowski:

Thank you for making recommendations on 8-hour ozone air quality designations. Pursuant to the Clean Air Act (CAA), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is required to promulgate designations for new or revised standards, such as the 8-hour ozone standard. Earlier this year, we entered into a consent decree that requires us to promulgate designations by April 15, 2004.

We have reviewed the letter from the Commissioner of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Ernesta Ballard, dated April 24, 2003, submitting Alaska's recommendations on air quality designations for the 8-hour ozone standard. This letter is to inform you that the EPA does not intend to make modifications to your recommendation of statewide attainment. We will continue to work with your office as we move forward to make final designations.

The CAA defines a nonattainment area as any area that does not meet (or that contributes to ambient air quality in a nearby area that does not meet) the national primary or secondary ambient air quality standard for the pollutant. EPA guidance indicates that Alaska should use the larger of the Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA), Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), or the 1-hour ozone nonattainment area as the presumptive boundary for 8-hour ozone nonattainment areas. The guidance provides 11 factors that Alaska should consider in determining whether to modify the presumptive boundaries. We have reviewed your submission and believe it is consistent with our guidance.

We look forward to a continued dialog with Alaska as we work to finalize the designations for the 8-hour ozone standard. If your air quality staff have any questions regarding this matter, they may contact Janis Hastings, Acting Director of the office of Air Quality, at (206)-553-1582

Sincerely,

L. John Iani
Regional Administrator

cc: Ernesta Ballard, Commissioner, ADEC

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