UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 6
1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200
DALLAS, TX 75202-2733

DEC 03 2003

The Honorable M. J. Mike Foster, Jr.
Governor of Louisiana
Baton Rouge, LA 70884-2263

Dear Governor Foster:

Thank you for the letter from Dr. Hall Bohlinger, Secretary, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ), dated July 1, 2003, in which he submitted Louisiana's recommendations on air quality designations for the 8-hour national health-based standard for ground level ozone. I also appreciate the supplemental material submitted by Dr. Bohlinger on October 14, 2003, providing additional supporting materials for the designations and verifying that ozone monitoring data collected during the 2003 ozone season have been quality-assured, certified, and entered into the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Air Quality System. The State submittal was the first step in our working cooperatively to designate areas in which the air standards have not yet been attained and in designating as attainment those areas that have achieved the clean air goal. As part of this process, EPA committed to take into consideration the most recent air quality data collected in calendar year 2003 in making our determination. I am pleased to inform you that based on the 2001-2003 ozone monitoring data collected by the LDEQ, it appears likely that all areas of Louisiana except the five parish Baton Rouge area are demonstrating attainment with the 8-hour ozone standard. This is a very significant accomplishment for Louisiana.

Consistent with the Clean Air Act, Section 107(d)(1), this letter is to inform you that EPA does not intend to make modifications to your recommended designations and boundaries included in your July 1, 2003, letter.

Throughout the 2003 ozone season, LDEQ along with EPA tracked 2003 ozone monitoring data and its impact on the areas' 2001-2003 ozone levels. We are pleased to concur with Louisiana that preliminary 2001-2003 ozone monitoring data indicate that the New Orleans area is attaining the 8-hour ozone standard. We want to specifically acknowledge the voluntary efforts in your State to improve the air quality, especially the efforts with early air quality planning in the Shreveport/Bossier City area.

The enclosure to this letter provides a table in which we identify the parishes that we intend to include in the nonattainment area.

The State's and EPA's work to identify areas in attainment or in nonattainment is an important step in EPA's commitment to achieving clean air in our Region. I am pleased with the

progress that Louisiana has made in improving air quality. We appreciate your efforts and request that additional information the State wishes to have considered in an analysis for boundary determinations be submitted to EPA by February 6, 2004. We look forward to working with you as we proceed to finalize the designations for the 8-hour ozone standard.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me or have your staff call Mr. Thomas Diggs, of my staff, at (214) 665-3102.

Sincerely yours,

Richard E. Greene
Regional Administrator (6RA)

Enclosure

cc: Dr. Hall Bohlinger, Secretary
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
Mr. Robert P. Hannah, Deputy Secretary
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality

Enclosure

The following table identifies the area and counties composing that area within Louisiana that EPA intends to designate as nonattainment. The EPA intends to designate as attainment/unclassifiable all parishes not identified in the table below.

	Louisiana Recommended Nonattainment Counties	**EPA Recommended Nonattainment Counties**
Baton Rouge	Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston and West Baton Rouge	Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston and West Baton Rouge

Modifications to Louisiana's Recommendations

None