UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8
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DEC 0 3 2003

Ref: 8P-AR

Honorable John Hoeven
Governor of North Dakota
State Capitol
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505

Dear Governor Hoeven:

Thank you for your letter of February 20, 2003, which forwarded your recommended designation of attainment for the 8-hour national health-based standard for ozone, for all areas in North Dakota. We appreciate receiving this recommendation. It is an important first step in informing North Dakota citizens about healthy and unhealthy air pollution levels in their cities and hometowns.

Under the Clean Air Act (CAA), EPA is required to promulgate designations for new or revised standards such as the 8-hour ozone standard. We plan on fulfilling this requirement by promulgating designations for all places in the nation by April 15, 2004. The new 8-hour ozone standard, combined with these designations and the emission reductions to be made in areas with non-attainment designations, will provide all Americans with healthier air and an improved quality of life.

We have reviewed your February 20, 2003, letter submitting North Dakota's recommendations on air quality designations for the 8-hour ozone standard. This letter is to inform you that EPA does not intend to make modifications to your recommended designations. We will continue to work with your office as we move forward to make the final designations. Also, please note that EPA will be addressing Indian country through a separate concurrent process with the Tribes in North Dakota.

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If you have any questions, please contact me. Your staff may also wish to contact Richard Long, Director of our Air and Radiation Program, at (303) 312-6005, or Tim Russ, Air and Radiation staff, at (303) 312-6479. For your convenience you may contact my staff toll-free at 1-800-227-8917.

Sincerely yours,

Robert E. Roberts
Regional Administrator

cc: Terry Dwelle, State Health Officer, North Dakota Department of Health
Terry O'Clair, Director, Air Quality