RMNP 2012 NITROGEN DEPOSITION MILESTONE REPORT

Stakeholder Meeting Presentation
February 12, 2014
Outline

® Background of RMNP Initiative
® Purpose & goals of 2012 Milestone Report
® Report details:
  ◦ Critical load & glidepath
  ◦ Weight of the evidence approach
  ◦ Deposition trends
  ◦ Source category & attribution analyses
  ◦ Emission inventories, trends and studies
  ◦ Current and future emission reduction activities
  ◦ RMNP emissions and controls
  ◦ Conclusions and next steps
Interagency effort addresses air pollution issues in RMNP
- Focus on nitrogen deposition trends
- CDPHE, EPA, NPS
- Nitrogen Deposition Reduction Plan – 2007
- Contingency Plan - 2010
Critical Load

• Large body of evidence indicates nitrogen deposition has affected and continues to affect ecosystems within the park.
  • Current wet deposition monitored at ~2.9 kg N/hectare/yr (rolling 5-year average)
  • Natural background estimated at 0.2 kg N/ha/yr

• Specific, published (peer-reviewed) research has shown that wet deposition levels at the time the biological changes started to occur was ~1.5 kg N/ha/yr.
Rocky Mountain NP: Continuum of Ecological Effects from Nitrogen Deposition

Natural Resource Effects and Critical Loads (CL) of N

- Increase in "nitrogen loving" aquatic diatom species
  - CL = 1.5 wet N

- Change in alpine plant diversity
  - CL = 3.0 total N

- Increase in "weedy" lichen species
  - CL = 3.1 total N

- Effects on aquatic animals (episodic acidification)
  - CL = 4.5 wet N

Current (5 yr avg) N at Loch Vale
Target load (Park natural resource goal)
Natural background N deposition
Glidepath and Current Wet Nitrogen Deposition
Rocky Mountain National Park

- 1st Interim Milestone (2.7 kg N/ha/yr)
- 2nd Interim Milestone (2.4 kg N/ha/yr)
- 3rd Interim Milestone (2.1 kg N/ha/yr)
- 4th Interim Milestone (1.8 kg N/ha/yr)

Resource Management Goal (1.5 kg N/ha/yr)

Natural Conditions (0.2 kg N/ha/yr)
Weight of the Evidence Approach

- Assessment of multiple evidence types
- Two main goals:
  - 2012 Nitrogen Deposition Interim Milestone met?
  - Will the RMNP Nitrogen Deposition Contingency Plan be triggered?
- Qualitative Process
Types of Evidence

- Deposition patterns and trends on regional and national levels;
- Source category and attribution analyses and studies;
- Emission inventories, including significant source categories;
- Emission trends using several different techniques, including modeling, monitoring, and other scientific assessments;
Current and future emission inventory improvements;
Demographic trends;
Current and future emission reduction activities, including a discussion regarding regulatory vs. voluntary approaches;
Ammonia-focused projects from both local and national perspectives; and
In-park emissions and reduction activities.
Trend at Loch Vale shifted from increasing to stable
Nitrate regional trend stable over long-term, decreasing in short-term
Ammonia regional trend increasing over long-term, stable over short-term
National Deposition Trends

updated from Lehmann et al, 2005
Primary and secondary particulate contributions

IMPROVE monitoring

Flat over long-term

Downward trend in recent years

Modeling indicates that volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions are not significant contributor to deposition in RMNP

Man-made NO$_x$ emissions are significant for secondary particulate formation during spring and fall
RoMANS I & II Conclusions

- Substantial portion of deposited nitrogen originates in Colorado
- Ammonia/ammonium sources
  - Greater than 50% from Colorado
- Nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) sources
  - Less than 50% from Colorado
- During spring and fall events, high concentrations of both types of nitrogen move from eastern urban & agricultural areas of Front Range
- Local sources of ammonia not significant contributors to deposition in RMNP
Demographic Trends

- Small steady increase in Denver Metro population
- Future vehicle miles traveled slightly greater than population increase
- Almost half of population settled in areas not previously urbanized
- Total cattle, farms, and swine remain steady in recent years
NO₂ monitoring:
- Nationally, 52% decrease in last 20 years
- Locally, 34% decrease in last 20 years

Ammonia:
- Monitoring not available
- National Emissions Inventory estimates fairly stable emissions since 2002
2008 US Ammonia, Total = 4.2M TPY

- Livestock: 58%
- Fertilizer: 28%
- Fires: 5%
- PTNCEM: 2%
- On-Road: 3%
- Off-Road: 0%
- Other Area: 4%
- O&G: 0%
Denver Metro Area/North Front Range Ammonia Inventory

2008 National Emission Inventory

*Colorado 9-County DMA/NFR Ammonia Emissions in tons/year*

- Livestock: 16,802 tons/year (75%)
- Fertilizer: 3,163 tons/year (14%)
- Highway Vehicles: 1,291 tons/year (6%)
- Other Fuel Combustion: 1,003 tons/year (4%)
- Fires: 80 tons/year (0%)
- Elect. Fuel Combustion: 178 tons/year (1%)
- Off-Highway: 21 tons/year (0%)
- Waste Disposal: 12 tons/year (0%)

2/12/2014 RMNP Stakeholder Mtg
Passive Ammonia Sampling in Northeast Colorado
Efforts to Improve Colorado Emission Inventories: Studies

- **WestJump Air Quality Modeling Study**
  - Identify source categories with potential for updates and/or improvements
    - Ammonia: Livestock, fertilizer
    - NO\(_x\): Oil and gas
    - NO\(_x\): Highway vehicles
    - NO\(_x\) and Ammonia: Fires

- **Three-State Study**
  - Updating modeling profiles for livestock ammonia emission sources
Efforts to Improve Colorado Emission Inventories: Modeling

DMA/NFR Ozone NAA
Oil & Gas NOx Emissions [tons/day]
Ammonia not regulated as criteria or hazardous pollutant under Clean Air Act
  - Emission inventories remain uncertain

MOU agencies continually address stakeholder concerns about unknown source categories

Revisit ammonia and NO\textsubscript{x} inventories when 2011 NEI becomes available

Upcoming initiatives:
  - North Front Range Oil and Gas Air Pollutant Emissions and Dispersion Study (2014 – 2017)
  - Front Range Air Pollution and Photochemistry Experiment (FRAPPE) (summer 2014)
Current and Future Emission Reduction Activities: NO\textsubscript{x}

NO\textsubscript{x} Reductions Statewide* (by 2018)

- Original Regional Haze NO\textsubscript{x} Reduction
- Current Regional Haze NO\textsubscript{x} Reduction
- Other Strategies (Engine Controls, I/M, Vehicle Standards)
- Current Total Nox Reductions (by 2018)

*Using 2009 inventory data
Animal feeding operation research

- EPA National Air Emissions Monitoring Study (NAEMS)
- CSU ambient ammonia feedlot monitoring

Report from EPA’s Integrated Nitrogen Committee

- Recommend livestock ammonia emissions be reduced 30% and nitrogenous fertilizer 20%
Ag Subcommittee

- Follows progress of deposition trends in RMNP;
- Help quantify ammonia emissions in Colorado;
- Investigate ways to mitigate ammonia emissions from agriculture and other sources;
- Develop plans for outreach activities to increase industry mitigation efforts;
- Dialogue with MOU agencies to improve understanding of nitrogen deposition effects in RMNP and challenges and opportunities associated with reducing ammonia emissions.
Current and Future Emission Reduction Activities: Ammonia

® Ag Subcommittee

° CSU Research:
  · Best Management Practice surveys
  · Livestock facility BMP effectiveness
  · Improving ammonia emissions measurements
  · Soil cores to improve diurnal and seasonal trends in local ammonia emissions
  · Examine dietary trends and feed additives that may reduce ammonia emissions

° Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) 2013 Air Quality Initiative
“Early Warning System”

- Advises agriculture producers to avoid high nitrogen-emitting activities (e.g. manure handling) during specific periods of time when weather conditions could readily transport nitrogen into the park (CSU)

2 year Development Pilot

- Approx. $189K committed
  - $44k+ Colorado Agriculture Industry
  - $10k Rocky Mountain National Park
  - $40k NPS Air Resource Division
  - $20k CDPHE APCD
  - $21k+ from CDPHE DEHS
  - Texas A&M ($20k), CSU ($25k) in-kind support
Ag Subcommittee Outreach Efforts & Future Plans

- Quarterly meetings since 2007
- Several fact sheets and web resources
- Four Agricultural Air Quality Symposia
  - More planned for 2015
- Development of adaptive 5-year plan
- Additional CSU research
- Researching additional monitoring options
Mobile Sources

- Approx. 3 million visitors annually
- Visitor transportation systems
  - Bear Lake
  - Moraine Park
  - Estes Park Fairgrounds
- Increasing fleet efficiency
  - Shuttles
  - National Park Service fleet
  - 19 hybrid vehicles in 2012 (increased from 4 in 2007)
Stationary Sources

- Replacement of two diesel powered generators in 2005

Climate Friendly Parks Program

Environmental Management System

- 30% energy use reduction for RMNP by 2015 (2003 as baseline year)
Monitoring indicates current wet nitrogen deposition is above milestone, but trends have shifted from increasing to flat.

Measurements and modeling analyses indicate NO$_x$ and ammonia sources significant contributors during spring and fall.

Demographic trends show Front Range population and vehicle miles increasing while agricultural counts steady.

NO$_x$ emissions decreasing nationally and locally while ammonia emissions remain stable.

Efforts continue to improve Colorado’s nitrogen emission inventories.
Significant NO$_x$ reductions on the horizon expected to contribute to reduced nitrogen deposition in RMNP

Ag Subcommittee and multiple ammonia-related research efforts promising
  ° 5-year adaptive plan
    * Early Warning System

In-Park emission strategies in place
  ° Vehicle transportation systems
  ° Increases in fleet efficiency
  ° Environmental Management System
Conclusions

- Two identified goals:
  - 2012 interim milestone determination
  - RMNP Nitrogen Deposition Contingency Plan triggering
- Therefore, the MOU agencies conclude that the 2012 interim milestone has not been achieved. However, the RMNP Nitrogen Deposition Contingency Plan shall not be triggered at this time.
Next Steps

- Review and update 2010 Contingency Plan;
- Continued tracking of nitrogen deposition reduction;
- Continued collaboration with Ag Subcommittee;
- Continued work with additional CDPHE programs and state agencies, and other relevant agencies and stakeholders particularly on inventory improvements;
- Continued collaboration with stakeholders, researchers, and other agencies;
- Coordination with other states and initializing discussions regarding nitrogen deposition changes in the West;
- Additional monitoring research and modeling (as funding permits); and
- Education and outreach to interested stakeholders.
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Questions?
Comments due by March 11, 2014

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