

<< PREVIOUS SECTION

Air Quality

Indicator: Nonattainment Areas (areas with significant existing levels of air pollution) and Class I Areas (clean areas where almost any additional air pollution would be considered significant,) by county. Counties are presented as “in attainment” (i.e., the entire area is within all applicable standards,) “partially in attainment” (i.e., a portion of the area has been demonstrated to violate at least one applicable standard,) or “entirely in nonattainment” (i.e., the entire area has been demonstrated to violate at least one applicable standard.) Class I Area boundaries are presented as established either by Congress or tribal governments.

Key Findings: Every state office and many field offices have nonattainment and Class I areas within their jurisdictions. In the past, most air quality management issues have been associated with minerals development and operations and Bureau-initiated prescribed burns. Several conformity analyses have been prepared in California and Nevada nonattainment areas, and potential Class I Area impacts in the Cascades, Rocky Mountains and Four Corners region have been a concern.

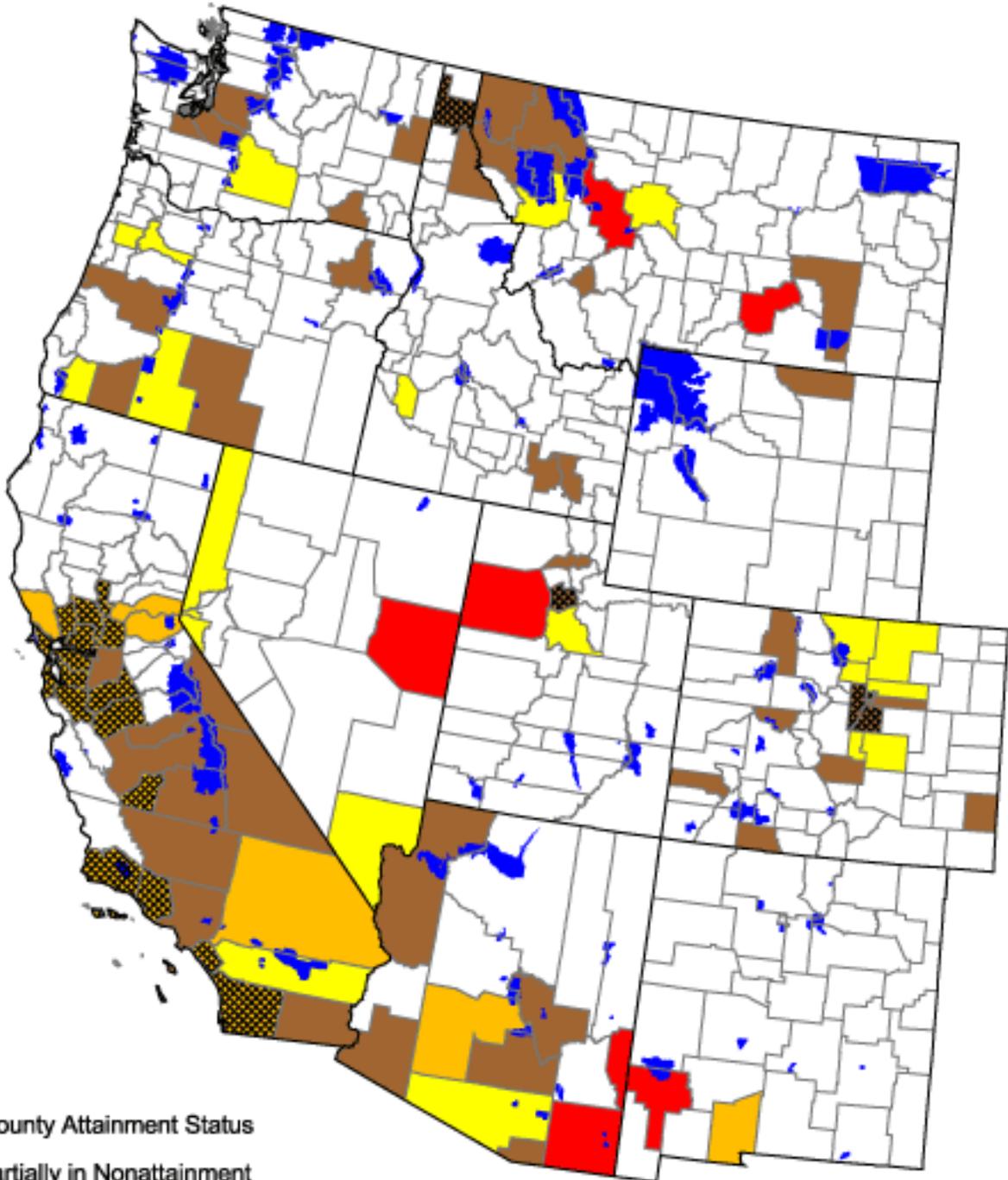
Limitations: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) revises nonattainment area boundaries regularly, but given periodic changes in the standards and the non-automated form of the record, generating meaningful trends is unlikely. Class I Area data were assembled from several different sources, with National Park Service (NPS) caveats regarding data accuracy. In addition, several Class I Areas are too small to be seen on broad scale maps.

Source: The nonattainment area data and maps were obtained from the EPA website: <http://www.epa.gov/agweb/nonat.html>; Class I Area data were obtained from the NPS website: <http://www2.nature.nps.gov/ard/parkhp.html>.

Comments: The air quality status on and near the public lands is significant because the Bureau must: (1) conduct a regulatory Conformity Analysis and Determination within designated nonattainment areas prior to implementing actions, (2) comply with applicable Class I Area air pollutant limits, and (3) may need to determine if activities would cause significant visibility impacts. Activities that impact either nonattainment or Class I areas are likely to cause public concern and require additional National Environmental Policy Act analysis. All activities conducted within EPA designated nonattainment areas are subject to regulatory air pollutant emissions limitations. There are currently ten different standards for six different pollutants, with two additional standards under review. The total additional amount of nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter, and sulfur dioxide is also limited within Class I Areas. All Bureau authorized or conducted activities must comply with these requirements (40 CFR 51.850 and 43 CFR 2801.2(b)(2)).

The single map showing all counties with even partial nonattainment status for any applicable air pollutant could be replaced with multiple maps for individual air pollutants, and the precise boundaries could be digitized. The Bureau could also generate higher quality individual Class I Area maps. However, it is unlikely more specific or precise maps would justify the labor and financial requirements necessary to refine and digitize these large scale maps.

Air Quality



County Attainment Status

Partially in Nonattainment
Due to:

-  Carbon Monoxide
-  Ozone
-  PM10
-  Sulfur Dioxide

Entirely in Nonattainment
Due to:

-  Ozone
-  PM10

Air Quality Class I Areas



Scale 1:12,000,000

[NEXT SECTION >>](#)

[RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)