
**Transportation Conformity Determination Report for
the 1997 ozone NAAQS**

**The Indiana Department
of Transportation**

Greene County

Mid-States Corridor Project

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- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM)
- Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)

Executive Summary

As part of its transportation planning process, The Indiana Department of Transportation completed the transportation conformity process for Mid-States Corridor project which includes a segment in Greene County. This report documents that the project meets the federal transportation conformity requirements in 40 CFR Part 93.

Clean Air Act (CAA) section 176(c) (42 U.S.C. 7506(c)) requires that federally funded or approved highway and transit activities are consistent with (“conform to”) the purpose of the State Implementation Plan (SIP). Conformity to the purpose of the SIP means that transportation activities will not cause or contribute to new air quality violations, worsen existing violations, or delay timely attainment of the relevant NAAQS or any interim milestones. 42 U.S.C. 7506(c)(1). EPA’s transportation conformity rules establish the criteria and procedures for determining whether metropolitan transportation plans, transportation improvement programs (TIPs), and federally supported highway and transit projects conform to the SIP. 40 CFR Parts 51.390 and 93.

On February 16, 2018, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in *South Coast Air Quality Mgmt. District v. EPA* (“*South Coast II*,” 882 F.3d 1138) held that transportation conformity determinations must be made in areas that were either nonattainment or maintenance for the 1997 ozone national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS) and attainment for the 2008 ozone NAAQS when the 1997 ozone NAAQS was revoked. These conformity determinations are required in these areas after February 16, 2019. Greene County was *maintenance* at the time of the 1997 ozone NAAQS revocation on April 6, 2015 and was also designated attainment for the 2008 ozone NAAQS on May 21, 2012. Therefore, per the *South Coast II* decision, this conformity determination is being made for the 1997 ozone NAAQS on the Mid-States Corridor project in Greene County.

This conformity determination was completed consistent with CAA requirements, existing associated regulations at 40 CFR Parts 51.390 and 93, and the *South Coast II* decision, according to EPA’s *Transportation Conformity Guidance for the South Coast II Court Decision* issued on November 29, 2018.

1.0 Background and Conformity Process

The concept of transportation conformity was introduced in the Clean Air Act (CAA) of 1977, which included a provision to ensure that transportation investments conform to a State implementation plan (SIP) for meeting the Federal air quality standards. Conformity requirements were made substantially more rigorous in the CAA Amendments of 1990. The transportation conformity regulations that detail implementation of the CAA requirements were first issued in November 1993, and have been amended several times. The regulations establish the criteria and procedures for transportation agencies to demonstrate that air pollutant emissions from metropolitan transportation plans, transportation improvement programs and projects are consistent with (“conform to”) the State’s air quality goals in the SIP. This document has been prepared for State and local officials who are involved in decision making on transportation investments.

Transportation conformity is required under CAA Section 176(c) to ensure that Federally-supported transportation activities are consistent with (“conform to”) the purpose of a State’s SIP. Transportation conformity establishes the framework for improving air quality to protect public health and the environment. Conformity to the purpose of the SIP means Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding and approvals are given to highway and transit activities that will not cause new air quality violations, worsen existing air quality violations, or delay timely attainment of the relevant air quality standard, or any interim milestone.

On December 29, 2005, the EPA, in 70 FR 69085, published the final rule for the Greene County, Indiana area establishing a determination of attainment and a re-designation of Greene County to attainment of the 8-hour ozone standard. Greene County, Indiana was defined as an orphan maintenance area in the court decision as the region was a maintenance area for the 1997 Ozone NAAQS at the time of its revocation (80 FR 12264, March 6, 2015) and was designated attainment for the 2008 Ozone NAAQS in EPA’s original designations for the NAAQS (77 FR 30160, May 21, 2012).

2.0 Mid-States Corridor Project in Greene County

The Mid-States Corridor extends 54 miles from I-64/US 231 to I-69 at the existing US 231 interchange. The Refined Preferred Alternative P begins at the I-64/US 231 interchange and travels east of Huntingburg and Jasper, avoiding developed areas near these cities. From north of Haysville the corridor parallels the existing US 231 alignment to the west then includes multiple Loogootee bypass variations as well as a variation on existing US 231 through Loogootee. The corridor then passes West Boggs Lake to the east, then continues north generally paralleling US 231 to the west before ending at the existing I-69 interchange at US 231 in Greene County. A total of nine local

improvements on existing US 231 are included with the new corridor. The corridor improvement will include a divided 4-lane cross section (expressway) or an improved 2-lane cross section with passing lanes (super-2), which will be determined during the Tier 2 NEPA studies.

The Purpose of the Mid-States Corridor project is to provide an improved transportation link between the US 231/SR 66 intersection and I-69 (either directly or via SR 37) which:

- Improves business and personal regional connectivity in Dubois County and Southern Indiana.
- Improves highway connections to existing major multi-modal locations from Southern Indiana.

The Refined Preferred Alternative P performed highly in several core goal benefits presented. These included the sum of time saved to key destinations at 25 to 43 minutes, the sum of time saved to major multi-modal centers at 23 to 35 minutes and annual truck hours saved at 8,400 to 36,850. This alternative has a moderate level of impact to key natural resources. The corridor is a project of regional significance and with the northern 0.9 of a mile within Greene County it is within the Green County Orphan Maintenance Area for the 1997 Ozone NAAQS. The project is in agreement with the INDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan.

3.0 Transportation Conformity Determination: General Process

Per the court's decision in *South Coast II*, beginning February 16, 2019, a transportation conformity determination for the 1997 ozone NAAQS will be needed in 1997 ozone NAAQS nonattainment and maintenance areas identified by EPA¹ for certain transportation activities, including non-exempt FHWA/FTA projects in isolated rural orphan areas. Once US DOT makes its 1997 ozone NAAQS conformity determination for the State Route 54 Added Passing Lane project, conformity will be required no less frequently than every four years. This conformity determination report will address transportation conformity for this project in Greene County.

4.0 Transportation Conformity Requirements

4.1 Overview

On November 29, 2018, EPA issued **Transportation Conformity Guidance for the South Coast II Court Decision**² (EPA-420-B-18-050, November 2018) that addresses how transportation conformity determinations can be made in areas that were nonattainment or maintenance for the 1997 ozone NAAQS when the 1997 ozone NAAQS was revoked, but were designated attainment for the 2008 ozone NAAQS in EPA's original designations for this NAAQS (May 21, 2012).

The transportation conformity regulation at 40 CFR 93.109 sets forth the criteria and procedures for determining conformity. The conformity criteria for non-exempt FHWA/FTA projects in isolated rural orphan areas include: latest planning assumptions (93.110), latest emissions model (93.111), consultation (93.112), transportation control measures (93.113(d)), Currently conforming plan and TIP (93.114), CO, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} hot spots (93.116), PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} control measure (93.117), and emissions budget and/or interim emissions (93.118 and/or 93.119).

For the 1997 ozone NAAQS areas, transportation conformity for the 1997 ozone NAAQS can be demonstrated without a regional emissions analysis, per 40 CFR 93.109(c). This provision states that the regional emissions analysis requirement applies one year after the effective date of EPA's nonattainment designation for a NAAQS and until the effective date of revocation of such NAAQS for an area. The 1997 ozone NAAQS revocation was effective on April 6, 2015, and the *South Coast II* court upheld the revocation. As no regional emission analysis is required for this conformity determination, there is no requirement to use the latest emissions model, or budget or interim emissions

¹ The areas identified can be found in EPA's "Transportation Conformity Guidance for the South Coast II Court Decision, EPA-420-B-18-050, available on the web at: www.epa.gov/state-and-local-transportation/policy-and-technical-guidance-state-and-local-transportation .

² Available from <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-11/documents/420b18050.pdf>

tests. Furthermore, the hot-spot analysis requirement (93.116) and PM control measures requirement (93.117) apply only for PM NAAQS.

Therefore, transportation conformity for the 1997 ozone NAAQS for the Mid-States Corridor project in Greene County can be demonstrated by showing the remaining requirements in Table 1 in 40 CFR 93.109 have been met. These requirements, which are laid out in Section 2.7 of EPA's guidance and addressed below, include:

- Latest planning assumptions (93.110)
- Consultation (93.112)
- Transportation Control Measures (93.113)

4.2 Latest Planning Assumptions

The latest planning assumptions used for the Mid-States Corridor project included development of a regional travel demand model for the project based on the Indianan Statewide Travel Demand Model (ISTDM). The model was updated with added detail within the 12-county study area for the project, primarily around Dubois County. Updates based on US Census Bureau American Community Survey data were incorporated in coordination with INDOT Planning, which included major population centers outside of the 12-county area.

The model horizon year projections (2045) were based on extrapolations of past trends documented by INDOT and US Census Data, which were reviewed and incorporated into the model in coordination with INDOT Planning. The complete modeling documentation including all assumptions is detailed in the Mid-States Corridor Tier 1 DEIS Appendix T. (<https://midstatescorridor.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Appendix-T-Travel-Forecasting-Model-Documentation.pdf>)

The use of latest planning assumptions in 40 CFR 93.110 of the conformity rule generally apply to regional emissions analysis. In the 1997 ozone NAAQS areas, the use of latest planning assumptions requirement applies to assumptions about transportation control measures (TCMs) in an approved SIP.

The Indiana SIP does not include any TCMs for the Greene County Orphan Maintenance Area, see also Section 4.4.

4.3 Consultation Requirements

The consultation requirements in 40 CFR 93.112 were addressed both for interagency consultation and public consultation.

An Interagency Consultation Group (ICG), including FHWA, EPA, FTA, IDEM and INDOT, is reviewing the draft copy of this document concurrent with a 15-

day public comment period to ensure all requirements of the conformity determination have been met. The ICG members have the opportunity to request a conference call should an agency want to discuss the document with the ICG.

Public consultation is being conducted consistent with planning rule requirements in 23 CFR 450. The document will be publicized in accordance with the INDOT's Public Involvement Process including posting in two Greene County papers for a notice period of fifteen days, after initial ICG consultation.

4.4 Timely Implementation of TCMs

The Indiana SIP does not include any TCMs for the Greene County Orphan Maintenance Area.

Conclusion

The conformity determination process completed for the Mid-States Corridor project in Greene County demonstrates that this project meets the Clean Air Act and Transportation Conformity rule requirements for the 1997 ozone NAAQS.