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# SIP Revision: Visibility Protection (Phase I), June 13, 2002

**On June 13, 2002, the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) adopted a State Implementation Plan (SIP) revision for visibility protection in Class I Federal areas in Texas.**

## Summary of the SIP Revision

**Adoption Date:** 06/13/2002

**Background:** Under provisions of the Phase I Visibility SIP, adopted in September 1987, the state was required to conduct a periodic review of the effectiveness of the long-term visibility strategy for Big Bend and Guadalupe Mountains National Parks, the two mandatory Class I Federal areas in Texas. The review was reported to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The state's long-term strategy consisted of a New Source Review (NSR) program that required the agency to evaluate the visibility impacts of emissions from any proposed major new source or major modification of an existing source of air pollution within 100 kilometers (km) of the state's mandatory Class I Federal area.

**Key Changes:** Under this program, a permit applicant was required to determine if any new visibility impairment would occur due to the new construction or modification and to consult with the Federal Land Manager (FLM) prior to initiating construction.

The 2002 SIP revision asserted that:

- No haze emissions from existing stationary sources within 100 km from Big Bend and Guadalupe Mountains National Parks caused visibility impairment;
- The smoke management, NSR and other legislative program requirements were sufficient to prevent visibility impairment from nearby sources;
- Visibility worsened in the mid-1990s and then improved through 1998;
- No additional measures were needed; and
- No integral vistas identified by the FLM would trigger Best Available Retrofit Technology (BART) requirements.

The SIP also included details of the Big Bend Regional Aerosol and Visibility Observational (BRAVO) study, a federally funded study of visibility at Big Bend National Park.

Three legislative initiatives were implemented during this period with the co-benefit of reducing haze.

1. Senate Bill 766, also known as the Voluntary Emissions Reduction Permit (VERP) program, encouraged grandfathered sources to obtain a permit and reduce air emissions.
2. House Bill 2912 required the permitting of grandfathered facilities and mandatory cuts of nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) emissions by 2007, estimated at 50% reductions at pipeline compressors in East Texas (east of Interstate 35) and up to 20% in West Texas. The measure also stipulated that best available control technology (BACT) be installed at non-pipeline grandfathered facilities, including large industrial plants.



3. Senate Bill 7 established a mass cap and trade system where electric utility companies were issued emission allowances reductions of NO<sub>x</sub> and SO<sub>2</sub> that could be used for compliance or traded to other utilities for compliance purposes

### **SIP Narrative and Appendices**

Files linked from this page are in Portable Document Format ([PDF](#)).

#### **Visibility SIP Revision**

- Adopted [SIP Revision Narrative](#)