

## AIR QUALITY UPDATE

**SUBJECT:** Air Quality Status Report: Florida-Alabama, Okaloosa-Walton, and Bay TPOs

**REPORTING PERIOD:** July – September 2018

**ORIGIN OF SUBJECT:** Unified Planning Work Program, Task C-3

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACTION NEEDED:** Monitor

### BACKGROUND:

Based on extensive scientific evidence about ozone effects on public health and welfare, EPA set the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for ground level ozone at 70 parts per billion (ppb). Northwest Florida is in attainment; however, if Florida has any areas designated as nonattainment, Florida DEP will develop a State Implementation Plan (SIP) providing for the measures necessary to bring the areas into compliance with the revised NAAQS. Transportation conformity would be required in these nonattainment areas meaning a periodic demonstration must be made that transportation activities will not cause new air quality violations, worsen existing violations, or delay timely attainment of the NAAQS.

The purpose of this report is to provide the TPOs with current information on ozone levels in the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) publishes annual Air Quality Status Attainment Reports. Attainment Reports are a three-year average of the 4<sup>th</sup> highest annual 8-hour ozone readings. The ozone season is from April 1<sup>st</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup>.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** This item is for information only.

### REPORT:

The federal standard for ozone has been established at a level equivalent to 70 parts per billion averaged over any 8-hour period. An area will be considered in violation (not meeting the standard) if the average of the annual fourth highest maximum daily 8-hour average ozone concentration at any ozone monitor for a three-year period exceeds 70 parts per billion. The table below shows the highest 8-hour averages of ozone in each TPO region for the reporting period.

Air Quality Monitoring Attainment Status Update for July-Sept 2018 <a href="https://fldep.dep.state.fl.us/air/flaqs/Attainmentgaseous.asp">https://fldep.dep.state.fl.us/air/flaqs/Attainmentgaseous.asp</a> (November 13, 2018)					
TPO	Air Quality Monitoring Station	Highest 8-Hour Ozone Reading in Parts Per Billion (Date of Reading)		2017 3-year Attainment Average	2018 year-to-date 3-year Running Average
Florida-Alabama	Ellyson Industrial Park	54	(July 14)	63	65
	Pensacola NAS	67	(July 28)	62	63
	Woodlawn Beach Middle School	63	(July 28)	61	61
Okaloosa-Walton	Fort Walton Beach	60	(July 28)	60	61
Bay County	St. Andrews State Park	53	(July 23)	60	59
Regional	Bonifay, Holmes County	54	(July 11)	58	58

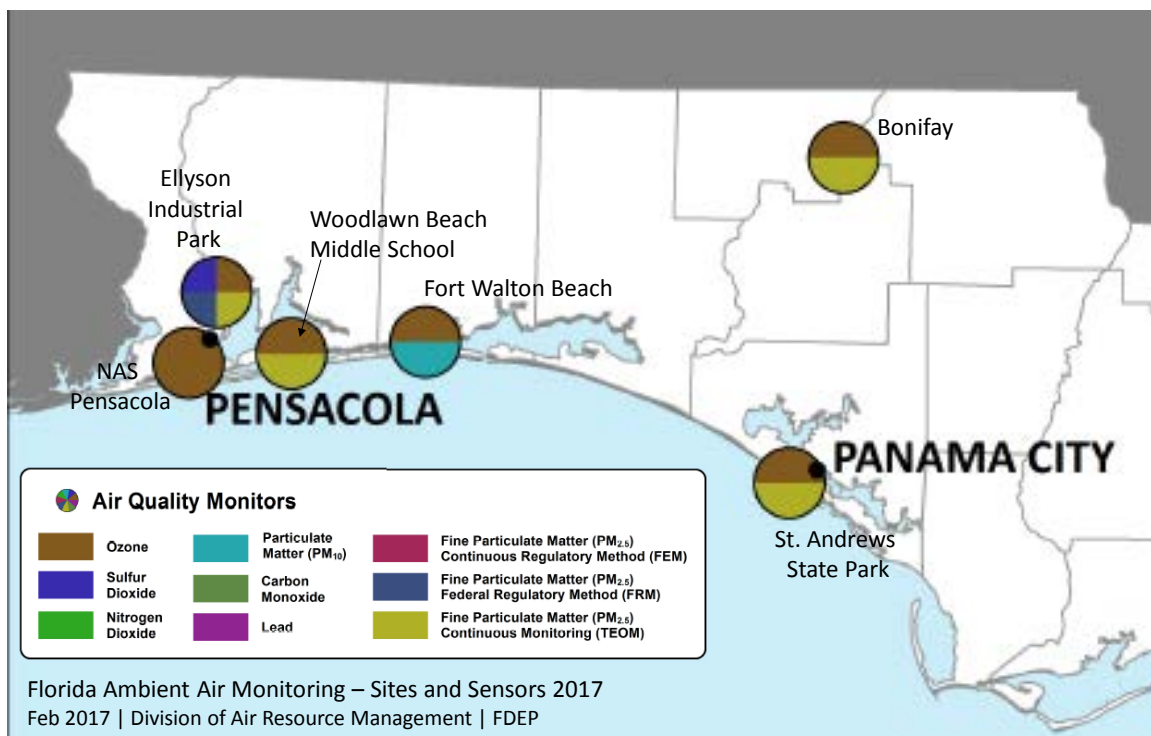
## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

### Ground-level Ozone (Smog)<sup>1</sup>

Ozone also occurs naturally near the earth's surface. However, man-made emissions of VOCs and NO<sub>x</sub> can cause additional ozone, the primary component of urban smog, to be formed. This additional ozone, which can more than triple the amount of natural ground-level ozone, can cause health and environmental damage. Ozone builds up near the ground through a series of complex chemical reactions involving VOCs and NO<sub>x</sub> in the presence of sunlight. VOCs are produced by natural sources, such as trees; fuel combustion in engines and industrial operations; some types of chemical manufacturing operations; evaporation of solvents in consumer and commercial products; and evaporation of volatile fuels such as gasoline. NO<sub>x</sub> are emitted from motor vehicles; off-road engines such as aircraft, locomotives and construction equipment; fossil-fuel burning power plants and other industrial facilities; and other sources of combustion.

Ozone concentrations can reach unhealthy levels when the weather is hot and sunny with relatively light winds. Even at relatively low levels, ozone may cause inflammation and irritation of the respiratory tract, particularly during physical activity. The resulting symptoms can include breathing difficulty, coughing and throat irritation. Breathing ozone can affect lung function and worsen asthma attacks. Ozone also can increase the susceptibility of the lungs to infections, allergens and other air pollutants. Groups that are sensitive to ozone include children and adults who are active outdoors, and people with respiratory disease such as asthma. Sensitive people who experience effects at lower ozone concentrations are likely to experience more serious effects at higher concentrations.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has established a health-based air quality standard for ozone. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, in cooperation with several county air pollution control agencies, monitors ozone air quality in Florida's major urban areas.



<sup>1</sup> [floridadep.gov/air/air/content/air-quality-101](http://floridadep.gov/air/air/content/air-quality-101) (accessed March 2018)

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