

Meeting Notes

Air Quality Subcommittee (AQS)

April 3, 2025

Attendees

Greg Becoat, EPA
Leonard Bonareck, WILMAPCO
Cooper Bowers, DelDOT
Elizabeth Coffee, Jacobs
Sophia Cortazzo, MDOT
Carlos Dipres, Waste Management
Taylor Englert, DNREC
Anson Gock, DelDOT
Pamela Keeney, DNREC
Tina Merrill, DNREC
Stephen O’Conner, Cecil County
Mike Petit de Mange, D/KC MPO
Matt Rogers, NCC
Catherine Salarano, MDE
Cathy Smith, DTC
Bill Swiatek, WILMAPCO
Tigist Zegeye, WILMAPCO

Meeting Recording (Zoom)

<https://wilmapco.sharefile.com/public/share/web-s4a78c43c7b31441dbb12bcf4fda90184>

Meeting Agenda/Package

<https://wilmapco.sharefile.com/public/share/web-sd2f6925daac348669bc3fddb629d1760>

Acceptance of Previous Meeting Notes

(0:58 into the Zoom recording)

- The group accepted the meeting notes from the September meeting without any changes or clarifications.

Proposed Amendment to the FY 2025 – 2028 Transportation Improvement Program, Cecil County Element: Planning and Design for Belvidere Road Improvements

(1:40 into the Zoom recording)

- Mr. Swiatek reviewed a proposed amendment to the TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) in Cecil County.
 - The amendment includes right-of-way funding for Belvidere Road improvements.
 - The project, tied to an interchange expansion, is expected to increase daily traffic there from 2,000 to 18,000 vehicles.
 - Despite the traffic increase, it was determined this amendment does *not* trigger an air quality conformity analysis, as the project was already modeled for in-service by 2035.
 - The amendment is for planning and design only, not construction.
- There was agreement from the committee that no revised air quality analysis is needed.

Review of Draft FY 2027 – FY 2030 Transportation Improvement Program Projects, New Castle County Element

(7:55 into the Zoom recording)

- Mr. Swiatek said that WILMAPCO staff reviewed the draft FY 2027–2030 TIP projects for conformity triggers.
 - No new capacity or system expansion projects were identified that would trigger a revised conformity analysis.
 - Existing modeled horizon years (2025, 2035, 2045, and 2050) help avoid conformity issues that may arise when a project's in-service year changes for now.
- There was agreement from the AQS that no new conformity analysis was necessary.

Review of Draft Air Quality Technical Scores in the FY 2027- FY 2030 Transportation Improvement Program, New Castle County Element

(7:55 into the Zoom recording)

- Mr. Swiatek provided a brief review of how air quality technical scores are assigned to projects within WILMAPCO's project prioritization process.
 - Scores range from +3 (projects expected to improve air quality significantly) to -3 (projects expected to worsen air quality significantly).
 - Examples include:
 - +3: Major transit expansions, non-motorized system improvements.
 - +1: Replacements or minor upgrades.
 - 0: No expected impact (e.g., maintenance).

- -1 or -3: Capacity-adding road projects not in or in the model, respectively.
- No questions or objections were raised about the scoring methodology.
- Mr. Swiatek reviewed the scoring of over 50 transportation projects using a consensus-based framework that scores the project's potential air quality benefits.
 - **Bike/Pedestrian Projects:** All received positive scores; higher scores were given to more extensive projects (e.g., Newport River Trail).
 - **Multimodal Projects:** Two roundabout projects, the Bear Road and Reybold Drive Intersection Improvements project and the Bunker Hill Road at Sand Hill Drive/Merrimac Avenue Intersection Improvements project were updated to receive +1 for air quality benefits, based on recent FHWA CMAQ cost-effectiveness data.
 - **Other Notable Projects:**
 - Some regionally significant, capacity-adding projects received negative scores (e.g., -3 for inducing congestion).
 - Transit expansion projects (e.g., Newport, Newark, Fairplay stations) received +3.
 - The truck parking facility near Wilmington received +3 for incorporating anti-idling technology.
- The AQS accepted the scores as presented, with the two changes to the roundabout projects noted above.

Draft CMAQ Prioritization for the FY 2027- FY 2030 Transportation Improvement Program, New Castle County Element

(22:03 into the Zoom recording)

- Mr. Swiatek reviewed a draft prioritization of draft TIP projects eligible for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding:
 - Rankings are based on FHWA's cost-effectiveness data for air quality improvements.
 - Top-ranked projects included idle-reduction (e.g., truck parking), diesel engine retrofits, and transit expansions.
 - Bike/ped and multimodal projects were also included but scored lower in cost-effectiveness.
- The AQS accepted the CMAQ technical scores as presented.

Draft 2026 New Castle County Motor Vehicle Emission Budgets

(27:47 into the Zoom recording)

- Ms. Englert provided a presentation about the proposed Motor Vehicle Emission Budgets for New Castle County.
- The county is part of a non-attainment area under the 2015 Ozone standard.
- The area was recently reclassified from "moderate" to "serious" by the EPA.
- A new 2026 emissions budget was developed using the MOVES5 model and includes projected emissions for VOCs and NOx during the ozone season.
- VMT and other inputs were forecast using FHWA growth rates and other planning tools.
- Ms. Englert discussed the methodology and assumptions of the budget:
 - **Data Sources and Methodologies:**
 - Used forecasted rates from FHWA and DMV vehicle population data (2017–2024), projecting to 2026 with linear regression.
 - AVFT (Alternative Fuel Vehicle Types) projections were based on Delaware's 2023 vehicle registration data and EPA's MOVES5 tool, using proportional comparisons to national distributions.
 - Age distribution was projected using EPA's tool from 2023 to 2026.
 - Other inputs included the 2023 NEI, MOVES5 default values, and EPA's 2022 V1 emissions platform.
 - Meteorological data was averaged over 2022–2024 from NOAA.
 - **Key Assumptions:**
 - Road type, speed, fuel, and emission parameters followed EPA recommendations and state-specific data (e.g., Delaware's I&M program).
 - LEV standards (National and California) were factored in per EPA guidance.
- Ms. Englert discussed the draft emissions budget, its compliance with regulations, and compared it to the last New Castle County conformity analysis.
 - **2026 Draft Emissions Budget:**
 - A 10% safety margin was added to account for uncertainty, resulting in final draft budgets of:
 - NOx: 7.02 tons/day
 - VOCs: 3.5 tons/day
 - **Compliance and Regulatory Status:**
 - The draft meets reasonable further progress (24% reduction from 2017 to 2026).
 - Compared current budget to previous ones and WILMAPCO's conformity determination, as shown on the following page.

New Castle County	Summer Season Week Day Average (tons/day)	
	NOx	VOC
2009 MVEB Conformity Budget	19.23	9.89
2025 Conformity Determinations (WILMAPCO)	7.43	4.14
2035 Conformity Determinations (WILMAPCO)	4.33	2.37
2026 MVEB MOVES5	7.02	3.50

- Differences are due in part to updated modeling tools (MOVES5 vs MOVES3), newer forecast data, and methodology changes.
- The 2023 mobile budgets are still under EPA review, and delays were noted due to administrative holds. Mr. Beacoat said he would look into the matter.
- Ms. Englert said next steps include:
 - Continue drafting the Serious Nonattainment Area SIP for ozone, due Jan 1, 2026.
 - Include performance certification, enhanced I&M, clean fuel program, and potential transportation controls.
 - A Public hearing planned for August 2025.
 - New conformity determinations will be due within two years of EPA budget approval.
 - Participants acknowledged the importance of integrating the new budget into the next conformity run, expected around 2026–2027.

Other business

(42:56 into the Zoom recording)

- None