



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 6  
1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200  
DALLAS, TX 75202-2733

APR 09 2013

Mr. Robert Tally  
Division Administrator - Texas  
Federal Highway Administration  
826 Federal Building, 300 East 8th Street  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Mr. Tally:

In March 2013, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) received conformity determination documents for the Houston-Galveston Area Council's (HGAC) 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update, and the 2013-2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) submitted by the HGAC for interagency consultation and review. A new conformity determination is necessary for the Houston/Galveston/Brazoria (Houston) 1997 8-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard nonattainment area due to amendments of the RTP and TIP and the need to comply with the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act signed into law on July 6, 2012.

Any issues associated with the demonstration of conformity were addressed in conference calls and e-mails with the HGAC, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the Texas Department of Transportation, and the EPA. The criteria for our review and the interagency consultation process can be found at 40 CFR Part 93, Subpart A and guidance memoranda issued by the FHWA and the EPA for transportation conformity determinations.

Based on the documentation submitted to the EPA and discussed during the interagency consultation process, the estimated emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) for the 2035 RTP and the 2013-2016 TIP will be below the Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets (MVEB) established for these pollutants in the Attainment Demonstration and Reasonable Further Progress State Implementation Plans. The NOx and VOC MVEBs were found adequate by the EPA on January 25, 2011 (76 FR 4342). We have no further comments and are supportive of a positive conformity finding by the FHWA for the Houston area.

I appreciate your cooperation in consulting with us and ensuring all provisions of the transportation conformity rules have been properly addressed. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Jeff Riley of my staff at (214) 665-8542.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Guy Donaldson".

Guy Donaldson  
Chief  
Air Planning Section

cc: (See Page 2)

Mr. Alan Clark  
Houston-Galveston Area Council

Dr. Graciela Lubertino  
Houston-Galveston Area Council

Mr. Jose Campos  
Federal Highway Administration

Ms. Shundreka R. Givan  
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Ms. Holly Brightwell Ferguson  
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

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