FW: Konza prairie air monitor

Tapp, Joshua
Sent: Thursday, April 18, 2013 8:43 AM
To: Smith, John; Jay, Michael; Algoe-Eakin, Amy; Kemp, Lachala; Grier, Gina; Nichols, Robert; Hood, Rich; Bryan, David

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From: Harvey, Reid
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 7:14 PM
To: McCabe, Janet
Cc: Dunham, Sarah; Weber, Rebecca; Millett, John; Tapp, Joshua; Wayland, Richard
Subject: Re: Konza prairie air monitor

Chet and I will work with Josh on this to craft an answer. In brief there are about 5 monitors in that part of the state that can "characterize" the general air quality.

Reid

From: McCabe, Janet
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 7:47:08 PM
To: Harvey, Reid
Cc: Dunham, Sarah; Weber, Rebecca; Millett, John; Tapp, Joshua
Subject: Re: Konza prairie air monitor

Josh--i just learned that becky's away on vacation so am looping you in.

From: McCabe, Janet
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 5:45:40 PM
To: Harvey, Reid
Cc: Dunham, Sarah; Weber, Rebecca; Millett, John
Subject: Re: Konza prairie air monitor

Ok--I forwarded this info to Becky Weber and am copying her here so that she and her folks can help as this unfolds.

What response do we have to claims that discontinuing this monitor leaves us--and the public--without an important source of information? Other monitors in the area that provide coverage, other monitors that give us information about the impacts of burning?

From: Harvey, Reid
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 5:39:49 PM
To: McCabe, Janet
Cc: Dunham, Sarah
Subject: Fw: Konza prairie air monitor

Janet: Following our discussion today, I received this additional info on checking email tonight. We are alerting John Millet as well.

Reid

From: Lear, Gary
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 6:16:58 PM
To: Harvey, Reid; Haeuber, Richard; Wayland, Richard

Cc: Puchalski, Melissa; Sharac, Timothy
Subject: FW: Konza prairie air monitor

Gary Lear
Sr. Environmental Scientist
202-343-9159
USEPA/OAR/OAP/CAMD
Washington DC

From: Craig Volland [mailto:hartwood2@kc.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 4:39 PM
To: Lear, Gary
Cc: Weber, Rebecca; Tapp, Joshua; TGross@kdheks.gov; rmanes@tnc.org; trewyn@k-state.edu; John Blair
Subject: Re: Konza prairie air monitor

Dear Mr. Lear,

Thanks for the information. We think the public needs to know about this development, so we sent out this press release and fact sheet today.

Sincerely, Craig Volland
Chair, Air Quality Committee
Kansas Chapter, Sierra Club

EPA Shuts Kansas Air Monitor that Indicates Health Threat

Dear Sierra Club Contact Craig Volland,

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Craig Volland, 913-334-0556, hartwood2@kc.rr.com

Without prior public notice, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has discontinued monitoring for ozone pollution at the Konza Prairie site near Manhattan, Kansas. This monitor, which has been collecting valuable data since 2002, has consistently indicated levels of pollution high enough during certain times of the year to cause significant health impacts in the area.

In response to our inquiry, EPA says they complied with a request from the landowner, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and from Kansas State University (KSU), the operating agency, to remove the monitor. Documents attached to EPA's response indicate that TNC and KSU were concerned that the monitor would be used for regulatory compliance purposes and interfere with their research on rangeland burning.

"Those concerns are hard to fathom since EPA just recently threw out the data (for regulatory purposes) related to ozone standard exceedances in 2011 caused by rangeland burning in the Flint Hills," said Craig Volland, Chair of the Kansas Chapter Air Quality Committee. "The fact is, two thirds of the 43 times that ozone readings at this monitor have exceeded the current national ozone standard since 2002 *have occurred in the summer*, not burning season. There's a real need

for EPA and KDHE to understand why this is happening, and one cannot do that without collecting the data."

The Konza Prairie ozone monitor is also particularly valuable because it is located within the Flint Hills itself and available to assess effects on residents very near the burning.

"We know that high ozone levels, especially at or above the current standard, are associated with health effects, particularly among vulnerable members of our communities, " said Sheryl Magzamen, PhD, Asst. Professor of Epidemiology at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. "The elderly and children with asthma are highly susceptible groups."

In their 2010 Smoke Management Plan KDHE promised to consult with the Centers for Disease Control to develop a more comprehensive study on the potential health impacts of the burning in the Flint Hills. The discontinuance of the Konza Prairie monitor will likely complicate that task.

"What's needed here is a focus on protecting the health of the residents in and around Manahattan, Kansas," added Volland. The Kansas Chapter is prepared to help find an alternate location in the Manhattan area if KDHE and EPA are unable to resolve this situation in short order.

More information can be found on the attached Fact Sheet including a link to EPA documents.

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On Apr 15, 2013, at 3:12 PM, Lear, Gary wrote:

Dear Mr. Volland,

Thank you for your interest in the CASTNET monitoring program. The ozone monitor at the Konza Prairie CASTNET site was discontinued on April 5 following requests from Mr. Rob Manes at The Nature Conservancy (the land owner) and Dr. Ron Trewyn of Kansas State University (the operating agency) (correspondence attached). Because CASTNET monitors operate at the discretion of the land owner and operator, we complied with these requests.

If I can be of further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,

Gary

Gary Lear
CASTNET Program Manager
202-343-9159
USEPA/OAR/OAP/CAMD
Washington DC

-----Original Message-----
From: Tom Gross [mailto:TGross@kdheks.gov]
Sent: Friday, April 12, 2013 2:26 PM
To: 'Craig Volland'
Cc: Tapp, Joshua
Subject: RE: Konza prairie air monitor

Craig

That is an EPA monitor not a KDHE one, so I will defer to them. I will copy Josh Tapp on this note so he can respond. Our preliminary review of the satellite images shows limited burning this year in the Flint Hills.

Tom

Thomas Gross
Bureau of Air
Kansas Department of Health and Environment
1000 SW Jackson, Suite 310
Topeka, Kansas 66612
(785) 296-1692

-----Original Message-----
From: Craig Volland [mailto:hartwood2@kc.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2013 4:25 PM
To: Tom Gross
Subject: Konza prairie air monitor

Hey Tom. I was checking the Konza prairie monitor on CASTNET to see how it was reacting to this year's burning season and it doesn't seem to be working.
Do you know what's going on with it?

Regards, Craig Volland

----------FORWARDED MESSAGE----------
-----Original Message-----
From: rmanes@tnc.org [mailto:rmanes@tnc.org]
Sent: Wednesday, April 03, 2013 4:15 PM
To: Tapp, Joshua
Cc: John Briggs; Brian K. Obermeyer; Lance Hedges; Tom Gross; R.W. Trewyn
Subject: Re: Konza Ozone Monitor

Dear Mr. Tapp:

The Nature Conservancy strongly supports science-based restoration and stewardship of environmental health in all realms, including air quality. However, after consulting with our partners at Kansas State University (see message below), as well as other experts and stakeholders, I am sending this message to ask that the EPA monitoring equipment that is used for compliance data gathering be removed from Konza Biological Research Station as soon as possible. If I need to take further action in order to complete this removal, please let me know; or call me (620-388-1940), if you would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Rob Manes
Director, The Nature Conservancy of Kansas

Rob:

Following lengthy discussions with our Konza Prairie Biological Station leadership team and others at Kansas State regarding the ozone monitor on the CASTNET system, it appears the only acceptable path forward is to remove the ozone monitor from the Konza site while retaining the other CASTNET components along with our member status in the CASTNET research network. Being a research site has always been our goal; being a regulatory site was neither anticipated nor desired.

It's not clear what steps are required to actually remove the ozone monitor from the system, but the sooner that can be done the better.

Please let me know if you have any questions and thank you for your assistance in facilitating this request.

Best wishes,

Ron

R.W. Trewyn, PhD
Vice President for Research
Kansas State University
105 Anderson Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506-0113
Phone: 785/532-5110
Fax: 785
Sent from my Verizon Wireless BlackBerry

From: Robert Manes [mailto:RMANES@TNC.ORG]
Sent: Wednesday, March 27, 2013 12:07 AM
To: Tapp, Joshua
Cc: John Briggs; Brian K. Obermeyer; Lance Hedges; Tom Gross
Subject: Konza Ozone Monitor

Dear Mr. Tapp:

The purpose of this message is to communicate concerns, on behalf of The Nature Conservancy of Kansas (TNC), regarding the ozone monitor currently sited at Konza Biological Station, a 9.000-acre research property near Manhattan, KS, owned primarily by TNC and operated by Kansas State University. I would first emphasize that TNC continues to fully support the CASTNET monitoring program goals of providing long-term data sets for ozone and other air quality parameters. We also support the gathering of scientific data that can aid in analyzing, abating and facilitating adaption to climate change.

I was concerned, however, to learn recently that the status of the Konza monitoring station had, two years ago, been changed from a research purpose to a regulatory purpose. I cannot recall or find record that TNC

was consulted about, or notified of, this change. As a result, neither we nor Kansas State University representatives were able to evaluate or communicate implications of the change.

While neither I nor my staff possess particular expertise in technical aspects of air quality monitoring or enforcement, we are aware that use of data from Konza for regulatory purposes could have negative and unintended impacts on important research, conservation and other activities in the region, including prescribed and experimental burning. We are committed to continuing the long-term research efforts that have been underway at the Konza site for over a decade. We recognize the importance of long-term air quality data sets to EPA and to researchers at the Konza Prairie. However, I do want to have opportunity to discuss whether it is appropriate for the Konza monitor to continue in place for regulatory purposes.

Mr. Tom Gross of KDHE informed me of a scheduled call on the afternoon of April 11th to discuss this issue. I would appreciate the opportunity to participate in that discussion, or in another near-term venue to address this issue. Please feel free to call me at your earliest convenience at the mobile phone number below.

Thank you.

Rob Manes
Director, The Nature Conservancy of Kansas
785-233-4400 (office)
620-388-1940 (mobile)
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Topeka, KS 66603
rmanes@tnc.org
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