**UTE INDIAN TRIBE**
Energy and Minerals Department

P.O. Box 70
988 South 7500 East
Fort Duchesne, Utah 84026

Phone: 435-725-4950
Fax: 435-725-4970
Email: energy_minerals@utetribe.com

December 4, 2015

Submitted to:

http://www.regulation s.gov

Re: DOCKET ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2014-0606

Review of New Sources and Modifications in Indian Country: Federal Implementation Plan for Managing Air Emissions from True Minor Sources Engaged in Oil and Natural Gas Production in Indian Country

Submitted on behalf of:

Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation

Please accept our comments regarding the Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") draft Federal Implementation Plan ("FIP") that would apply to true minor sources and minor modifications at existing true minor sources in the production segment of the oil and natural gas sector located or expanding in Indian Country.

As an initial matter, we note that the Uintah Basin, home of the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, is expressly discussed in the proposed, draft FIP. See Part VII(C)(l) (Comments in favor of Regulation of Existing Sources); see also Part VII(C)(3). Consequently, we believe that the Ute Tribe is particularly well-suited to comment on the proposed, draft FIP.

We additionally note that the Uinta Basin is impacted by a fairly unique issue of wintertime ozone. Accordingly, the Ute Tribe members, residing within the Basin, are impacted by ozone issues different than those typically found across the Country.

Moreover, we note that oil and natural gas production is essential to the economic health of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation.

Finally, we note that the oil production within the Basin is heavy, thick oil that is generally different than most oil production in the Country. See, e.g., Part VII(C)(3) fn. 43.

Comment 1:

With these initial observations in mind, the Ute Tribe appreciates EPA's effort to propose this draft FIP. The Ute Tribe questions, however, the EPA's proposal of a generic, nationwide FJP.

Rather, the Ute Tribe believes that the conditions impacting the Uinta Basin are sufficiently unique that a tribe-specific FIP should be prepared for the Uintah and Ouray Reservation.

Indeed , EPA has stated in its proposal (specifically with regard to existing sources in the Uintah Basin) that "[W]e believe that the most appropriate means for addressing impacts from existing sources is through area- or reservation -specific FIPs and not through this proposed , national FIP." Part VII(C)(3).

We believe that it would be preferable, and more appropriate, to address the air quality issues of the Uintah Basin in one reservation -specific FIP, or a Tribal Implementation Plan, for the Uintah and Ouray Reservation. We welcome the opportunity to work with EPA to develop an appropriate implementation plan for our Reservation.

Comment 2:

While we strongly want clean air, we do not want to unnecessarily impede economic growth. In this regard, we are concerned that air permitting with in the Uinta Basin is too time-consuming, and that unnecessary delays inhibit economic investment in the Basin.

In developing a reservation-specific implementation plan, we would like to work with EPA and the State of Utah to develop environmentally-protective, but more efficient, permitting requirement s for the Uintah and Ouray Reservation.

Comment 3:

While we acknowledge in Comment 2 that air permitting often is too time-consuming, we question the wisdom of the draft FIP in eliminating permitting requirement s for many oil and gas activities. Instead, we believe that a streamlined permitting process, which preserves some ability of the Tribal members to receive notice and to comment, would be greatly preferable.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed, draft FIP. We look forward to working with EPA on this imp01tant initiative.

Ute Indian Tribal

Air Quality Program Coordinator,

_____