

Chris Covert-Bowlds

Air pollution remains one of the most serious threats facing national parks, threatening the health of park visitors, wildlife, watersheds, and Washington communities.

I am concerned the Department of Ecology has proposed a Regional Haze Plan that does nothing to reduce and control facility emissions that degrade views of Mt. Rainier, drive climate change and harm local communities, especially those disproportionately affected by cumulative environmental exposures from air pollution. The plan proposed by the state does not reduce emissions from paper mills and oil refineries, which together account for nearly half of air impacts in our state.

I'm reaching out today to call on Ecology to fulfill its Regional Haze obligations under the Clean Air Act and ensure our protected public lands and affected communities get the benefit of cleaner air. Please revise the regional haze plan to thoroughly assess air pollution impacts on communities of color and low-income neighborhoods and ensure that these paper mills and oil refining facilities are required to clean up their pollution and do not get a free pass to pollute for the next decade. The health of our national parks, wilderness areas and communities depend on your choices today.