Air pollution from coal-fired power plants has dramatically reduced the visibility at our nation’s most treasured national parks and wilderness areas. These places are an important part of our American heritage, and they need protection. In Texas, coal plants are sending pollution into the Big Bend National Park and Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma, and the Caney Creek Wilderness Area in Arkansas.

To restore the spectacular scenic views at these national parks and wilderness areas, a Clean Air Act protection called the Regional Haze Rule requires states to develop plans to clean up pollution and improve air quality at the parks.

In 2009, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality proposed a do-nothing haze plan that would have taken more than 140 years to clear the skies and to restore the renowned scenic views at national parks and wilderness areas. Despite the fact that the nation’s largest, most polluting coal plants are in Texas, TCEQ’s regional haze plan does not require a single plant to reduce its air pollution. Thankfully, the Environmental Protection Agency has stepped in and proposed a common-sense plan that requires pollution cuts from dirty coal-fired coal plants. Cleaning up this pollution also helps protect public health and can boost local economies.

The Sierra Club and its partners support the EPA’s plan and want to make it stronger so we can cut pollution, clear the air, and protect our health and our treasured places.

**FACT #1 — TEXAS SOURCES PRODUCE MORE HAZE-CAUSING POLLUTION THAN OKLAHOMA AND ARKANSAS SOURCES COMBINED**

In addition to causing haze, sulfur dioxide pollution (SO2) triggers asthma attacks and can contribute to serious respiratory illnesses. Nitrogen oxide pollution (NO2) gets into the atmosphere where it forms smog pollution, causing bad air days that are unfortunately frequent in cities like Dallas, Fort Worth, Oklahoma City and Tulsa. In 2012, Texas coal-fired power plants emitted over 338,853 tons of SO2, whereas all the coal-fired power plants in both Arkansas and Oklahoma emitted approximately 152,599 tons of SO2 combined. This is a lot of haze and smog-forming pollution going into our air, but Texas...
clearly pumps out far more pollution than its neighbors.

**FACT #2 — RESEARCH SHOWS SIGNIFICANT IMPACT OF TEXAS SOURCES ON CLASS I AREAS IN OKLAHOMA AND ARKANSAS**

Scientific analysis conducted by the Central Regional Air Planning Association (of which Texas is a member) as well as the EPA, shows that Texas coal plants create more haze-forming air pollution than is produced in those states.

**FACT #3 — TCEQ'S DO-NOTHING HAZE PLAN DOES NOT REQUIRE ANY SOURCES TO REDUCE POLLUTION AND CLEAR OUR SKIES**

Under TCEQ’s haze plan, coal companies are free to continue with business as usual. According to the U.S. National Park Service and others, this plan fails to protect our air. The do-nothing haze plan does not require a single plant to install pollution protections to reduce soot, smog and haze-forming air pollution. The EPA plan, however, puts real protections in place, which include adding controls on the dirtiest plants.

**FACT #4 — TCEQ’S HAZE PLAN DOES NOT ACHIEVE NATURAL VISIBILITY CONDITIONS AT BIG BEND AND GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS FOR MORE THAN 140 YEARS**

Under Texas regulators’ ineffective plan, Big Bend National Park would not see clear skies until 2155, and Texas polluters would continue creating haze and smog pollution problems in our neighboring states.

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