

WESTAR Planning Committee Notes September 3, 2026

1. Call to Order - Morgan Frank (AK)
 - a. Notes for this call: Arizona
2. Discussion Items
 - a. Updates on 120-day letters for PM2.5? (All)
 - Some Regional offices set October 26 as the deadline for letters to be received by states (noted by Oregon).
 - b. Roundtable: Maintaining public buy-in, how to ensure public remains engaged in the air quality process, including updating new standards (All)
 - Some members noted that the public has begun accepting PM (particulate matter) issues as a "new normal" rather than actively engaging.
 - Webpage Management: Some agencies maintain shared buy-in by making each department responsible for updating their respective section on official webpages.
 - c. Roundtable: Wildfire smoke outreach: what is working and what isn't (All)
 - Outreach Beyond Maps/Forecasting/Advisories:
 - *Colorado*: In addition to standard ozone reporting, state meteorologists run a dedicated blog (colosmokeoutlook.blogspot.com) covering current conditions and actionable advice, which has gained significant traction.
 - *Idaho*: Uses a dedicated blog (idsmoke.blogspot.com) for smoke updates.
 - *Montrose Lab*: Hosts resources such as the Smoke Symposium (themontroselab.com/smoke-symposium).
 - *Montana (West of Great Falls)*: Areas prone to wildfires and inversions hold best-practice meetings to build an information base for counties seeking state guidance during burn seasons. They create slide presentations tailored to seasonal outlooks for local officials to monitor.
 - Inter-Agency & National Park
 - Park and regional staff are briefed on local, county, and state air quality monitoring setups.
 - Some agencies follow EPA guidance to maintain consistent messaging, Air Quality Index (AQI) levels, and alerts.
 - Some National Parks and local areas share real-time AQI data proactively, leaving specific public notification methods to the discretion of individual park managers.
 - Public Messaging & Public Health:
 - Press releases and social media posts advise specific actions (e.g., turning on swamp coolers, closing windows).
 - Health messaging directly originates from the Department of Health and Human Services.
 - *AirNow*: Linked on agency websites alongside interactive Fire and Smoke Maps to track real-time PM2.5 monitored by technical teams.
 - *Montana*: The state monitoring map is their most visited website.
 - *Today's Air*: Displays monitoring data well, though it is less focused on the health consequences or effects of harmful events.

- State & Regional Specific Resources:
 - *Clark County, NV*: desaqmonitoring.clarkcountynv.gov/Wildfires
 - *National Park Service (NPS)*:
nps.gov/subjects/air/current-data.htm?map=pm (Displays PM map; click dots for details/smoke forecasts).
 - *Oregon*: Issues advisories via oregonsmoke.org; communications team is currently pulling site traffic data to share.
 - *Washington*: Ecology Department maintains an extensive PM2.5 program, but other staff handle day-to-day public outreach.

3. Actions/Updates

- The Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America, and others filed a petition for writ of certiorari to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit June 26, 2026, decision regarding U.S. EPA's final rule, "Reconsideration of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter"
https://nam.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/01_2026-08-28_Final-Industry-Cert-Petition.pdf
- Intermountain West Ozone Exchange Conference on October 26–28, 2026 Jointly hosted by the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization and Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments. A three-day conference on ozone science and attainment challenges specific to Intermountain West states. *Note: Overlaps with WESTAR's meeting schedule.* <https://ozoneexchange.org/>
- September 9–11, 2026 – AAPCA 2026 Fall Business Meeting
<https://cleanairact.org/blog/>
- CMAS, October 19–21, Raleigh, NC <https://cmascenter.org/conference/register.cfm>
- Residential Wood Heating Conference, October 20–21, Portland, OR
<https://events.ticketleap.com/tickets/nascaum/national-residential-wood-heating-meeting>
- WESTAR-WRAP Fall Business Meeting, October 28–29, Boise, ID
- November 10–13, 2026 – Air & Waste Management Association Atmospheric Optics: Aerosols, Visibility, and the Radiative Balance
https://www.awma.org/ev_calendar_day.asp?date=11/10/2026&eventid=312

WESTAR Planning Committee Contact Spreadsheet i. Please add your/your group members' roles for future contact reference.

Topic Suggestion Form: Please use this form to submit any topic suggestions you would like us to cover in future meetings.

https://forms.cloud.microsoft/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Kz0ZiC_PcEWplsnCwXbPsVKPRkhC0URCsEJM0D6x6YNUQldQMFBCTBGNUJaODc5ODFYMERHQUpCNy4u

4. Next Call

- October 1, 2026, 10:00 AM HST; 12:00 PM AKDT; 1:00 PM PDT; 2:00 PM MDT; 3:00 PM CDT