



CMAQ and NPS: Exploring the applicability of the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement program to NPS transit



Source: US Department of Transportation Volpe Center

Agreement No. P12PG70503
March 2014



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Definitions

The following terms are used in this report:

CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program
CO	Carbon monoxide
DOT	Department of Transportation
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 st Century
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NPS	National Park Service
O ₃	Ozone
PM	Particulate matter
RPO	Regional Planning Organization
TIP	Transportation Improvement Plan

Introduction

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program is a potential funding source for NPS transit systems. NPS transit managers seeking funding to support or expand transit service may consider working with State, regional and local partners to identify opportunities to suggest projects for CMAQ funding.

Recent changes in dedicated funding for NPS transit systems (e.g., the discontinuation of the Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks program) have increased the importance of partner funding sources. The CMAQ program is a potential fit for NPS park units because of its dual focus on air quality and congestion, mirroring the NPS missions of protecting resources and providing access. [Appendix A](#) provides two examples of NPS transit systems already benefiting from CMAQ.

This bulletin details the CMAQ program, project eligibility requirements, and how NPS staff can engage with State, regional, and local partners to apply for CMAQ funding.

About CMAQ

Jointly administered by FHWA and FTA, CMAQ has been an important funding source for highway and transit projects that reduce congestion and EPA-regulated air pollutants since the early 1990s. According to FHWA's [CMAQ Guidance](#), MAP-21 authorizes over \$2.2 billion in CMAQ funding in both fiscal year 2013 and 2014. The CMAQ program is a flexible funding source that typically provides 80 percent of project costs.

CMAQ Funding is allocated to State DOTs and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) based on population and pollution levels in ozone (O₃), particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), and carbon monoxide (CO) nonattainment or maintenance areas designated by the EPA. [Appendix B](#) lists park units located in nonattainment and/or maintenance areas. All states receive a minimum amount of funding even if a nonattainment or maintenance area is not located within the State.

Coordinate with Local, Regional, and State Partners

In urban areas projects must be included in the MPO's transportation improvement plans (TIPs) or for rural areas, the Statewide TIP. CMAQ project selection is at the discretion of the State DOTs and MPOs. However, Federal rules require analysis of project costs and benefits and many MPOs and State DOTs have periodic calls for projects with competitive selection criteria. Therefore, it is important for park units to learn about and engage in regional and statewide planning processes so they can be prepared to submit competitive proposals. Park unit staff may consider attending MPO or Statewide transit planning meetings to begin learning local CMAQ procedures and to identify potential partners. See the FHWA [database of CMAQ-funded projects](#) for examples of past CMAQ-funded projects in your area.

Eligible Project Types

According to the [FHWA's Public Transportation CMAQ Guidance](#), there are four types of transit projects eligible for CMAQ funding:

Key Findings:

- The CMAQ program is an important funding source to consider for NPS transit funding
- CMAQ funds are coordinated through States and MPOs, therefore projects must be listed in TIPs and/or STIPs
- Engage and collaborate with local, regional and State partners to identify opportunities and suggest projects
- Demonstrate and communicate economic and environmental benefits of NPS transit systems to build support

1. **New Transit Service**

CMAQ funds may be used to support startup of new transit services such as new a shuttle or ferry service linking activity centers. Funds may be used to cover planning, project development, initial capital costs, and to assist with operating costs during the first five years of service.

2. **System or Service Expansion**

Expansions that will generate additional ridership may be eligible for CMAQ funds because a shift to transit reduces emissions and congestion.

3. **New Vehicles**

New transit vehicles may be purchased with CMAQ funds. The vehicles can be used for fleet expansion or to replace current vehicles. A variety of transit vehicle types are eligible, including alternative fuel vehicles.

4. **Fare Subsidies**

CMAQ funds can support innovative fare reduction and financial incentive strategies in particular situations. For example, reduced fares may be offered as part of an area-wide strategy for reducing emissions during peak periods of ozone pollution. However, because NPS transit systems do not tend to charge fares, this project type may not be applicable to NPS.

Conclusion

The CMAQ program is well-aligned with the NPS missions of protecting resources and providing public access to valuable natural and cultural areas. CMAQ can be a viable transit funding opportunity for many NPS transit systems, particularly those located in air quality nonattainment areas. However, participation in regional and statewide transportation planning process is essential for park units considering pursuing CMAQ funds. In many cases, park units may not be able to submit project proposals directly, and will need to work with partners to participate in the CMAQ process. Park units should actively engage with local and regional stakeholders to build support for specific projects, and work to communicate quantifiable emissions and congestion reduction estimates to develop competitive applications.

Resources

[NPS Alternative Transportation Program](#)

[NPS National Transit Inventory, 2012](#)

[NPS Air Resources Division *Methods for Determining Air Quality Conditions and Trends for Park Planning and Assessments*](#)

[FHWA CMAQ and Public Transportation Guidance](#)

[Innovative Transportation Planning Partnerships to Enhance National Parks and Gateway Communities \(Transportation Research Board 2009\)](#)

Appendix A -- NPS Examples

Acadia National Park Island Explorer Shuttle Bus System

Through strong and cooperative regional partnerships, Acadia National Park was able to implement and sustain the Island Explorer transit. Started in 1999, it continues today as a popular transit service for the region. The 17+ vehicle fleet runs seven routes and links various hotels and campgrounds in the area to park unit attractions and the Bar Harbor Airport. From the beginning, Acadia worked with partners to find diverse financial support for the transit system.

With the support of the Mount Desert Island League of Towns, the Island Explorer Shuttle Bus system was presented to Maine DOT. Maine DOT approved the project and Island Explorer received CMAQ funding. Acadia National Park along with several of their partners provided the 20 percent local match. Through local, regional, and state transportation partnerships Acadia National Park took advantage of unconventional transit system funding options resulting in benefits for the entire community. A 2001 study conducted in the service's third year calculated that more than 200,000 visitors rode the buses, keeping approximately 88,000 vehicles off the park and MDI roads, resulting in a 33 percent reduction in carbon monoxide emissions. Furthermore, a 2012 [Maine DOT grant analysis](#) found that between 1999 and 2009 the Island Explorer carried nearly 3 million passengers and reduced traffic on park and local roads by over 1 million vehicles.

Figure 1
Island Explorer bus at Acadia National Park

Source: National Park Service Media Library

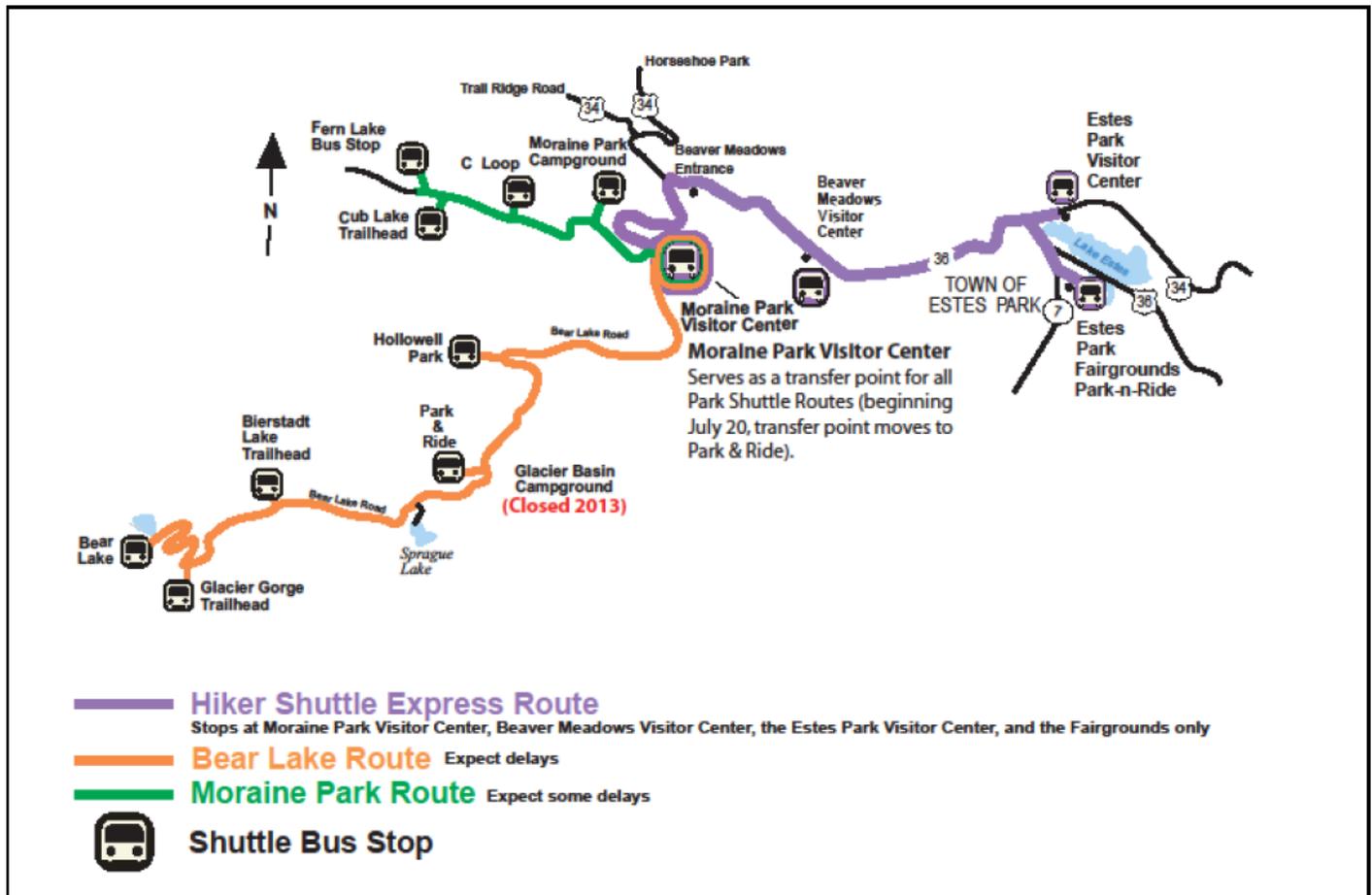


Rocky Mountain National Park & Estes Park Transit System

In collaboration with NPS, the town of [Estes Park received CMAQ funding to help improve the Estes Park Transit Facility and Parking Structure](#). This transit hub serves as a stop for the Rocky Mountain National Park Hiker Shuttle. The project received a total of \$329,000 in CMAQ funding from the local MPO and Colorado DOT to expand the number of parking spaces available at the transit facility. NPS did not directly receive CMAQ funds; this effort highlights the importance of Federal, state, and local coordination. By working together, these groups were able to reduce congestion and emissions in the Estes Valley and Rocky Mountain National Park through expanded parking and therefore greater use of an existing NPS transit system.

Figure 2
Map of transit services at Rocky Mountain National Park

Source: Rocky Mountain National Park





Appendix B -- Park Units in Nonattainment Areas with Associated MPOs and RPOs (2008 Standards)

Source: [NPS Air Quality Conditions Trends Report 2013](#)

Intermountain Region

NPS Unit	NPS Transit Systems	EPA Air Quality Criteria Pollutant	Nonattainment/Maintenance Area Name	State	Associated MPO
Big Thicket N PRES		8-Hour Ozone	Houston-Galveston-Brazoria	TX	Houston- Galveston Area Council
Golden Spike NHS		24-Hour PM 2.5	Logan	UT	Cache MPO
Petroglyph NM		CO	Albuquerque	NM	Mid-Region Council of Governments of New Mexico
Rocky Mountain NP	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, CO	Denver- Boulder- Greeley-Ft. Collins-Loveland	CO	Denver Regional Council on Governments
Timpanogos Cave NM		24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	Provo	UT	Mountainland Association of Governments
Tumacácori NHP		24-Hour PM 2.5	Nogales	AZ	Southeastern Arizona Governments Organization
Saguaro NP		CO	Tuscon	AZ	Pima Association of Governments
Yellowstone NP	Yes	CO	Billings	MT	Yellowstone County Planning Board



Midwest Region

NPS Unit	NPS Transit System	EPA Air Quality Criteria Pollutant	Nonattainment or Maintenance Area	State	Associated MPO
Cuyahoga Valley NP	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	Cleveland-Akron-Lorain	OH	Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency
First Ladies NHS		24-Hour PM 2.5	Canton-Massillon	OH	Stark County Area Transportation Study
Indiana Dunes NL		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Chicago-Naperville	IL-IN-WI	Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission
James A Garfield NHS		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5	Cleveland-Akron-Lorain	OH	Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency
Jefferson National Expansion Memorial		8-Hour Ozone, CO	St. Louis- St. Charles-Farmington	MO-IL	East-West Gateway Coordinating Council
Mississippi NRRRA		CO	Minneapolis- St. Paul	MN	Twin Cities Metropolitan Council
River Raisin NB		24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	Detroit-Ann Arbor	MI	Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
Ulysses S Grant NHS		8-Hour Ozone, CO	St. Louis- St. Charles-Farmington	MO-IL	East-West Gateway Coordinating Council
William Howard Taft NHS		8-Hour Ozone	Cincinnati	OH-KY-IN	OKI Regional Council of Governments



National Capital Region

NPS Unit	NPS Transit System*	EPA Air Quality Criteria Pollutant	Nonattainment or Maintenance Area	State	Associated MPO
Antietam NB		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Carter G. Woodson Home NHS		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Catoctin Mountain Park		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Clara Barton NHS		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Constitution Gardens	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Ford's Theatre NHS	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Fort Washington Park		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Frederick Douglass NHS		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
George Washington Memorial PKWY	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments



Greenbelt Park		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Harpers Ferry NHP		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Korean War Veterans Memorial	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Lincoln Memorial		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Lyndon Baines Johnson Memorial Grove		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Manassas NBP		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Mary McLeod Bethune Council House NHS		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
National Mall & Memorial Parks	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Pennsylvania Avenue NHS		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Piscataway Park		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
President's Park (White House)		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Prince William Forest Park		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Rock Creek Park		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments



Theodore Roosevelt Island Park		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Thomas Jefferson Memorial	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Thomas Stone NHS		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Vietnam Veterans Memorial	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Washington Monument	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Wolf Trap NP for the Performing Arts	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments



Northeast Region

NPS Unit	NPS Transit System*	EPA Air Quality Criteria Pollutant	Nonattainment or Maintenance Area	State	Associated MPO
Adams NHP	Yes	CO	Boston	MA	Boston Region MPO
African Burial Ground NM		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	New York- N. New Jersey- Long Island	NY-NJ-CT	New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
Allegheny Portage Railroad NHS		24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	Pittsburgh-Beaver Valley	PA	Southwestern PA Commission
Boston Harbor Islands	Yes	CO	Boston	MA	Boston Region MPO
Boston NHP		CO	Boston	MA	Boston Region MPO
Castle Clinton NM		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	New York- N. New Jersey- Long Island	NY-NJ-CT	New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
Chesapeake & Ohio Canal NHP		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Delaware Water Gap NRA	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5	Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City	PA-NJ-MD-DE	New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
Edgar Allan Poe NHS		8-Hour Ozone	Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City	PA-NJ-MD-DE	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Edgar Allan Poe NHS		24-Hour PM 2.5	Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City	PA-NJ-MD-DE	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Federal Hall N MEM		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	New York- N. New Jersey- Long Island	NY-NJ-CT	New York Metropolitan Transportation Council



Fire Island NS	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	New York- N. New Jersey-Long Island	NY-NJ-CT	New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
Fort McHenry NM & Historic Shrine		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Baltimore	MD	Baltimore Regional Transportation Board
Fort Necessity NB		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Pittsburgh-Beaver Valley	PA	Southwestern PA Commission
Friendship Hill NHS		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Pittsburgh-Beaver Valley	PA	Southwestern PA Commission
Gateway NRA		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	New York- N. New Jersey-Long Island	NY-NJ-CT	New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
General Grant N MEM		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	New York- N. New Jersey-Long Island	NY-NJ-CT	New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
Governors Island NM	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	New York- N. New Jersey-Long Island	NY-NJ-CT	New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
Hamilton Grange N MEM		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	New York- N. New Jersey-Long Island	NY-NJ-CT	New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
Hampton NHS		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Baltimore	MD	Baltimore Regional Transportation Board
Hopewell Furnace NHS		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5	Reading	PA	Reading Area Transportation
Independence NHP		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5	Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City	PA-NJ-MD-DE	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Johnstown Flood N MEM	Yes	24-Hour PM 2.5	Johnstown	PA	Cambria county Planning Commission
Monocacy NB		8-Hour Ozone, CO	Washington	DC-MD-VA	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments



Morristown NHP		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	New York- N. New Jersey-Long Island	NY-NJ-CT	New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
Sagamore Hill NHS		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	New York- N. New Jersey-Long Island	NY-NJ-CT	New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
Saint Paul's Church NHS		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	New York- N. New Jersey-Long Island	NY-NJ-CT	New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
Statue of Liberty NM	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	New York- N. New Jersey-Long Island	NY-NJ-CT	New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
Thaddeus Kosciuszko N MEM		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5	Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City	PA-NJ-MD-DE	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace NHS		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	New York- N. New Jersey-Long Island	NY-NJ-CT	New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
Thomas Edison NHP		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	New York- N. New Jersey-Long Island	NY-NJ-CT	New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
Upper Delaware SRR		24-Hour PM 2.5	Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City	PA-NJ-MD-DE	Goldsboro MPO
Valley Forge NHP	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5	Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City	PA-NJ-MD-DE	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Weir Farm NHS		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	Greater Connecticut	CT	Greater Bridgeport Regional Planning Association/MPO



Pacific West Region

NPS Unit	NPS Transit System*	EPA Air Quality Criteria Pollutant	Nonattainment or Maintenance Area	State	Associated MPO
Cabrillo NM		8-Hour Ozone, CO	San Diego County	CA	San Diego Association of Governments
Channel Islands NP	Yes	8-Hour Ozone	Ventura County	CA	Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
Devils Postpile NM	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5	San Joaquin Valley	CA	San Joaquin County Council of Governments
Eugene O'Neill NHS	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	San Francisco Bay Area	CA	Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Fort Point NHS		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	San Francisco Bay Area	CA	Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Fort Vancouver NHS		CO	Vancouver	WA	Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council
Golden Gate NRA	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	San Francisco Bay Area	CA	Metropolitan Transportation Commission
John Muir NHS		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	San Francisco Bay Area	CA	Metropolitan Transportation Commission



Joshua Tree NP		8-Hour Ozone	Los Angeles- San Bernardino Counties (West Mojave Desert)	CA	Southern California Association of Governments
Lake Mead		CO	Las Vegas	NV	Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada
Mojave N PRES		8-Hour Ozone	Los Angeles- San Bernardino Counties (West Mojave Desert)	CA	Southern California Association of Governments
Muir Woods NM	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	San Francisco Bay Area	CA	Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Point Reyes NS	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	San Francisco Bay Area	CA	Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front NHP		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	San Francisco Bay Area	CA	Metropolitan Transportation Commission
San Francisco Maritime NHP		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	San Francisco Bay Area	CA	Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Santa Monica Mountains NRA		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5, CO	Los Angeles- South Coast Air Basin	CA	Southern California Association of Governments
Sequoia & Kings Canyon NPs	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5	San Joaquin Valley	CA	San Joaquin County Council of Governments
Yosemite NP	Yes	8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5	San Joaquin Valley	CA	San Joaquin County Council of Governments



Southwest Region

NPS Unit	NPS Transit Systems	EPA Air Quality Criteria Pollutant	Nonattainment or Maintenance Area	State	Associated MPO
Chattahoochee River NRA		8-Hour Ozone	Atlanta	GA	Atlanta Regional Commission
Great Smoky Mountains NP		8-Hour Ozone, 24-Hour PM 2.5	Knoxville	TN	Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization
Kennesaw Mountain NBP	Yes	8-Hour Ozone	Atlanta	GA	Atlanta Regional Commission
Martin Luther King Jr NHS		8-Hour Ozone	Atlanta	GA	Atlanta Regional Commission

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

*Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188*

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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) March 6, 2014	2. REPORT TYPE Final	3. DATES COVERED (From - To) January- March 2014
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4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE CMAQ and NPS: Exploring the applicability of the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement program to NPS transit	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
	5b. GRANT NUMBER
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER

6. AUTHOR(S) McCoy, Kevin Deaderick, Lauren Linthicum, Alex	5d. PROJECT NUMBER 51VU13
	5e. TASK NUMBER MTE29
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Department of Transportation Research and Innovative Technology Administration John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center 55 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02142	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER DOT-VNTSC-NPS-14-03
---	--

9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Jim Evans National Park Service PFMD/ Transportation Branch 1201 Eye Street, NW Tenth Floor Washington, DC 20005	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S) NPS
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) 999/123978

12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Public distribution/availability

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT
The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program is a funding program that was most recently re-authorized in Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century. CMAQ offers a potential funding opportunity for NPS park units with existing transit systems or those thinking about implementing one. With recent changes in funding for NPS transit systems, it is important for park units to look toward alternative funding sources. CMAQ's goals of air quality improvement and congestion mitigation align well with NPS environmental and visitor experience goals. To apply for CMAQ, building local partnerships and engaging in the local planning process are important actions for NPS park units to undertake.

15. SUBJECT TERMS
Transit funding, NPS, CMAQ, MAP-21, FTA, FHWA

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT N/A	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON Kevin McCoy
a. REPORT None	b. ABSTRACT None	c. THIS PAGE None			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code) 617-494-3962

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