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INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL GROUPING



Introduction to a special grouping of papers from the 2016 A&WMA Specialty Conference on Atmospheric Optics: Aerosols, Visibility, and the Radiative Balance

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Welcome to this special issue of the *Journal of Air & Waste Management Association (JAWMA)*, a grouping of nine papers based on presentations at the A&WMA Specialty Conference on Atmospheric Optics: Aerosols, Visibility, and

the Radiative Balance held September 27–30, 2016, in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. This international conference provided a technical forum on advances in the scientific understanding of the effects of aerosols on remote, urban, regional, continental, and global-scale haze and radiative balance. The conference addressed scientific topics, as well as regulatory and policy issues. Presentations included topics related to aerosol sources, transport, atmospheric processing, visibility, and the physiochemical, hygroscopic, and optical properties of aerosols from both measurement and modeling perspectives.

Visibility-related sessions included visibility as an indicator of human health, human perception of visibility, and temporal trends in visibility. Monitoring of aerosols and haze were addressed in sessions on aerosol field studies and monitoring networks, satellite and remote-sensing applications to haze and aerosol monitoring, and new instruments and measurement techniques. As an important parallel, aerosol modeling activities were addressed in a session on modeling aerosols and visibility at local, regional, and global scales.

Sessions on the measurement and modeling of atmospheric nitrogen furthered our understanding on the link between visibility, ecology, and agricultural issues. Scientific advances in the understanding of carbonaceous aerosols were addressed in sessions on secondary organic aerosols and light absorbing carbon. In addition, a session on mineral dust highlighted its influence on air quality and visibility.

The conference was also an effective platform for addressing policy-related issues, with sessions on potential impacts of emissions from oil and gas fields on air quality and

visibility, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Regional Haze Rule (RHR). Two panels expanded on these topics: regional perspectives on the second planning period for regional haze state implementation plans, and air quality issues in the Western States Air Resources Council (WESTAR) region. Finally, a panel also addressed evolving issues in air quality related to a changing climate.

The papers included in this issue reflect the diverse and wide-ranging topics that were presented at the conference. We are grateful to the presenters and attendees at the specialty conference, the conference organizing committee, the authors who submitted their manuscripts, and the reviewers, editors, and support staff who worked to produce this issue. The complete final program for the conference can be found online at <https://www.awma.org/Files/Publications/Visibility%202016%20Program%20Final.pdf> and the proceedings can be found at <http://proceedings.awma.org/Visibility2016/Vis2016.zip>. This conference was the 10th in a series of visibility-related specialty conferences and we were honored to be involved. We look forward to seeing you at the next visibility specialty conference.

Acknowledgment

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