

**To:** Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]  
**From:** POLITICO Pro Energy Whiteboard  
**Sent:** Wed 8/2/2017 11:57:46 PM  
**Subject:** Pruitt drops delay of ozone rule implementation

By Alex Guillén

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EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt has dropped his one-year delay of an upcoming implementation step for the 2015 ozone standard, EPA announced today.

The withdrawal comes after lawsuits from environmental groups and Democratic states sued over the delay in deciding which areas meet the standard and which do not. EPA had been due to file its first defense of Pruitt's delay in court on Thursday.

Pruitt originally said he did not believe EPA had the necessary data to decide on the designations by the Oct. 1 deadline. But a pre-publication Federal Register notice signed by Pruitt on Wednesday says that "the information gaps that formed the basis of the extension may not be as expansive as we previously believed."

Some areas may be ready for designation in the coming months, and the notice hints that regional delays may be necessary on a case-by-case basis. "The Administrator may still determine that an extension of time to complete designations is necessary, but is not making such a determination at this time," says the notice in withdrawing the nationwide delay.

"We believe in dialogue with, and being responsive to, our state partners. Today's action reinforces our commitment to working with the states through the complex designation process," Pruitt said in a statement.

Pruitt also said he intends to avoid any settlement agreements with "activist groups," a practice he has long opposed and said he ended at EPA. "We do not believe in regulation through litigation, and we take deadlines seriously. We also take the statute and the authority it gives us seriously," Pruitt said.

**WHAT'S NEXT:** EPA has until Oct. 1 to determine which areas of the U.S. meet the standard and which will have to submit plans to lower pollution, a years-long process.

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