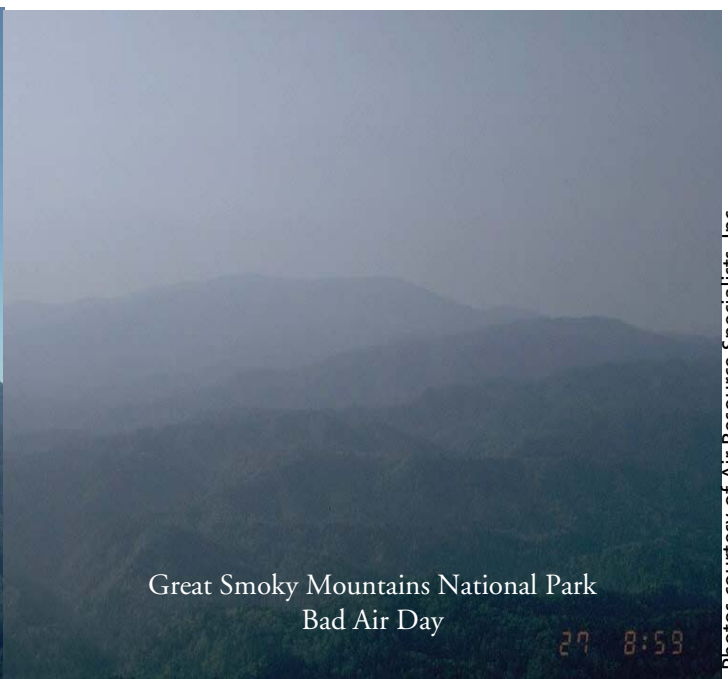




Great Smoky Mountains National Park
Good Air Day



Great Smoky Mountains National Park
Bad Air Day

Photos courtesy of Air Resource Specialists, Inc.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park: Air Quality at Risk

Park highlights

- Great Smoky Mountains National Park, America's most visited national park encompassing more than 800 square miles of the Southern Appalachians in Tennessee and North Carolina, contains half of the remaining old-growth forest in the East, more than 2,000 miles of streams, and 850 miles of trails.
- The park supports an astonishing array of plant and animal life. Over 10,000 species have been documented in the park; scientists believe an additional 90,000 species may live there. Because of its great biodiversity, the park has been designated an International Biosphere Reserve.

Current air quality

- Great Smoky Mountains National Park has the highest rates of nitrogen and sulfur pollution of any monitored location in North America, resulting in park rainfall that is 5 to 10 times more acidic than normal. Many trees in the park are dead or dying, and the water is too acidic to support some native fish.
- The park also suffers from among the highest levels of ozone (a lung-searing gas) in the Eastern U.S.; since 1990, ozone health limits have been exceeded on more than 300 days. High ozone pollution can cause visitors to experience breathing problems and asthma attacks.
- Average visibility in the park has been cut by about 40 percent in winter and 80 percent in summer, and sometimes less than one mile, meaning visitors may not even see surrounding mountains.

New coal-fired power plants

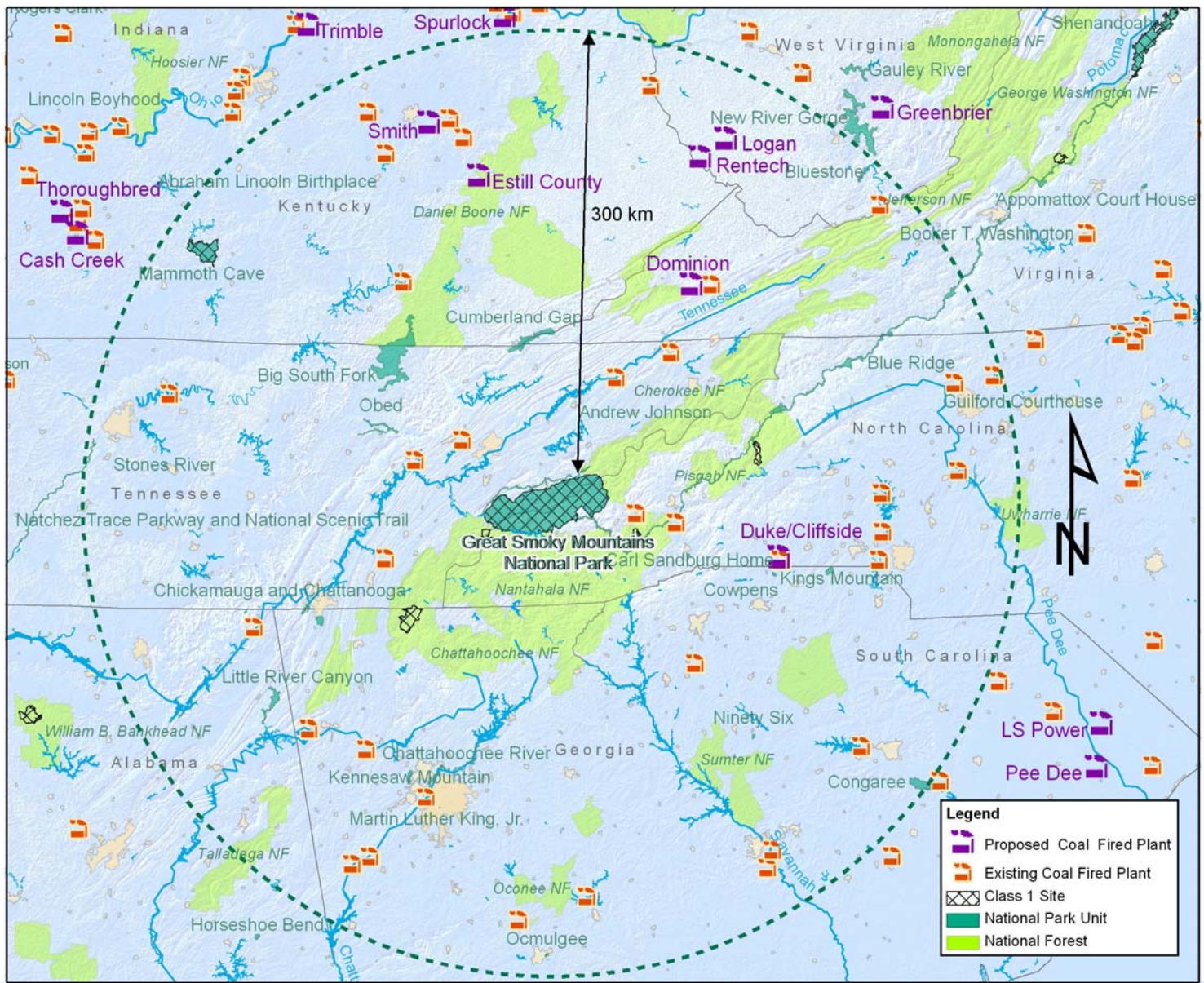
- Three new coal-fired power plants are under active development within 186 miles (300 km) of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, an area that already contains dozens of polluting coal-fired power plants, which are seriously polluting the park.
- Each year, these new plants would emit into the Smokies area air shed more than 16 million tons of carbon dioxide, 9,335 tons of sulfur dioxide, 5,604 tons of nitrogen oxides, and 560 pounds of toxic mercury. These pollutants will contribute to more hazy air, more unhealthy air days, greater stress to park trees, and increased mercury contamination of the park's streams.

National Park Service findings

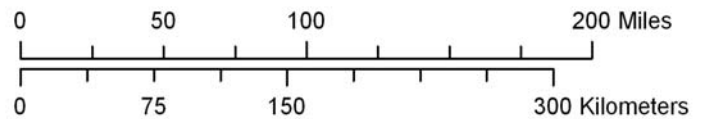
- "[T]he real-world effect of [Duke Energy's coal-fired power plant] by itself would be severe impacts upon air quality and air quality related values at Great Smoky Mountains National Park."
- The Duke plant's "increase in mercury [pollution] coupled with the predicted increase in sulfur [pollution] could impact park resources, including threatened and endangered species."
- Dominion's Wise County, Va., coal-fired power plant "would have a significant impact" on sulfur dioxide pollution at Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
- "Dominion has not justified the need for [pollution limits] that are higher than [other comparable power plant projects]. Lower emission limits would result in less impact on park resources."



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Great Smoky Mountains: Proposed Coal Fired Power Plants



Power plants that have received permits or are in active permit process

Plant	Location	Owner	Size (MW)	Distance from Park	CO2 tons/yr	SO2 tons/yr	NOx tons/yr	Hg lbs/yr	Permit Status
Cliffside Power Plant	Rutherford County, NC	Duke Energy Carolinas	800 MW	130 km	9,608,567	4,126	2,407	463	Air permit issued January 2008
Virginia City Hybrid Energy Center	Wise County, VA	Virginia Electric & Power Co.-Dominion subsd.	668 MW	142 km	5,064,989	3,369	1,971	42	Draft air permit issued January 2008
Spurlock Generating Station (unit 4)	Mason County, KY	East Kentucky Power Cooperative	300 MW	250 km	1,864,267	1,840	1,226	55	Final air permit re-issued April 2008
Total New Pollution into Great Smoky Mountain National Park Area Airshed					16,537,823	9,335	5,604	560	

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