Regional and Local Carbon Flux Information from a Continuous Atmospheric CO$_2$ Network in the Rocky Mountains and Southwest

Sherri Heck$^{1,2}$, Britton Stephens$^2$, Andrew Watt$^2$ and Marnie Carroll$^3$

$^1$University of Colorado, Boulder, CO
$^2$National Center for Atmospheric Research, Boulder, CO
$^3$Diné Environmental Institute, Navajo Nation, Shiprock, NM

In order to improve the understanding of regional carbon fluxes in the Rocky Mountain West, autonomous, inexpensive, and robust CO$_2$ analyzers (AIRCOA) have been deployed at six sites throughout Colorado, Utah and Arizona including one monitor on the Navajo Nation. An analysis of the diurnal cycles in CO$_2$ concentration from several sites will be presented. Sites near major population centers reflect the influence of industrial CO$_2$ sources in afternoon upslope flows, with CO$_2$ concentration increasing and variable in the mid to late afternoon. Other more remote sites show more consistent and decreasing CO$_2$ concentrations throughout the afternoon. These measurements provide insights as to when and under what conditions mountaintop CO$_2$ signals are regionally representative. It is also hoped these measurements will improve our current understanding of the influence of forests on global CO$_2$ levels. Our measurements will be included in future CarbonTracker assimilation runs and other planned model-data fusion efforts. However, questions still exist concerning the ability of these models to accurately represent the various influences on CO$_2$ concentrations in continental boundary layers, and at mountaintop sites in particular. Preliminary analyses of a CarbonTracker and RACCOON (Regional Atmospheric Continuous CO$_2$ Network) diurnal cycle and Mauna Loa, Cold Bay Alaska (NOAA ESRL/GMD) and RACCOON background CO$_2$ concentration comparisons will be presented. We plan to add a 7th AIRCOA observing site in Africa in order to supply essential CO$_2$ measurements and provide science outreach to the local populace. These data are available to the public on the internet in near real-time to support quality control, local science, and larger scale synthesis efforts. ([http://raccoon.ucar.edu](http://raccoon.ucar.edu)). Currently Native American students are helping maintain the detector on Navajo Nation (Roof Butte) and creating their own experiments using the available data sets.

Contact information: Marnie Carroll, Diné Environmental Institute, Diné College, P.O. Box 580 Shiprock, NM 87420, USA. Phone: 505-368-3556; Fax: 505-368-3550; Email: mkcarroll@dinecollege.edu