El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization awards $404,000 to UTEP Civil Engineering

The Civil Engineering Department at the University of Texas at El Paso has received a $404,000 grant from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) thru the El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization for the El Paso MPO Rider 8 Ozone Reduction Program at El Paso, Texas.

UTEP will work in collaboration with TCEQ and El Paso MPO to identify, inventory and monitor ozone pollution levels in the Paso del Norte region. Data will be used to model and quantify ozone pollution levels. An objective of the project is implementation of appropriate pollution reduction controls.

The El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization/Transportation Policy Board is the regional planning and programming agency responsible for working with residents, neighborhood groups, local, state and federal agencies along with other transportation providers in El Paso County, Texas, southern Doña Ana and Otero Counties in New Mexico. The agency is responsible for developing the area’s regional transportation plan.

Wen-Whai Li, Ph.D., Civil Engineering Professor and Principal Investigator for the award says: "This project will identify the conditions for high ozone episodes and provide effective measures for air pollution reduction in the region. We look forward to working with TCEQ, the El Paso MPO and local stakeholders to jointly improve El Paso's air quality."

A team of six undergraduate students and two graduate students from various disciplines will participate in the research project for fifteen months. Other UTEP researchers include Drs. Rosa Fitzgerald and Huiyan Yang of the Physics Department, Dr. Kelvin Cheu of the Civil Engineering Department and Dr. Hongling Yang of the Mathematics Department.