

IEPA Log No.: **C-0543-10**  
CoE appl. #: **CEMVR-OD-P-2010-899**

Public Notice Beginning Date: **February 2, 2011**  
Public Notice Ending Date: **March 4, 2011**

Section 401 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act  
Amendments of 1972

**Section 401 Water Quality Certification to Discharge into Waters of the State**

**Public Notice/Fact Sheet Issued By:**

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency  
Bureau of Water  
Permit Section  
1021 North Grand Avenue East  
Post Office Box 19276  
Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276  
217/782-3362

**Name and Address of Discharger:** Illinois Department of Transportation – 126 East Ash, Springfield, IL  
62704-4792

**Discharge Location:** Near LaHarpe in Section 25 of Township 7N, Range 5W of the 4th P.M. in  
Hancock County.

**Name of Receiving Water:** LaHarpe Creek

**Project Description:** Proposed bridge replacement

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) has received an application for a Section 401 water quality certification to discharge into the waters of the state associated with a Section 404 permit application received by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Public Notice period will begin and end on the dates indicated in the heading of this Public Notice. The last day comments will be received will be on the Public Notice period ending date unless a commenter demonstrating the need for additional time requests an extension to this comment period and the request is granted by the IEPA. Interested persons are invited to submit written comments on the project to the IEPA at the above address. Commenters shall provide their names and addresses along with comments on the certification application. Commenters may include a request for public hearing. The certification and notice number(s) must appear on each comment page.

The attached Fact Sheet provides a description of the project and the antidegradation assessment.

The application, Public Notice/Fact Sheet, comments received, and other documents are available for inspection and may be copied at the IEPA at the address shown above between 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday when scheduled by the interested person.

If written comments or requests indicate a significant degree of public interest in the certification application, the IEPA may, at its discretion, hold a public hearing. Public notice will be given 30 days before any public hearing. If a Section 401 water quality certification is issued, response to relevant comments will be provided at the time of the certification. For further information, please call Darren Gove at 217/782-3362.

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The Illinois Department of Transportation (“applicant”) has applied for Section 401 water quality certification for bridge replacement over LaHarpe Creek, located in Section 25, Township 7 North, Range 5 West, in Hancock County. The structure carries Illinois Route 9 over Hancock Creek about 1.5 miles east of the town of LaHarpe. A temporary causeway or work platform consisting clean aggregate may be required to perform the work to facilitate removal and replacement of the existing structure and will be determined at the time of construction. Approximately 3,850 cubic yards (2,300 square yards) of excavation in the stream will be required for the placement of approximately 1,050 cubic yards of class A4 riprap on the bed and banks up and downstream of the new structure. The total linear excavation in stream is 180 feet. Normal low flows will be maintained during construction by placing applicable and appropriate water rerouting methods, at the option of the contractor, to divert flow away from the work zone. All in-stream activities will be accomplished in a good workmanship manner with a minimum stream disturbance. The stream channel will be cleaned, reshaped and protected with riprap within the right of way limits.

**Identification and Characterization of the Affected Water Body.**

LaHarpe Creek is a General Use Water with a zero 7Q10 flow. LaHarpe Creek is not an enhanced waterbody pursuant to the dissolved oxygen water quality standard. Using the 2008 Illinois Department of Natural Resources Publication *Integrating Multiple Taxa in a Biological Stream Rating System*, the creek is not listed as a biologically significant stream nor has it received an integrity rating. LaHarpe Creek has a drainage area of approximately 19.23 square miles at the project site. Biological characterization of the stream has not been required because the project will not permanently alter the existing stream habitat conditions.

The IDNR WIRT System does not list any threatened or endangered aquatic species residing in the project area.

**Identification of Proposed Pollutant Load Increases or Potential Impacts on Uses.**

The pollutant load increases that would occur from this project include some possible increases in suspended solids during the construction of the project. Erosion control measures will be utilized to minimize any increase in suspended solids. Aquatic life uses in the portion of the creek that will be disturbed during construction may be negatively impacted, but in time, they will recover and support approximately the same community structure as is now found in the existing channel.

**Fate and Effect of Parameters Proposed for Increased Loading.**

The increase in suspended solids will be local and temporary. Erosion control measures will be utilized to minimize any increase in suspended solids and prevent further impact to the stream. Construction for the proposed project will occur during a period of low flow to further minimize any impact.

**Purpose and Social & Economic Benefits of the Proposed Activity.**

This project will replace the existing Illinois Route 9 Bridge over LaHarpe Creek due to its poor condition. Upon completion of the project, Illinois Route 9 at this location will exhibit improved safety due to the bridge's improved structural capacity.

**Assessments of Alternatives for Less Increase in Loading or Minimal Environmental Degradation.**

The construction of the proposed project will follow condition set forth by the Agency and USACE. Erosion control measures will need to be implemented to prevent additional impacts to the stream. The least intrusive alternative would be to not replace the bridge. This is not an acceptable alternative due to the condition of the bridge and potential hazard to the travelling public.

**Summary Comments of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Regional Planning Commissions, Zoning Boards or Other Entities**

In a report generated through IDNR's EcoCAT system dated January 21, 2011, the Illinois Natural Heritage Database contains no record of State-listed threatened or endangered species in the vicinity of the project location; therefore, consultation is terminated.

**Agency Conclusion.**

This preliminary assessment was conducted pursuant to the Illinois Pollution Control Board regulation for Antidegradation found at 35 Ill. Adm. Code 302.105 (antidegradation standard) and was based on the information available to the Agency at the time this antidegradation review summary was written. We tentatively find that the proposed activity will result in the attainment of water quality standards; that all existing uses of the receiving waters will be maintained; that all technically and economically reasonable measures to avoid or minimize the extent of the proposed increase in pollutant loading have been incorporated into the proposed activity; and that this activity will benefit the community at large by replacing of a bridge structure resulting in a safer stream crossing. Comments received during the 401 Water Quality Certification public notice period will be evaluated before a final decision is made by the Agency.