

IEPA Log No.: **C-0817-07**
CoE appl. #: **P-2697**

Public Notice Beginning Date: **February 1, 2011**
Public Notice Ending Date: **March 3, 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
Facility Evaluation Unit
1021 North Grand Avenue East
Post Office Box 19276
Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276
217/782-3362

Name and Address of Discharger: Tri-City Regional Port District, 1635 W. First Street, Granite City, IL 62040

Discharge Location: Section 27, T3N, R10W of the 3rd P.M. in Madison County near Madison

Name of Receiving Water: Mississippi River (River Mile 183.5)

Project Description: Construction of a harbor.

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 Thaddeus Faught at 217/782-3362.

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Fact Sheet for Antidegradation Assessment
Tri-City Regional Port District – Mississippi River – Madison County
IEPA Log # C-0817-07
COE Log P-2697
Contact: Bob Mosher at 217/558-2012
February 1, 2011

The applicant has applied for Section 401 water quality certification for the proposed impact of 20.13 acres of jurisdictional wetlands and 1,600 linear feet of Mississippi River shoreline located near Granite City in Section 26, Township 3N, Range 10W, Madison County, Illinois. The proposed River's Edge South Harbor Project will include construction of a new barge loading harbor along the Mississippi River that will facilitate the loading/unloading of trains and trucks with wet and dry bulk commodities. The former Charles Melvin Price Support Center military site will be used for this project. The project is located just downstream of the confluence of the Chain of Rocks Canal. Excavated sediment from the harbor construction will be placed on wetlands that will then constitute landward facilities for the project. The wetlands to be filled consist of 5.50 acres of emergent wetlands and 14.63 acres of forested wetlands. Mitigation for the proposed impacts will be on a site located near the mouth of Piasa Creek in Jersey County. The proposed mitigation will compensate for wetland filled and riparian area disturbed at the project site.

Identification and Characterization of the Affected Water Body.

The affected wetlands have been characterized by Geotechnology, Inc. The emergent wetlands impacted consist of periodically inundated areas from the Mississippi River with overhead electric transmission lines. Few species of wetland plants were observed due to recent inundation. The site formerly was used for borrow and Army ordnance exercises and the wetlands that evolved in the wake of these activities are not high quality. USACE mitigation of the emergent wetlands lost to filling is proposed at a 1.5:1 ratio resulting in 8.25 acres created off-site. The forested wetlands consist of water tolerant trees specifically cottonwood, silver maple, mulberry, river birch, and black willow with little understory. Mitigation of the forested wetlands lost to filling is proposed at a 3:1 ratio resulting in 43.89 acres created off-site. The remaining wetland on the project site will not be disturbed.

Additionally, the Illinois Interagency Wetland Policy Act requires a 4:1 mitigation ratio. This leads to an additional 28.38 acres of forested wetland, for a total project mitigation of 72.27 acres of forested wetland and 8.25 acres of emergent wetland.

Geotechnology, Inc. determined that 5,600 stream mitigation credits will compensate for the impacts to the riverbank. These credits were determined using the Missouri Stream Mitigation Method.

The wetlands impacted are not flowing waters and therefore have no 7Q10 flow. No segment codes exist. The wetlands have not been assessed in conjunction with the Illinois Integrated Water Quality Report and Section 303(d) List – 2006 or partially approved 2008 List. The wetlands are not evaluated in the 2008 Illinois Department of Natural Resources Publication *Integrating Multiple Taxa in a Biological Stream Rating System*. The wetlands are not

designated as enhanced waters pursuant to the dissolved oxygen water quality standard. The Mississippi River (segment J-36) has a 7Q10 flow of 46370 cfs at this location. The stream is listed on the Illinois Integrated Water Quality Report and Section 303(d) List – 2006 for primary contact use, cause fecal coliform; fish consumption use, cause PCBs; and public water supply use, cause manganese. The partially approved 2008 List is identical except that mercury has been added as a cause of fish consumption use impairment. The Mississippi River is not listed as a biologically significant stream in the 2008 Illinois Department of Natural Resources Publication *Integrating Multiple Taxa in a Biological Stream Rating System*, nor is it given an integrity rating. The Mississippi River at this location is designated as an enhanced water pursuant to the dissolved oxygen water quality standard. The IDNR WIRT system does not list any threatened or endangered species are residing in the river at this location.

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

The construction activities associated with the new loading facility will cause temporary increases in suspended solids to the Mississippi River. This increase is expected to be minor due to best management practices employed during construction. No adverse impacts to the non-filled portions of the wetlands are anticipated.

The filled wetlands will be mitigated in Jersey County by converting agricultural lands located in the lower reaches of the Piasa Creek watershed into emergent and forested wetlands. Hardwood tree species and shrubs typical of the area (e.g., pecan, overcup oak, etc.) will be planted in the created forested wetland (72.27 acres). The emergent wetland will be planted with suitable native herbaceous species (8.25 acres). Two zones will be established, one receiving more frequent inundation from Piasa Creek and one less frequent. The mitigation for the riverbank impacts will be conducted in this same area, along the banks of Piasa Creek. Native hardwood trees and shrubs will be used in the restoration. 2,365 linear feet of Piasa Creek riparian zone will be restored, totaling approximately 6.45 acres. The riparian corridor restoration will total approximately 5,655 stream mitigation credits under the Missouri Stream Mitigation Method.

Fate and Effect of Parameters Proposed for Increased Loading.

Suspended solids generated during construction will settle in non-discharging retention basins. Some silt will re-suspend in the Mississippi River during construction, but this will be very minor and will not cause adverse impacts to aquatic life.

Purpose and Social & Economic Benefits of the Proposed Activity.

According to information contained in the application, the new public commercial intermodal freight center will allow more efficient barge loading facilities for the region. More opportunities for freight transfer will be possible with this project, thereby helping the local and regional economies. Jobs will be created during the construction of the project and additional jobs will also be created for the operation of the facility.

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

The site chosen for the project was formerly used as a demolition area in a military base. The wetlands to be filled were degraded from this former use and residual refuse dumping. Locating the harbor at this site reuses what is essentially a brownfield site. Given the distribution of wetlands on the site, it is not possible to avoid them and still construct the facility. The surrounding property (River's Edge) is a development designed to reuse former industrial and military property by reestablishing industry and creating a shipping hub with roadways and rail lines to be constructed. The harbor is an essential part of the re-development plan. Mitigation for the filled wetlands and river riparian zone sought to create wetlands on adjacent properties but found none suitable. Working with the Great Rivers Land Trust, the applicant found a site north of the project to construct a significant wetlands and riparian zone mitigation project. A document from the consultant to the Tri-City Regional Port District entitled "Draft Illinois Wetland Compensation Plan River's Edge South Harbor Madison, Illinois" dated August 17, 2010 details the alternatives analysis for selection of the mitigation site along Piasa Creek.

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

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources was consulted regarding threatened and endangered species issues on February 22, 2010. It was determined that the Western Sand Darter potentially exists at the site. A March 2, 2010 letter from IDNR terminates consultation with the issuance of an incidental take authorization.

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 affected 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 creating a harbor to facilitate truck and rail connection to barge transport. Comments received during the 401 Water Quality Certification public notice period will be evaluated before a final decision is made by the Agency.