

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA)
Notice of Public Hearing for Section 401 Water Quality Certifications

Southwestern Illinois Flood Prevention District

Madison, Monroe and St. Clair Counties

Public Hearing

Thursday, January 3, 2013 at 6:30 p.m.

Metro East Park & Recreational District
104 United Drive
Collinsville, Illinois

The IEPA Bureau of Water has received three applications for Section 401 water quality certification for discharge into waters of the United States associated with a Section 404 permit application received by the United States Army Corps of Engineers. The address of the applicant is Southwestern Illinois Flood Prevention District Council, 104, United Drive, Collinsville, IL 62234.

Log No. C-0001-12 (COE appl. #2011-805): The Southwestern Illinois Flood Prevention District Council (Applicant) has applied for a 401 water quality certification (WQC) for permanent wetland impacts associated with proposed levee improvements to the Metro East Sanitary District (MESD) levee system. The MESD levee, in addition to the 9-mile long Chain or Rocks levee (federally owned), forms a single levee system that provides flood protection for the cities of East St. Louis, Granite City, and other municipalities adjacent to the Mississippi River between River Miles (RM) 175 and 195. The Cahokia Canal borders the northern part of system and Prairie du Pont Creek borders the southern part of the system. More details are available at <http://www.epa.state.il.us/public-notices/2012/sifpdc-metro-east/index.pdf>.

Log No. C-0002-12 (COE appl. #2011-806): The Applicant has applied for a 401 WQC for permanent stream and wetland impacts associated with proposed levee improvements to the Wood River (WR) levee system. The WR levee system is located in Madison County adjacent to the Mississippi River between River Miles (RM) 195 and 203 and consists of three separate standalone levees; the Upper, Lower, and East-West Forks Wood River Drainage and Levee Districts. The Upper Wood River District originates near the Intersection of Langdon and Front Streets (US Highway 67) in Alton, Illinois, and extends downstream to Wood River Creek (1,641 acres of Mississippi River floodplain protection). The Lower Wood River District originates at the West Fork of Wood River Creek near Powder Mill Road in East Alton, Illinois, and extends downstream to the mouth of the Cahokia Creek Diversion Channel at RM 195 (10,687 acres of Mississippi River floodplain protection). The East-West Forks portion of the District occurs on the north side of the East and West Forks of the Wood River (428 acres of Mississippi River floodplain protection). More details are available at <http://www.epa.state.il.us/public-notices/2012/sifpdc-wood-river/index.pdf>.

Log No. C-0003-12 (COE appl. #2011-808): The Applicant has applied for Section 401 WQC for permanent wetland impacts associated with proposed levee improvements to the Prairie du Pont and Fish Lake Drainage and Levee Districts. The northern portion of this levee system is in St. Clair

County and is administered by the Prairie du Pont Sanitary and Levee District, while the southern portion of the levee is in Monroe County and is administered by the Fish Lake Drainage and Levee District. The project area is located east of the Mississippi River between River Miles 166 and 175, with the Cahokia Canal bordering the northern part of the system and Palmer Creek bisecting the levee where it joins the Mississippi River at RM 167.3. More details are available at <http://www.epa.state.il.us/public-notices/2012/sifpdc-prairie-dupont/index.pdf>.

The purpose of these improvements is to restore the level of protection such that the levee systems will be eligible for FEMA re-accreditation in accordance with 44 CFR 65.10 criteria, which requires protection from the 100-year flood shown on Flood Rate Insurance Maps. The improvements are required to control underseepage of groundwater and relieve excessive hydrostatic pressures beneath the levee system during flood conditions. In the absence of these control measures, high river levels would force groundwater to flow naturally as uncontrolled seepage throughout and along the landward side of the levee systems into low-lying areas such as wetlands, sloughs, and drainage channels. Uncontrolled seepage has the potential to infiltrate and erode permeable areas of the levees, create sandboils, and compromise the structural integrity of the levee systems.

The IEPA has made a tentative determination to issue the Section 401 water quality certifications in accordance with 35 Illinois Administrative Code (IAC) Subtitle C (*Water Pollution*), the Illinois Environmental Protection Act and the federal Clean Water Act. The 401 certification process is governed by the provisions of 35 IAC Part 395, *Procedures and Criteria for Certification of Applications for Federal Permits or Licenses for Discharges into Waters of the State*, which can be obtained online at <http://www.ipcb.state.il.us/documents/dsweb/Get/Document-12064/>. Inquiries about the certifications should be directed to Permit Engineer Thaddeus Faught, IEPA Division of Water Pollution Control, Permit Section, 1021 North Grand Avenue East, Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276, phone 217-782-3362, or e-mail thaddeus.faught@illinois.gov. The permit applications are available for examination at the IEPA offices in Springfield or online as indicated above.

Requests for special needs interpreters must be made to the IEPA hearing officer by **December 20, 2012**. The hearing will be held under 35 IAC Part 164, *Procedures for Informational Public Hearings*, which can be obtained at <http://www.ipcb.state.il.us/documents/dsweb/Get/Document-11864>.

The hearing record is a file containing the hearing transcript and written comments. **Written comments must be postmarked or e-mailed by midnight, February 4, 2013, when the hearing record closes** (e-mails with written comments **must be sent to** epa.publichearingcom@illinois.gov and should specify SW IL Flood Prevention District Council or C-0001-12 or C-0002-12 or C-0003-12 in the subject line). Email comments originating on third party systems or servers intended for submittal of multiple emails of the same or nearly the same content will not be accepted without prior approval of the hearing officer. The IEPA welcomes substantive written comments. Comments need not be notarized and sent to:

Hearing Officer Dean Studer
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
1021 North Grand Avenue East
P. O. Box 19276
Springfield, IL 62794-9276
Phone 217-558-8280 TDD (hearing impaired) 217-782-9143

All other comments not pertaining to these WQCs can be emailed to the hearing officer at dean.studer@illinois.gov.