

IEPA Log No.: **C-0683-12**

CoE appl. #: **N/A**

Public Notice Beginning Date: **September 24, 2014**

Public Notice Ending Date: **October 24, 2014**

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
Division of Water Pollution Control
Permit Section
1021 North Grand Avenue East
Post Office Box 19276
Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276
217/782-3362

Name and Address of Discharger: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, 1222 Spruce Street, St. Louis, Missouri 63103-2833

Discharge Location: Along the Mississippi River between river miles 0 and 300.

Name of Receiving Water: Mississippi River

Project Description: Maintenance dredging of the navigational channel.

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 an application received from 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
St. Louis Corps of Engineers – Mississippi River Miles 0-300 Dredging – Various Counties
IEPA Log No. C-0683-12
COE Log No. N/A
Contact: Eric Runkel (217)558-2012
September 24, 2014

The United States Corps of Engineers (applicant) has applied for 401 water quality certification for maintenance dredging of the navigational channel on the Mississippi River from River Mile 0 to 300. The affected reach of the river is located in the following counties: Calhoun, Jersey, Madison, St. Clair, Monroe, Randolph, Jackson, Union, and Alexander. The reach extends from just below Lock and Dam No. 22 to the confluence with the Ohio River. Dredging along the Mississippi River is necessary in order to maintain the 9-foot navigational channel. Dredged material may be removed by either hydraulic methods or mechanical methods. Most sediments in the river navigation channel are sandy. Due to the large sediment load carried by the waterway and continually changing flows, specific dredging locations and quantities to be dredged vary from year to year. Potential dredge material placement sites would include shoreline placement, floodplain placement, beneficial use site, or upland or contained placement as well as open water disposal. Placement areas are consistent with previous dredging projects. Prior to the dredging and placement of any dredged material, representatives of the Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois EPA, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Missouri Department of Conservation, and Missouri Department of Natural Resources will be notified in order to comment on any potential impacts and provide any necessary coordination. This is an on-going and continuous project for routine dredging of the Mississippi River by the applicant. The previous permit was issued under Illinois EPA #C-0330-05.

Identification and Characterization of the Affected Water Body.

The Mississippi River from River Mile 0 to 300 is a General Use Water. At River Mile 300, located in Calhoun County, the 7Q10 flow is approximately 16,510 cfs. At River Mile 0, located in Alexander County, the 7Q10 flow is approximately 49,200 cfs. The Mississippi River between these river mile markers is not listed as biologically significant in the 2008 Illinois Department of Natural Resources publication Integrating Multiple Taxa in a Biological Stream Rating System nor been given an integrity rating. The Mississippi River reach for this project are comprised of six segments listed as Waterbody Segments IL_K-21, IL_J-05, IL_J-02, IL_J, IL_J-36, and IL_I-84. The reach is enhanced in regard to the dissolved oxygen water quality standard for part of IL_K-21 (River Mile Marker 300.0 to north of Hamburg), part of IL_J-05 (from East Alton to Hartford), all of IL_J-02 (from Granite City to Brooklyn), all of IL_J (from Fairmont to south of Cahokia), part of IL_J-36 (north of E Carondelet to north of Valmeyer) and part of IL_I-84 (south of Thebes to the confluence with the Ohio River).

All waterbody segments are found on the 2014 Illinois 303(d) List.

The Mississippi River, Waterbody Segment IL_K-21 has been assessed under the Agency's 305(b)/303(d) program and is listed as fully supportive of Aquatic Life and Aesthetic Quality, but is listed as impaired for Fish Consumption; Mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls are listed as the causes of the impairment, and Primary Contact Recreation; fecal coliform is listed as the cause of the impairment. Secondary Contact has not been assessed.

The Mississippi River, Waterbody Segment IL_J-05 has been assessed under the Agency's 305(b)/303(d) program and is listed as fully supportive of Aquatic Life and Public and Food Processing Water Supplies, but is listed as impaired for Fish Consumption; Mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls are listed as the causes of the impairment, and Primary Contact Recreation; fecal coliform is listed as the cause of the impairment. Secondary Contact and Aesthetic Quality have not been assessed.

The Mississippi River, Waterbody Segment IL_J-02 has been assessed under the Agency's 305(b)/303(d) program and is listed as fully supportive of Aquatic Life, Public and Food Processing Water Supplies, Primary Contact Recreation and Secondary Contact, but is listed as impaired for Fish Consumption; Mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls are listed as the causes of the impairment. Aesthetic Quality has not been assessed.

The Mississippi River, Waterbody Segment IL_J has been assessed under the Agency's 305(b)/303(d) program and is listed as fully supportive of Aquatic Life and Public and Food Processing Water Supplies, but is listed as impaired for Fish Consumption; Mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls are listed as the causes of the impairment. Secondary Contact and Aesthetic Quality have not been assessed.

The Mississippi River, Waterbody Segment J-36 has been assessed under the Agency's 305(b)/303(d) program and is listed as fully supportive of Aquatic Life, Primary Contact Recreation and Secondary Contact, but is listed as impaired for Fish Consumption; Mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls are listed as the causes of the impairment. Aesthetic Quality has not been assessed.

The Mississippi River, Waterbody Segment IL_I-84 has been assessed under the Agency's 305(b)/303(d) program and is listed as fully supportive of Aquatic Life and Public and Food Processing Water Supplies, but is listed as impaired for Fish Consumption; Mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls are listed as the causes of the impairment and Primary Contact Recreation; fecal coliform is listed as the cause of the impairment. Secondary Contact and Aesthetic Quality have not been assessed.

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

Pollutant load increases that would occur from this project include some increases in suspended solids during the dredging and placement of the spoil material. The benthic habitat to be dredged will be disturbed but should revert to its previous condition of aquatic life support soon after dredging.

Fate and Effect of Parameters Proposed for Increased Loading.

The increase in suspended solids will be local and temporary. Placement areas will be the same (or very similar) to past dredging projects. This is a continuing project for the Corps.

Purpose and Anticipated Benefits of the Proposed Activity.

This project is necessary in order to maintain the 9-foot navigation channel on the Mississippi River. This will maintain the commercial and recreational uses of the river system.

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

The project will follow guidelines set forth by the Agency. Prior to the discharge of any dredged material, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois EPA, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Missouri Department of Conservation, and Missouri Department of Natural Resources shall be informed of the proposed dredging activity. Dredging shall occur in historic dredging locations. The historic dredging locations include reaches of the river(s) in which dredging has occurred in the past five years. If additional reaches are necessary, they need to be reviewed individually. Historic dredge placements sites, used within the last five years, may be utilized. Any new or additional dredge spoil placement sites will need to be reviewed individually. The least intrusive alternative would be to not allow dredging on the Mississippi River. However, this is not an acceptable alternative given that this is a useful project and will maintain commercial and recreational uses of the river system.

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

No comments have been received from IDNR.

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). We tentatively find that the proposed activity, utilizing historic dredging locations and placement sites, will result in the attainment of water quality standards. 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. This activity will benefit the community at large by maintaining commercial and recreational uses of the river system. Comments received during the 401 Water Quality Certification public notice period will be evaluated before a final decision is made by the Agency.