

IEPA Log No.: **C-0265-17**
CoE appl. #: **2017-806**

Public Notice Beginning Date: **September 11, 2018**
Public Notice Ending Date: **October 2, 2018**

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: Watco Companies, LLC, #2 Monsanto Ave., Sauget, IL 62201

Discharge Location: Section 22, T2N, R10W of the 3rd P.M. in St. Clair County within Sauget

Name of Receiving Water: Mississippi River Mile 178.2

Project Description: Cahokia marine terminal liquids dock.

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
Watco Companies, LLC. – Mississippi River Mile 178.2 – St. Clair County
IEPA Log No. C-0265-17
COE Log No. MVS-2017-806
Contact: Abby Brokaw 217/782-3362
September 11, 2018

Watco Companies (“Applicant”) has applied for a 401 Water Quality Certification for impacts associated with moving a liquids handling barge dock from its current location on the left descending bank of the Mississippi River at mile marker 178.2 UM to a new location downstream and further from the bank. The Applicant also proposes a new walkway with an onshore foundation and upgraded structure to house needed hoses, lines and couplings. The project is located in Sauget, St. Clair County, Illinois.

In the current position, the liquids handling barge dock and access walkway are subject to instability caused by low water grounding and high driftwood conditions. Additionally, these river conditions may compromise the existing hose connections, which could lead to a release into the Mississippi River.

The Applicant is proposing to relocate the liquids handling barge dock and upgrade the access walkway and liquid lines leading to the dock. The liquids handling barge dock will be placed approximately 52 feet further away from the bank and 32 feet further downstream, still within property limits of the Applicant’s Cahokia Marine Terminal. Moving the liquids handling barge dock away from shore will continue to allow for safe draft during low and high-water levels in the river. The only operational traffic in the project area is the Applicant’s coal loading terminals and operations, which will not be impacted.

The shift of the liquids handling barge dock downstream will also allow a balanced landing for the 120-foot engineered walkway. The walkway will be oriented to land on the shoreline directly east of the new liquids handling barge dock location. A new foundation will be constructed on the river shore and an additional pedestrian bridge section will cover the gap between grade at the existing fence line and the new foundation. The walkway truss will have hard piping installed for the liquids handling operations which will eliminate the exposure of hoses/lines/couplings close to or over the water. The location and construction of the walkway will not impact river traffic.

Identification and Characterization of the Affected Water Body.

The Mississippi River (IL_J) has 46500 cfs of flow during critical 7Q10 low-flow conditions and is classified as a General Use Water. At this location, 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*, or given an integrity rating in that document. The Mississippi River, Waterbody Segment IL_J, is listed on the draft 2016 Illinois Integrated Water Quality Report and Section 303(d) List as impaired for fish consumption use with potential causes given as mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls. Aquatic life and public and food processing water supply uses are fully supported. This segment of the Mississippi River is subject to enhanced dissolved oxygen standards.

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

The pollutant load increases likely to occur from project activities is an increase in total suspended solids. This increase is a normal and unavoidable result of the proposed project and will occur in the river at the point of construction activity. Benthic habitat will also be disturbed in the vicinity of the construction area. There is no expected degradation of the Mississippi River or terrestrial habitats; therefore, the applicant proposes no mitigation.

Fate and Effect of Parameters Proposed for Increased Loading.

The increase in suspended solids from the construction activities will be local and temporary. Although the benthic habitat will be disturbed by the construction activities, it is anticipated to recover and improve over time.

Purpose and Social & Economic Benefits of the Proposed Activity.

The purpose of the proposed relocation of the liquids handling barge dock is to address safety and environmental concerns caused by structural circumstances and river conditions.

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

The alternatives considered for addressing the safety and environmental concerns of the existing liquids handling barge dock structure included 1) do nothing or 2) relocate the liquids handling barge dock and upgrade the walkway. The least intrusive alternative will be to not complete the project. This is not an acceptable alternative given personnel safety issues and potential environmental concerns associated with low water conditions of the Mississippi River. An additional design alternative considered attaching the walkway to an existing power plant structure; however, that structure may be removed/demolished in the future due to age and deteriorating condition. The selected alternative to relocate the liquids handling barge dock, as well as upgrade the walkway and liquids handling operations, will reduce the potential personnel safety and environmental risks. The proposed project will follow conditions set forth by the Agency.

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

On July 3, 2018, an IDNR EcoCAT consultation was initiated, Project #1900077, and indicated that the Illinois Natural Heritage Database contains no record of State-listed threatened or endangered species, Illinois Natural Area Inventory sites, dedicated Illinois Nature Preserves, or registered Land and Water Reserves in the vicinity of the project location. The consultation was immediately terminated.

To complete the work, an area of 6 – 10 trees will need to be removed. The Applicant consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine necessary steps to protect local wildlife utilizing the area, including a bat survey. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Survey, who concurred that no suitable habitat exists on the project site for either of the endangered and threatened bat species known to occur in St. Clair County, Illinois.

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 the draft permit was written. We tentatively find that the proposed activity will result in the attainment of water quality standards and TMDL load allocations; that all existing uses of the receiving stream 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 addressing the safety and environmental concerns of the current liquids handling barge dock location and associated walkway and liquid lines. Comments received during the 401 Water Quality Certification public notice period will be evaluated before a final decision is made by the Agency.