

**Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Bureau of Water, Permit Section
(IEPA)**

2520 West Iles, Post Office Box 19276, Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276, 217/782-3362

The IEPA has issued a Public Notice of a request for a Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality certification that would allow the issuance of a federal permit for the discharge of pollutants to waters of the State.

Public Notice Beginning Date:

Monday, July 28, 2025

Public Notice Ending Date:

Monday, August 18, 2025

Agency Log No.: C-0108-24

Federal Permit Information: Federal permit/license no. LRC-2024-227 is under the jurisdiction of Chicago District, Regulatory Branch U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Name and Address of Discharger: Illinois State Police, Aaron Session - 801 S 7th Street, #400, Springfield, IL 62703

Discharge Location: In Statewide/Regional in Will County. Additional project location information includes the following: 19422 W Division St, Crest Hill, IL 60441

Name of Receiving Water: Des Plaines River

Project Name/Description: Construction of New Crime Lab and Police HQ - proposed construction of a new crime lab and police HQ consisting of 2 buildings, parking lots, paved walking paths on a 13 acre campus. Project will include abatement and demolition of existing water tower, service building, and site utilities. 0.96 acre of wetland will be impacted.

Construction Schedule: Not identified

The Public Notice period will begin and end on the dates indicated in the heading of this Public Notice. Interested persons are invited to submit written comments on the project to the IEPA at the above address. Commenters must provide their name and address along with comments on the certification request. The IEPA Log number must appear on each comment page. Commenters may include a request for public hearing. Only hearing requests and comments that pertain to Clean Water Act Section 401 authority will be considered. This authority provides consideration of whether the permit or license would be consistent with Sections 301, 302, 303, 306, or 307 of the CWA, as well as "any other appropriate requirement of State [or tribal] law". Requests for additional comment period must provide a demonstration of need. The final day of comment acceptance will be on the Public Notice Ending date shown above, unless the IEPA grants an extended notice period. The attached Fact Sheet provides a detailed description of the project and the findings of the IEPA's antidegradation assessment.

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 see the contact information below.

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Post Document. No. C-0108-24-07282025-PublicNoticeAndFactSheet.pdf

401 Water Quality Certification Fact Sheet for Illinois State Police Crime Lab

IEPA Log No. C-0108-24

Contact: Angie Sutton 217-782-9864

The Illinois State Police (ISP) Department has applied for a 401 Water Quality Certification for impacts associated with the construction of a new crime lab and police headquarters in Township 36 North, Range 10 East, Section 21, Will County, Illinois at 19422 and 19444 West Division Street in the City of Crest Hill. The proposed project is planned to be built by the Capital Development Board (CDB).

The project site, a 13-acre (Ac) campus, will consist of two buildings that will house a 29,900-square foot (sf) Division of Patrol Operations and the Division of Criminal Investigation, and a 45,510-sf building that will house the Division of Forensic Services. Improvements to the site will include one stormwater detention area, three bioretention areas, utilities extended from the correctional facility across Division Street, two 26-foot-wide asphalt vehicular entries from Division Street (one secured and one public), parking for 193 vehicles and 31 secured seized vehicles, landscaping, a five-foot wide asphalt wellness path, lighting, signage, and fence and gate enclosures.

The campus will be built on part of a 174-Ac parcel owned by the ISP and managed by the Will County Forest Preserve (WCFP) District. The location was determined due to a land transfer between WCFP and the ISP in which the street frontage would remain under ISP control, the remaining portion of land would go to Will County for management. Construction is funded by the Rebuild Illinois Capital Program which is overseen by the CDB. The site currently requires abatement and demolition of an existing water tower, service building, and site utilities. This project will replace the current Joliet Forensic Science Laboratory built in 1964 and is part of the plan to update old facilities and to reduce backlog for crime scene and DNA testing. The case backlog for crimes has been over a six month wait and several new facilities were planned and built throughout the State in order to decrease this backlog and to solve crimes faster.

The project is expected to permanently impact 1.04 Ac of jurisdictional wetland and 630 linear feet (LF) of stream. The majority of the wetland impacts will occur in Wetland A with just 1072 sf of impacts in Wetland B, a roadside ditch. Mitigation for 1.04 Ac of wetland impacts and 630 LF of stream impacts will be accomplished by purchasing wetland mitigation bank credits from the Cedar Creek A1 bank located in Will County and operated by Land and Water Resources, Inc. If credits are unavailable at Cedar Creek, other nearby banks in the service area with credits available will be investigated, including Muirhead Springs operated by the Forest Preserve District of Kane County and V3 Companies or Buffalo Creek operated by Lake County Division of Transportation and Hey & Associates. Mitigation credits will be purchased at the ratio set by USACE.

Information used in this review was obtained from the application documents dated April 17, 2024, May 23, 2024, December 9, 2024, and February 21, 2025. Additionally, a Water Budget Analysis dated December 6, 2024 as well as a Subsurface Exploration and Geotechnical Engineering Report dated July 12, 2022 were submitted as part of the application.

Identification and Characterization of the Affected Water Body.

On April 16 and March 13, 2024, Helianthus performed a wetland survey for the 21 Ac site. The site lies within part of the Will County Prairie Bluff Preserve and appears to have been planted in a prairie seed. The land was formerly used for crop production but is now predominately reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), brown fox sedge (*Carex vulpinoidea*), Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*), and cursed crowfoot (*Ranunculus sceleratus*). Two wetlands were identified on the property during the field visit. One wetland was an interconnected drainageway that runs northwest to southeast across the property. The second wetland was a fragment of roadside ditch that straddles the driveway for the onsite water tower.

Wetland A is a drainageway consisting of emergent wetland that forks at the water tower. The wetland was formerly farmed but after 2020, it and the surrounding field were planted and managed as prairie. During both site visits, water was observed actively flowing from northwest to southeast. The driveway to the water tower crosses Wetland A via a culvert. Some small spring features were evident just east of the culvert. The wetland also runs parallel to and then connects to a roadside ditch wetland along Division Street near the southeast corner of the property. Vegetation is comprised of early successional emergent and wet meadow vegetation. The dominant species were frost aster (*Symphotrichum pilosum*), sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*), giant foxtail (*Setaria faberi*), yellow foxtail (*Setaria pumila*), reed canary grass, river bulrush (*Bolboschoenus fluvialis*) and Pennsylvania smartweed (*Persicaria pensylvanica*). These species colonized the wetland once cultivation ceased five years ago. The Chicago Region Floristic Quality Assessment for this wetland complex calculated a Mean C of 1.82 and an FQI of 13.78. Based on the vegetation, this wetland does not meet criteria for a High-Quality Aquatic Resource (HQR) wetland.

Wetland B is in a roadside ditch on either side of the existing driveway for the water tower. It is an emergent wetland not connected to Wetland A and is separated by a segment of upland vegetation within the ditch feature. Wetland B had one inch of surface water with a gravel fill layer 8 inches below the surface. Dominant species here consisted of reed canary grass, giant foxtail, and smooth brome (*Bromus inermis*). The Chicago Region Floristic Quality Assessment for this wetland complex calculated a Mean C of 0.42 and an FQI of 1.44. Based on the vegetation, this wetland does not meet criteria for a High-Quality Aquatic Resource (HQR) wetland.

A drainage feature is located within Wetland A where the two forks of the wetland merge into one to the east of the driveway for the water tower. This feature may meet the criteria of a waterway because it has developed bed and banks through erosive forces and there was active flow during both site visits. This feature continues running east and ultimately flows into the roadside ditch along the north side of Division Street. A spring feature is visible just upstream of this point where the bed and banks have formed.

The project is expected to permanently impact 0.96 Ac of jurisdictional wetland and 450 linear feet (LF) of stream. The majority of the wetland impacts will occur in Wetland A with just 310 sf (0.007 Ac) of impacts in Wetland B, a roadside ditch.

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 total suspended solids. These increases are a normal and unavoidable result of construction and grading that may occur in the wetland. The existing benthic habitat of the wetland would be permanently removed by grading/filling activities. The proposed construction activities include the discharge of fill material within the project area for parking/driveway, bioretention areas, and water management activities. Clean fill is required for the project and includes 655 Cubic Yards (CY) asphalt for the pavement and walking path, 109 CY concrete for equipment pads and sidewalks, 955 CY topsoil, and 3 CY of rip rap. The infiltration will require a total of 102 CY of fill that includes mulch, topsoil and stone.

Wetland impacts are due to the new west driveway and entrance (only impacts to Wetland B), widening of the roadside ditch and road, the new parking that surrounds Building B (forensic laboratory), the fence line, and the bioretention feature. Most of the development is designed to be built at grade, and fill material will be required to create the parking lot area. Additional impacts include construction of the bioretention basin, and landscaping. A stormwater detention pond created in where the two forks of the wetland join will be excavated, and an underdrain placed (this is where stream impacts will occur).

Fate and Effect of Parameters Proposed for Increased Loading.

Wetland and stream mitigation for the proposed 1.04 acres of impacted wetland and the 630 linear feet of stream will be accomplished by purchasing credits from the nearest wetland mitigation bank, which is the Cedar Creek A1 bank located in Will County, IL and operated by Land and Water Resources, Inc. If credits are unavailable at Cedar Creek, other nearby banks in the service area with credits available will be investigated, including Muirhead Springs operated by the Forest Preserve District of Kane County and V3 Companies or Buffalo Creek operated by Lake County Division of Transportation and Hey & Associates. Mitigation credits will be purchased at the ratio set by USACE.

Although the ISP is the owner of the entire 174-acre parcel, a land swap was conducted between ISP and the Will County Forest Preserve, which gave ISP the frontage along Division Street to use for facilities and left the remaining part of the property along IL-53/S. Broadway Street under the control of and management by the Will County Forest Preserve District. The rationale for this is that the area along S. Broadway is part of a primary recharge area for the Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve and the Des Plaines River to the east. The ISP has already used a portion of the area along W. Division Street for their new firing range. The remaining land is what is being used for the proposed project in this application.

Soil erosion and stormwater BMPs will be implemented to protect the quality and quantity of groundwater. To further address groundwater concerns, oil-water separators will be installed. The dry basin that was originally planned, is being redesigned as a wet bottom basin with native wetland plants to help infiltrate and improve the quality of water from the development and to provide groundwater recharge, and a stormwater detention pond is being constructed. Landscape plans will also include more native plants.

Purpose and Social & Economic Benefits of the Proposed Activity.

This project will replace the current Joliet Forensic Science Laboratory built in 1964 and is part of the plan to update old facilities and to reduce backlog for crime scene and DNA testing. The case backlog for crimes has been over a six month wait and several new facilities were planned and built throughout the State in order to decrease this backlog and to solve crimes faster. The new campus will be a state-of-the-art facility, intended to provide a safe and secure environment for working with the highest standards of forensic science, securing safe handling of evidence and optimization of forensic diagnostic results in a more contemporary laboratory environment.

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

The Applicant has provided the following alternatives:

Site Location Alternatives:

The proposed 21 Ac project site was chosen because of its proximity to other ISP Facilities, easy access and frontage, and the availability of existing utilities from the State Correctional facility to tie into across the street and thereby assisting in overall construction expenditure. The property is already owned by ISP so no new properties were required to be purchased. The land transfer leaves the remaining part of the property along IL-53/S. Broadway under control and management of WCFPD. If ISP developed the property along IL-53/S. Broadway, it would cause damage to the primary recharge area. The ISP has already used a portion of the area along W. Division Street for their new firing range. Therefore, remaining land is what is available for the proposed project in this application. Of the 21 acres available, the 13 acres on the east side of the parcel were chosen as there were more wetlands on the west side of the parcel. This avoids and preserves 1.05 acres of wetland to the west of the development.

No Action Alternative:

In the No-Action alternative, if these facilities are not built, the backlog for crime testing will remain high, the aging facilities in Joliet will continue to be used, and the opportunity to implement new technologies for crime analysis will not be realized. The additional jobs anticipated as a result of the construction of the facilities and employees for the new facilities will not be created. No wetlands will be disturbed by this No-Action alternative. However, the No-Action alternative does not meet the basic forensic services needs of the state, which is the purpose for the project. For these reasons, this was determined not to be the preferred alternative.

Alternative 1:

In Alternative 1, the proposed building is a single, long building of 80,000 sf stretching across the site from west to east with a 244-space parking lot in front of the building. Two access drives are placed on either side of the development where a dry bottom stormwater detention pond is located between the

two driveways in front of the parking lot. A total of 1.20 acres of wetlands would be impacted by this alternative.

Alternative 1 was rejected because this configuration does not allow for the necessary functions and separations between key departments and flows. The ISP determined that they needed separate facilities so that the level of security could be higher for the ISP District 5 Headquarters versus the Forensic Science Laboratory. Additionally, the two programs do not share much functional program use and the secured parking is all on one side and needs to be separated for each user. It also lacks outdoor activity areas and walking path, critical for the LEED Silver certification. There is no availability within the project footprint for an entrance plaza to distribute the various flows to entrances or main entranceway. Alternative 1 also has the most environmental impact. For these reasons, Alternative 1 was determined not to be the preferred alternative.

Alternative 2:

In Alternative 2, the buildings are split into two buildings that line up with each other, stretching west. The 224-space parking lot stretches across the front of the buildings which incorporate bioswales in the medians, thereby reducing volume sent to the detention basin. The detention basin was reduced in size and shifted to the east to avoid more wetland. However, the second driveway could not be shifted as the slope was too steep and could not be reduced due to availability of space to do so. For this reason, only one driveway could be provided in Alternative 2. This alternative would impact 0.59 Ac.

Alternative 2 was rejected due to only being able to provide one driveway for the entire project. This would make access/safety issues associated with fire and emergency vehicles, as well as security around the ISP Headquarters. ISP Headquarters requires separate access points for the public, and patrol and detectives, as well as detainees. Crime Scene Services Command of the Forensic Lab would need a secure gated parking area provided; however, this is not possible with this alternative. New State buildings are required to meet silver LEED certification at minimum, which is not possible with this alternative due to the lack of walking paths and plaza areas available. Separate and outlined various areas and labs are not provided, and the rectangular building shape does not provide as many windows. The detention basin has been moved to avoid the wetland, although it may still have indirect effects to the wetland by affecting the groundwater table due to the need to excavate five feet deeper than the wetland, potentially draining it. This alternative does not meet all of the project objectives; however, it does avoid more wetland impacts.

Preferred Alternative:

This alternative limits development to the eastern 13 Ac of the 21 Ac of available land in the proposed project area. It consists of two steel-framed buildings with concrete footings and slab-on-grade floors. Building shapes are designed with a greater perimeter to provide more natural light and are elongated so that various labs and departments are better segregated. The Troop 3 - Lockport building will house the Division of Patrol Operations and the Division of Criminal Investigation, which is a 29,900-sf building including office and administration space, training rooms, processing and evidence rooms, and garages for vehicle inspection. The Joliet Forensic Science Laboratory will house the Division of Forensic Services

which includes Forensic Services Command and Crime Services Command, and the 45,510-sf building will include a DNA lab, Latent Prints lab, Drug Chem lab, Toxicology lab, Firearms lab, Triage, Evidence Collection and Storage, CSCS Garages, Crime Scene Staff Offices, an indoor firing range, a conference room/training center, and administrative office space. The buildings are non-overlapping and set at angles which maximize views of the adjacent prairie preserve property to the north. The west driveway lines up with the correctional facility's driveway providing better traffic safety and aligns with existing utilities. ISP Headquarters has a separate driveway, and greenspace/wellness paths create a campus feel while meeting LEED certification requirements.

The site improvements will include one dry-bottom stormwater detention area, three bioretention areas, telephone, electric, sanitary, and water extended from the correctional facility across Division Street, two 26' wide asphalt vehicular entries from Division Street (one secured and one public), parking for 193 vehicles and 31 secured seized vehicles, landscaping, a five-foot wide asphalt wellness path, lighting, signage, and fence and gate enclosures. The 224 parking spaces provided, meets the City of Crest Hill code requirements. The buildings also must be set back at least 30 feet north of Division Street. IDOT has also required road widening of Division Street.

A total of 1.04 Ac of wetland and 630 LF of stream is proposed to be impacted by the Preferred Alternative.

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

A habitat assessment for the Federally Endangered Hines Emerald Dragonfly (HED) was conducted in early July of 2024. This assessment determined that there is no larval habitat or suitable breeding habitat for the HED at the site and larvae were not found during this assessment. No HED adults were seen flying in the project area during the assessment. The Habitat Assessment Report is currently under review by the US Fish & Wildlife Service. This was transmitted to the USACE on July 19, 2024 from Rada Architects.

An EcoCAT consultation (Project # 2410831 and 2412512) was initiated on February 21, 2025. The Illinois Natural Heritage Database showed the following protected resources may be in the vicinity of the project location:

Class III Groundwater

- Lockport Prairie

Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI)

- Lockport Prairie
- Lockport Prairie East

Illinois Nature Preserves Commission Lands

- Dellwood Park West Nature Preserve
- Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve

State Threatened or Endangered Species

- Blanding's Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*)
- Hine's Emerald Dragonfly (*Somatochlora hineana*)
- Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*)
- Spotted Turtle (*Clemmys guttata*)

"Due to the project scope and proximity to protected resources, the Department offers the following comments and recommends the following actions be taken to avoid adversely impacting listed species and/or protected natural areas in the vicinity of the project:"

Lockport Prairie Class III Groundwater

"EcoCAT indicates this project falls within the Lockport Prairie Groundwater recharge area, which protects the integrity of the Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve. Class III Groundwaters are groundwaters that are particularly sensitive and ecologically vital. The modification of groundwater quality and quantity which may affect conditions within a Nature Preserve is prohibited. Per the *Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act [525 ILCS 30/17]*, all public agencies shall recognize that the protection of nature preserves, and associated Class 3 Groundwaters, is the public policy of the State and shall avoid the planning of any action that would adversely affect them. To avoid adverse impact to Lockport Prairie Class III Groundwater, the following best management practices (BMPs) should be implemented:

- Oil-water separators be installed on all parking lot drains and regularly maintained.
- Use the lightest weight equipment possible to complete the job.
- All appropriate BMPs, including balloon or large tires, should be used whenever possible to reduce compaction.
- Disc site upon completion to de-compact the surface after final soil is placed to ensure good infiltration.
- Naturalized permeable basins and swales should be included in the design."

Lockport Prairie INAI, Lockport Prairie East INAI, & Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve

"EcoCAT indicates this project is in the vicinity of Lockport Prairie INAI, Lockport Prairie East INAI, & Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve. The Department recommends the following to avoid impacts to Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve:

- Any required night lighting should follow International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) guidance to minimize the effect of light pollution on wildlife.

- Soil erosion and sediment control BMPs should be implemented and properly maintained. If erosion control blanket is to be used, wildlife-friendly plastic-free blanket should be used to prevent the entanglement of native wildlife. If wildlife-friendly plastic-free blanket cannot be used, then the plastic erosion control blanket should be removed once vegetation is established.
- Good housekeeping practices should be implemented and maintained during and after construction to prevent trash and other debris from inadvertently blowing or washing into nearby natural areas.”

Dellwood Park West Nature Preserve

The Department has determined that adverse impacts to this area are unlikely.

Blanding’s Turtle, Hine’s Emerald Dragonfly, Least Bittern, & Spotted Turtle

“The Department has determined that adverse impacts to these species are unlikely.

Please note that due to the federal status of the Hine’s Emerald Dragonfly, and its potential occurrence in the project area, coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may be necessary and is separate from this consultation and Illinois State regulations.”

Given the above recommendations are adopted, the Department has determined that impacts to these protected resources are unlikely. The Department has determined impacts to other protected resources in the vicinity of the project location are also unlikely.

Interagency Wetland Policy Act

“The project proponent has indicated that on-site mitigation will be conducted on Forest Preserve District property adjacent to the project area, and that mitigation will be completed at a 6:1 ratio per USACE requirements, therefore this project exceeds the maximum mitigation ratio required for IWPA and in is compliance with Title 17 *Illinois Administrative Code* Part 1090 of the *Interagency Wetland Policy Act*.”

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 assessment was written. We tentatively find that the proposed activity would result in the attainment of water quality standards; 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 would benefit the State of Illinois by providing a new state-of-the-art facility, intended to provide a safe and secure environment for working with the highest standards of forensic science, as well as reducing backlog for crime scene and DNA testing. Comments received during the 401 Water Quality Certification public notice period will be evaluated before a final decision is made by the Agency.