

IEPA Log No.: **C-0072-18**
CoE appl. #: **LRL-1981-90070-mck**

Public Notice Beginning Date: **May 30, 2019**
Public Notice Ending Date: **June 20, 2019**

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: Consolidated Grain and Barge Co., 201 Missouri Ave., Mound City, IL 62963

Discharge Location: Right Bank of Ohio River, Mile 972.9, Mound City, Illinois

Name of Receiving Water: Ohio River

Project Description: 10-year maintenance dredging

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 Wei Han at 217/782-3362.

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Consolidated Grain and Barge Co. (“Applicant”) has applied for 401 Water Quality Certification to reauthorize maintenance dredging over the next 10-year period along the river bank of the Ohio River, Mile 972.9, Mound City, Pulaski County, Illinois, and Ballard County, Kentucky. The Applicant previously had a maintenance dredging permit, USACE permit number LRL-2006-1457-GJD, which expired December 31, 2017.

No changes are proposed in the existing maintenance dredging activity. The material would be moved to the side of the dredged area by use of a cable crane and clamshell bucket (mechanical dredging method), which sits on a work barge. Initially, the footprint to be dredged is approximately 8,700 cubic yards of material from around the loading dock and access channel. Dredge material, predominately composed of silt, would then be placed back into the River. The Applicant anticipates that the annual maintenance would result in a discharge of 5,000 cubic yards of dredged material every 2-3 years, if needed.

The purpose of the 10-year maintenance dredging permit request, is to maintain adequate river depth over the 10-year period. The Applicant last conducted a dredge event at this facility in 2012 - 2013. Information used in this review was obtained from the permit application dated November 15, 2017, and subsequent materials.

Identification and Characterization of the Affected Water Body

The Ohio River is a General Use water and has 54,010 cfs of flow during critical 7Q10 low-flow conditions upstream of the project site. The Ohio River, Waterbody Segment IL_A-920-981, 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 dioxin (including 2, 3, 7, 8 – TCDD), mercury, and polychlorinated biphenyls; and primary contact use with a potential cause given as fecal coliform. Aquatic life and public and food processing water supplies uses are fully supported. The Ohio River is not listed as a biologically significant stream in the 2008 Illinois Department of Natural Resources Publication and *Integrating Multiple Taxa in a Biological Stream Rating System* or given an integrity rating in that document. This Waterbody Segment of the Ohio River is subject to enhanced dissolved oxygen standards.

Identification of Proposed Pollutant Load Increases or Potential Impacts on Uses

Pollutant load increases of total suspended solids are likely. This increase, a normal and unavoidable result of dredging and placement of dredged materials, may occur in the Ohio River at the point of activity. Benthic habitat would be disturbed but impacts to aquatic life uses of this area are not anticipated.

Fate and Effect of Parameters Proposed for Increased Loading

The increase in suspended solids would be local and temporary. Increased depths in navigable areas may reduce sediment agitation from boating traffic and reduce the volume of resuspended solids. Although the benthic habitat would be disturbed by the proposed activities, it is anticipated to recover over time.

Purpose and Social & Economic Benefits of the Proposed Activity

The Applicant provides various services for grain farmers, including buying, storing, selling, and shipping of crops. The maintenance dredging is needed to restore water depths to a level sufficient for barge loading activities.

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

On-Site Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative): The preferred alternative includes dredging approximately 8,700 cubic yards of sediment from around the existing loading dock and access channel by a cable crane and clam shell bucket. The dredged material would be placed back into the River. The Applicant would perform maintenance dredging every 2-3 years which would result in a discharge of 5,000 cubic yards of dredged material.

On-Site Alternative 2: This alternative includes dredging approximately 8,700 cubic yards of sediment from around the existing loading dock and access channel by a cable crane and clam shell bucket. The material would be placed on a barge and hauled/offloaded to an approved upland disposal site or a location on the Applicant's property. The Applicant estimated the cost for dredging and hauling material to an offsite upland location (which would include the mobilization/demobilization of the work barge, three empty barges, clamshell dredging cost, transportation of dredged material for disposal and the unloading and disposing of the dredged material) to be approximately \$353,200 for the initial 8,700 cubic yards of material, and approximately \$180,000 for each 5,000 cubic yards of material dredging event (estimated at more than 4 times the cost of the preferred alternative). Due to the logistics of handling the dredge material up to three separate times (i.e. loaded onto a work barge, transported to the disposal site, and offloaded to the disposal site) and the associated costs, this alternative was determined infeasible.

The least impactful alternative would be to not complete the project; however, the build-up of sediment would be a hinderance to barge loading activities. The Applicant would follow conditions set forth by the Agency and USACE.

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

On April 23, 2019, an IDNR EcoCAT consultation, Project #1910060, was initiated and indicated that the Illinois Natural Heritage Database contains record of the following State-listed threatened or endangered species in the vicinity of the project location: Black Sandshell (*Ligumia recta*), Ebonyshell (*Fusconaia ebena*), and Northern Madtom (*Noturus stigmosus*). After further evaluation, IDNR concluded that adverse effect is unlikely and the consultation was terminated, per a letter dated April 30, 2019.

On March 6, 2018, USFWS indicated that endangered species collection reports available to the Service do not indicate that federally listed or proposed endangered or threatened species occur within the impact area of the project. Based on the information available at the time, USFWS does not believe that the proposed project would cause adverse effects to listed species.

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 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; and the activity will restore and maintain water depths needed for barge loading activities. Comments received during the 401 Water Quality Certification public notice period will be evaluated before a final decision is made by the Agency.