

IEPA Log No.: **C-0280-14**  
CoE appl. #: **N/A**

Public Notice Beginning Date: **April 3, 2015**  
Public Notice Ending Date: **April 17, 2015**

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  
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, Chicago District – 231 South  
LaSalle Street, Chicago, IL 60604

**Discharge Location:** Near Waukegan Harbor in Section 22 of Township 45N, Range 12E of the 3rd  
P.M. in Lake County.

**Name of Receiving Water:** Lake Michigan

**Project Description:** Proposed mechanical maintenance dredging over a period of 10 years and up to  
125,000 cubic yards per year from Waukegan Approach Channel and Advanced Maintenance  
Area with open water disposal within Lake Michigan using a hopper or split hull barge.

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 Darren Gove at 217/782-3362.

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Fact Sheet for Antidegradation Assessment  
For U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago District  
IEPA Log No. C-0280-14  
COE Log No. N/A  
Contact: Diane Shasteen (217) 558-2012  
Public Notice Start Date: April 3, 2015

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The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE), Chicago District (applicant) has applied for Section 401 water quality certification for impacts associated with an annual increase of 50,000 cubic yards of dredged material from within Waukegan Harbor approach channel and advanced maintenance area. The Applicant proposes to mechanically dredge approximately 125,000 cubic yards of dredge material per year for 10 years. The Applicant was previously approved to remove 75,000 cubic yards of dredge material annually. The Approach Channel contains littoral sands that have been shown to be suitable for open water disposal in Lake Michigan. The dredged material will be used as either beach nourishment within Illinois Beach State Park or at a site about one mile south of the harbor. The COE has been conducting navigation dredging at the harbor since 1889 and currently dredges on an annual or biennial basis. The project is in Lake County, Section 22, Township 45 North, Range 12 East.

Antidegradation assessment materials were received from the applicant under a May 30, 2014, cover, 401 Application Review, Waukegan Harbor Approach Channel Dredging, Chicago District, ACOE Permit # Corps Project, IEPA Log # C-0280-13 received on June 4, 2014.

#### **Identification and Characterization of the Affected Water Body.**

The receiving waters are located entirely within the Lake Michigan basin. Waterbody Segment IL\_QLM-01 is listed in the Illinois Integrated Water Quality Report and Section 303(d) List 2012 as impaired for Fish Consumption use; Mercury and polychlorinated byphenyls are given as the causes of this impairment and Aesthetic Quality use; Phosphorus is given as the cause of this impairment. The list shows the lake fully supporting Aquatic Life, Public and Food Processing Water Supplies, Primary Contact Recreation and Secondary Contact Uses.

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

The pollutant load increases that would occur from this project include possible increases in suspended solids locally along the shoreline from dredged material. Existing benthos directly beneath where the dredging is proposed would be permanently removed. Fish eggs and larvae may be smothered by the proposed dredging activity, both at the dredge site and the replenishment site. Elutriate test results suggest potential increase in loading during disposal for Total Dissolved Solids (TDS), Lead, Zinc, Ammonia-nitrogen, Phosphorus, Sulfate and Chloride. The dredged material has historically been mostly sand (>80%), which will contain a minimal amount of contaminants.

#### **Fate and Effect of Parameters Proposed for Increased Loading.**

The increase in suspended solids and other parameters listed above will be local and temporary. Fish and other free-swimming organisms will tend to avoid the construction area; the area will be

used again by those fishes soon after construction ends. The dredge material will be used to nourish the beach directly south of Waukegan Harbor or at Illinois Beach State Park (IBSP).

The disposal areas were examined for water quality standards issues using *Great Lakes Dredge Material Testing and Evaluation Manual* and *Evaluation of Dredged Material Proposed for Discharge in Waters of the U.S* (Inland Testing Manual 1998).

Modeling by the COE concluded that substances associated with the sediment will disperse inside the disposal area within a very short time frame.

The COE concluded,

“Statistical comparisons between background and monitoring sample results did not indicate any difference between the data sets and it was concluded that sediment disposal operations are not having an impact on water quality in Lake Michigan.”

A detailed description of the most recent sampling and analytical results can be found in the Waukegan Approach Channel Monitoring 2014 and Contaminant Determination for Dredging and Open Water Disposal, dated February 2015, submitted in accordance with conditions of Illinois EPA permit #2005-LM-2830 and all subsequent revisions, prepared by the USACE, Chicago District. Additional modeling information was provided by the COE on October 30, 2014.

### **Purpose and Social & Economic Benefits of the Proposed Activity.**

This project will restore safe navigation to Waukegan Harbor and provide beach nourishment for local area beaches. Information provided by the COE indicates that Waukegan Harbor handles over 500,000 tons of goods and material in a given year. Economic evaluations concluded approximately 6.0 million dollars in direct revenue and over 17 million dollars in overall revenue to the regional economy, creates 40 direct jobs and 114 indirect jobs and generates labor income greater than 6.0 million dollars over a five-year period.

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

The administration of the proposed project will follow conditions set forth by the Agency and COE. A no action scenario concluded that continued shoaling would eventually lead to severe restrictive access or permanent closure of the harbor.

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

An Eco-CAT endangered species consultation with Illinois Department of Natural Resources was submitted on September 17, 2014 for the proposed approach channel dredging area. In an

electronic response dated September 17, 2014, IDNR stated that the project was not likely to adversely impact protected resources and the consultation was terminated.

Two Eco-CAT endangered species consultations with Illinois Department of Natural Resources were submitted on December 23, 2013 for the proposed disposal areas. In an electronic response dated December 26, 2013, IDNR stated that the project was not likely to adversely impact protected resources and that the consultations were terminated.

### **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 antidegradation review summary was written. We tentatively find that the proposed activity will result in the attainment of water quality standards; that all existing uses of the impacted waters 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 improve use of the harbor and will provide beach nourishment to local area beaches. Comments received during the 401 Water Quality Certification public notice period will be evaluated before a final decision is made by the Agency.