PUBLIC NOTICE

US Army Corps of Engineers Rock Island District

Applicant: U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

Date: February 13, 2004

Expires: March 4, 2004

CEMVR-OD-P-436230

Section: 404

Joint Public Notice
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Illinois Department of Natural Resources/Office of Water Resources

1. **Applicant**. U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Clock Tower Building, Rock Island, Illinois 61204-2004.

2. **Project Location**. Sections 10 and 11, Township 18 North, Range 12 West; near the City of Beardstown, Cass County, Illinois; approximate Illinois River mile 88.9 (left descending bank).

3. **Project Description**.

a. Purpose. The basic purpose of this project is to maintain appropriate project width and depth of the nine-foot commercial navigation channel on the Illinois Waterway to allow for the transport of commodities, etc. The overall project purpose of the project is to attempt to reduce downstream dredging needed through the construction of a sediment trap. The purpose of the experimental sediment trap project is to determine the rate at which the sediment trap fills and the grain size of the sediment that fills the trap in order to evaluate the potential for this type of sediment trap project to reduce future downstream maintenance dredging by capturing the sediment at a defined location.

b. Background. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District (District) is directed by Congress to maintain a 9-Foot Navigation Channel on the Illinois Waterway. Channel maintenance involves dredging of accumulated sediment to restore the channel to proper navigation dimensions to meet commercial navigation needs.

c. Proposed Project. The project purpose is to reduce future downstream dredging at chronic dredge cuts. One chronic dredge cut is located at Illinois Waterway river miles 86.2 to 89.5 near Beardstown, Illinois. This dredge cut is made up of two smaller dredge cuts – the Grape Island dredge cut at river mile 86.2 to 87.5 and the Beardstown cut at river mile 87.5 to 89.5. These collectively are referred to as the Beardstown dredge cut.

(1) Sediment Trap. An experimental sediment trap (approximately 5.1 acres in size with a depth of approximately 3 feet) will be excavated at the mouth of the Sangamon River in Beardstown. Approximately 24,200 cubic yards of sediment are proposed to be hydraulically dredged from the sediment trap. This experimental sediment trap will evaluate the effectiveness of a sediment trap in that location to enable better scheduling of dredging the Beardstown dredge cut and potentially to reduce the number of potential or imminent closures within the navigation channel. These benefits may occur because some sediment may be captured within the confines of the sediment trap before it can continue downstream to be deposited within the chronic dredge cut. If the District determines that the experimental sediment trap will have benefits to the maintenance of the navigation channel, it may evaluate the potential for maintaining a permanent sediment trap in that location or another location within the Sangamon River. Any permanent sediment trap will be evaluated under future environmental documentation.

(2) Pilot Channel. The previously excavated small boat channel will be re-excavated to create the pilot channel needed to allow for workboat and pipeline access between the sediment trap and the placement site within the Beardstown harbor. The channel allowed boats to go back and forth from the Illinois River to the Beardstown harbor. That channel has since mostly filled in with sediment deposited at the mouth of the Sangamon River, and boat access is currently only available between the Illinois River and the Beardstown harbor during high water. Approximately 7,000 cubic yards of material is expected to be mechanically dredged to construct the pilot channel, which will be approximately 40 feet wide, 6 feet deep, and 850 feet long. The remaining area between

the pilot channel and the placement site is currently deep enough to allow for access of the pipeline and workboat access. The pilot channel will be mechanically excavated and the excavated sediments will be placed behind the containment berm at the placement site within the Beardstown harbor. This channel must be constructed prior to the dredging of the sediment trap so that the access to the placement site is assured during low-water conditions. The pilot channel will be constructed during high water conditions so that the boats used for mechanical dredging can reach the placement site within the Beardstown harbor. If appropriate high water conditions do not occur in 2004, the pilot channel will be constructed during the next year that has the appropriate high water conditions. The sediment trap would be excavated when funding and logistics allow. Approximately 0.4 acre of riverine wetland will be impacted in order to create the pilot channel. This would be expected to fill back in over time and become vegetated with wetland species if the channel were again abandoned. The City of Beardstown, however, currently plans to re-open a marina within the harbor and utilize the pilot channel to allow boats to access the Illinois River from the marina.

(3) Dredged Material Placement. The dredged placement site is located along the left descending bank of the Illinois Waterway at approximate river mile 89.0. The approximately 300-foot-wide by 600-foot-long placement site (approximately 3 acres) is an open water area within the Beardstown harbor. A permanent containment berm will be constructed to hold the dredged material as it dewaters. The berm will be 12 feet in height, with 3:1 slopes on the riverside and 4:1 slopes on the containment side, and a 10-foot minimum top width. Sandy material used to construct the containment berm would be trucked to the placement site from the Beardstown Dredge Cut Dredged Material Management Plan Placement Site 1 at RM 87.7L. The placement site will be bordered by the containment berm to the northwest, the existing levee to the southwest and southeast, and the marina peninsula to the northeast. A drop structure would be installed in the containment berm after the mechanical dredging of the pilot channel and before the hydraulic dredging of the sediment trap to allow for adequate drainage of the placement site during hydraulic dredging. The City of Beardstown currently has plans to dredge the harbor to enable boat usage of a new marina in that area. Once the placement site has been filled to capacity and has sufficiently dewatered, the City of Beardstown currently plans to create a parking lot at the placement site. Once this is done, there will be no additional capacity in the placement site for dredged material. If the currently proposed experimental sediment trap is shown to provide benefits to the maintenance of the 9-foot navigation channel, a new placement site would need to be identified in order to dredge the sediment trap on a more permanent basis.

(4) Mitigation. Approximately 0.4 acre of wetland and mudflat habitat would be impacted to create a pilot channel to bring the hydraulic pipeline from the sediment trap to the placement site within the Beardstown harbor. Two mitigation alternatives have been considered. A decision on which compensatory mitigation site to utilize will be made after review of all public comments received.

- Alternative – wetland enhancement. This alternative involves the enhancement of approximately 1.7 acres of wetland by excavating the existing reed canary grass-dominated wetland approximately 2 feet in order to remove the top layer of silt and the reed canary grass rhizomes. Reed canary grass is an invasive species that provides minimal wildlife habitat. The top layer of silt over the original sandy substrate at the site was brought there through construction impacts from the adjacent roadway and medical complex. A culvert will be installed below the roadway that separates the mitigation site from the existing larger wetland complex to the west of the site. This would bring a surface water connection from the wetland complex into the mitigation site, along with seeds from the wetland plants in the larger wetland complex. The mitigation site is expected to revegetate with cattails, which dominate the larger wetland complex.

- Alternative – construction of frog ponds. This alternative involves the construction of a series of frog ponds to provide habitat for the State-threatened Illinois chorus frog and other wetland-dependent species. The frog ponds will be constructed on land adjacent to the Beardstown DMMP Placement Site 1, where the District constructed frog ponds in 2002 and 2003. Approximately 0.8 acre of wetlands would be created through the construction of the frog ponds.

(5) Coordination. The project has been coordinated with the following: Beardstown Sanitary District; City of Beardstown; Illinois Department of Natural Resources; Illinois Environmental Protection Agency; Illinois Department of Agriculture; Cass County Health Department; Illinois Historic Preservation Agency; United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service; and the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region V.

4. Agency Review and Where to Reply.

a. Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers. The project plans are being processed under the provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344).

b. State of Illinois.

(1) The applicant has applied to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) for water quality certification, or waiver thereof, for the proposed activity in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. Certification or waiver indicates that IEPA believes the activity will not violate applicable water quality standards. The review by the IEPA is conducted in accordance with the Illinois water quality standards under 35 Illinois Administrative Code Subtitle C. The water quality standards provide for the IEPA to review individual projects by providing an antidegradation assessment, which includes an evaluation of alternatives to any proposed increase in pollutant loading that may result from this activity. The "Fact Sheet" containing the antidegradation assessment for this proposed project may be found on the IEPA's web site, at www.epa.state.il.us/public-notices/. In the event that the IEPA is unable to publish the "Fact Sheet" corresponding to the timeframe of this Joint Public Notice, a separate public notice and "Fact Sheet" will be published by the IEPA at the web site identified above. You may also obtain a copy of the "Fact Sheet" by contacting the IEPA at the address or telephone number shown below. Written comments specifically concerning possible impacts to water quality should be addressed to: Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Bureau of Water, Watershed Management Section, 1021 N. Grand Avenue East, P.O. Box 19276, Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276. A copy of the written comments should be provided to the Corps of Engineers. If you have any questions, please contact IEPA at (217) 782-3362.

(2) The Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Office of Natural Resources (IDNR/OWR), application is being processed pursuant to an Act in Relation to the Regulation of the Rivers, Lakes and Streams of the State of Illinois, Chapter 615, ILCS 5 (Illinois Compiled Statutes (1994)). Comments concerning the IDNR/OWR permit should be addressed to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Office of Water Resources, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271, with a copy provided to the Corps of Engineers (see paragraph 11. of this public notice for address). Mr. Mike Diedrichsen, IDNR/OWR (217/782-3863), may be contacted for additional information.

5. **Historical/Archaeological**. The Corps of Engineers conducted an archival search for historic properties following the Policy and Procedures for the "Conduct of Underwater Historic Resource Surveys for Maintenance Dredging and Corps Activities" (DGL-89-01, March 1989). The Corps queried the most updated Illinois Geographic Information Systems (GIS) site file database. The proposed pilot channel includes portions of a landform comprised of sediments deposited during the formation of broad catastrophic flood paleochannels and is attributed with moderate potential for surface or near surface archeological deposits, with low potential for deeply buried archeological deposits. Based upon the archival research, no historic properties were previously documented within the proposed dredging area, dredged material placement site within the Beardstown harbor placement site, or the wetland mitigation alternatives. If human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony are encountered or collected, the Corps will comply with all provisions outlined in the appropriate state acts, statutes, guidance, provisions, etc., and any decisions regarding the treatment of human remains will be made recognizing the rights of lineal descendants, Tribes, and other Native American Indians and under consultation with the SHPO/THPO(s) and the other consulting parties, designated Tribal Coordinator, and/or other appropriate legal authority for future and expedient disposition or curation. When finds of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony are encountered or collected from Federal lands or federally recognized tribal lands, the Corps will coordinate with the appropriate federally recognized Native American Tribes, pursuant to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (25 U.S.C. § 3001 *et seq*.) and its implementing regulations (43 CFR Part 10).

6. **Endangered Species**. Two Federally listed endangered or threatened species are known from the project area:

- **Indiana Bat** (*Myotis sodalis*) - Federally Endangered. The Indiana bat is listed to be present throughout the state of Illinois. Indiana bats are not believed to occur within the project site.

- **Bald Eagle** (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) - Federally Threatened. The bald eagle is listed as wintering and breeding in this section of the Illinois Waterway. During the winter, this species feeds on fish in the open water areas created by dam tailwaters, the warm water effluents of power plants and municipal and industrial discharges, or in power plant cooling ponds. They roost at night in groups in large trees adjacent to the river in areas that are protected from the harsh winter elements. They perch in large shoreline trees to rest or feed on fish. This project does not involve significant clearing of mature trees and would not affect this species.

7. **Dredge/Fill Material Guidelines**. The evaluation of the impact of the proposed activity on the public interest will also include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency under authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR Part 230).

8. **Environmental Documentation**. The District staff has prepared a document entitled "*Environmental Assessment, Sangamon Experimental Sediment Trap, LaGrange Pool, Illinois Waterway River mile 88.9L, January 2004, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District*" for the project. This documentation is available for review at the Clock Tower Building (see address in paragraph 1.) during working hours (7:30 am to 4:00 pm).

9. **Public Interest Review**. The decision whether to proceed with the project will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food production and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

10. **Who Should Reply**. The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity. These statements should be submitted on or before the expiration date specified at the top of page 1. These statements should bear upon the adequacy of plans and suitability of locations and should, if appropriate, suggest any changes considered desirable.

11. **Public Hearing Requests**. Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing. A request may be denied if substantive reasons for holding a hearing are not provided.

12. **Reply to the Corps of Engineers**. Comments concerning the project should be addressed to the District Engineer, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, ATTN: OD-P (Wayne Hannel), Clock Tower Building - Post Office Box 2004, Rock Island, Illinois 61204-2004. **Mr. Wayne Hannel (309/794-5378)** may be contacted for additional information concerning regulatory issues. **Ms. Gail Clingerman (309/794-5791)** may be contacted for additional information concerning environmental issues.

original signed by

Attach
Plan

Duane P. Gapinski
Colonel, U.S. Army
District Engineer

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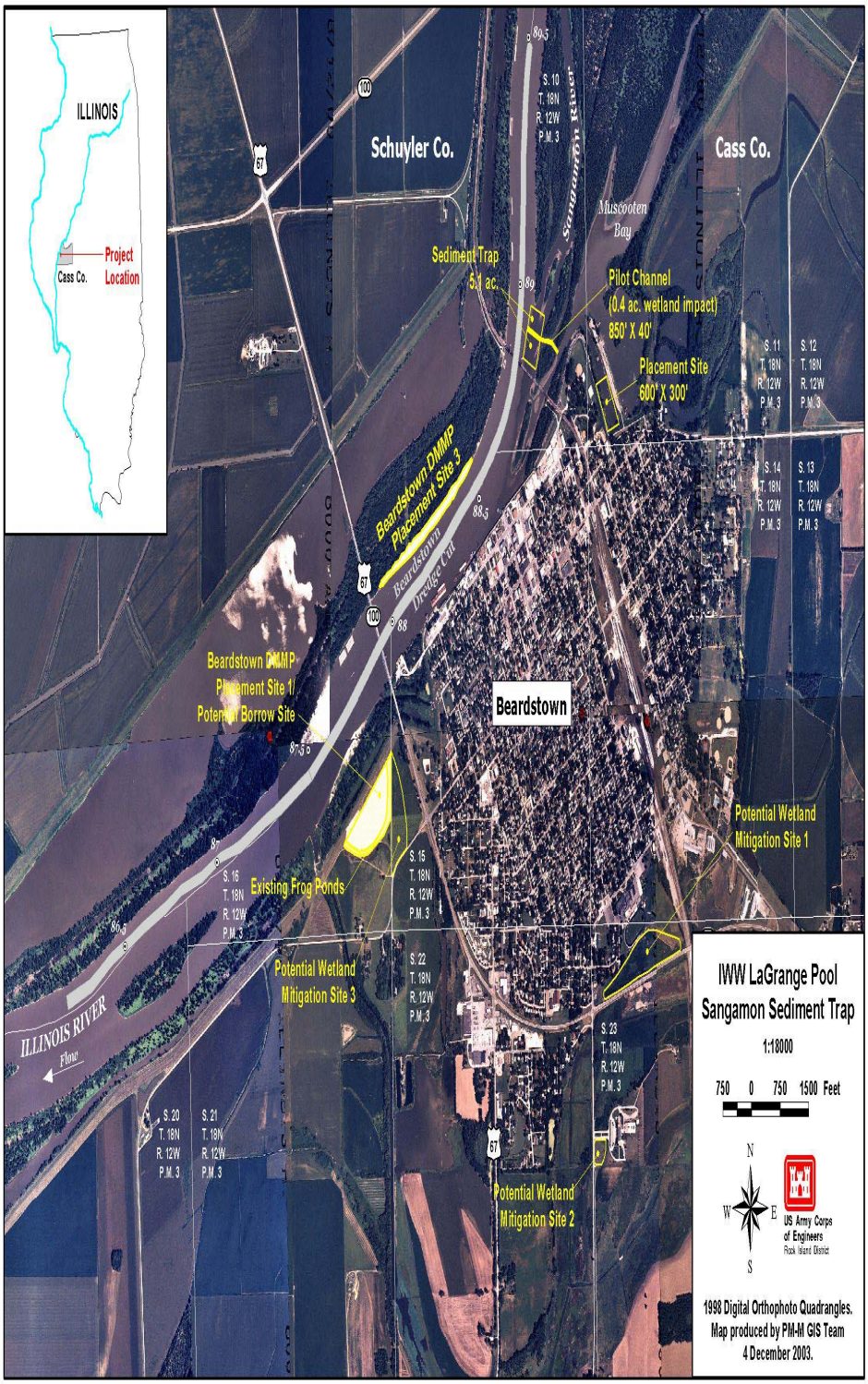

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Site Plan
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Potential Mitigation Sites
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