

IEPA Log No.: **C-0051-12**

CoE appl. #: **2011-136**

Public Notice Beginning Date: **May 7, 2013**

Public Notice Ending Date: **June 6, 2013**

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: United States Steel Corporation, Granite City Works, 1951 State Street, Granite City, IL 62040

Discharge Location: Sections 29 and 30, T3N, R9W of the 3rd P.M. in Madison County within Granite City

Name of Receiving Water: Unnamed Wetlands

Project Description: Landfill Expansion.

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
U.S. Steel Granite City Works – Unnamed Wetlands – Madison County
IEPA Log #C-0051-12
COE Log #2011-136
Contact: Bob Mosher 217/558-2012
May 7, 2013

United States Steel Corporation Granite City Works (“Applicant”) has applied for Section 401 water quality certification for wetland filling associated with the expansion of an on-site non-hazardous solid waste landfill. A 24 acre landfill will be developed immediately east of existing landfill. Sludges, dusts and other wastes from the steel mill will be deposited in the landfill. The area contains approximately 22 acres of wetlands, 11.75 acres of which will be filled to accommodate the landfill. The existing wetlands are characterized as poor quality and the result of industrial activities in the past. Some of the wetlands were formed when soil was excavated from borrow pits. A rail spur exists on the site of the landfill expansion. The applicant provided information regarding antidegradation assessment in a document entitled Section V Landfill Expansion Joint 404/401 Wetlands Permit Application dated January, 2012.

The Applicant will purchase 11.76 acres of wetland credits from an off-site wetland mitigation bank. While the location of the wetland bank utilized is not known at this time, it will be approved by the USA COE.

Identification and Characterization of the Affected Water Body.

The affected wetlands are General Use waters with zero 7Q10 flows. The wetlands have not been evaluated by the Illinois EPA Surface Water Monitoring Unit. The following table breaks down the type of wetlands that will be filled:

Type of Wetland	Acres Filled	Mitigation Ratio
Open Water	4.97	1:1
Emergent	4.38	1:1
Scrub-Shrub	2.21	1:1
Forested	0.2	1:1
Total	11.76	1:1

The descriptions of the affected wetlands are that they are low quality with emergent wetlands dominated by common reed, scrub-shrub wetlands dominated by honeysuckle and forested wetlands dominated by cottonwood and hackberry.

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

The wetlands filled will be lost at this location. During construction some suspended solids may be generated in the remaining wetlands. No adverse impacts are anticipated from the temporary generation of suspended solids during construction.

Fate and Effect of Parameters Proposed for Increased Loading.

The increase in suspended solids will be local and temporary. Erosion control measures will be utilized to minimize any increase in suspended solids and prevent impact to the remaining wetlands.

Purpose and Social & Economic Benefits of the Proposed Activity.

The purpose of this project is to allow the steel mill to have additional landfill space for its daily operational needs. This will allow the mill to remain viable and provide employment for the local community.

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

The construction of the proposed project will follow conditions set forth by the Agency and USACE.

The following alternatives were considered for this project;

1. Off-Site Disposal Alternative. This alternative would mean that off-site disposal would be the mode of waste disposal in the future. This would mean that trucks would transport the waste to landfills in the region that were willing to accept this material. This would cost the applicant 40% more for disposal according to statements in the alternatives analysis. Also, the increase in truck traffic would increase air pollution, cause local roadway congestion, and reduce landfill capacities at the other sites.
2. No-Action Alternative; The No-Action alternative, i.e., no on-site landfill construction and no off-site disposal, would mean that the steel mill would have to shut down as there would be no way to dispose of waste.
3. Selected Alternative; Expansion of the on-site landfill would allow the steel mill to be viable into the future.

The landfill footprint was re-aligned to avoid some of the wetlands (10.34 acres out of the total 21.9 acres are to be avoided).

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

Endangered species consultation was initiated through the Illinois Department of Natural Resource's EcoCAT system on December 20, 2011. A December 21, 2011 letter from IDNR terminated consultation as they concluded that the activity is unlikely to impact any threatened or endangered species nearby.

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 wetlands will be maintained or that adequate mitigation will be provided; 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 allowing an important local employer to remain viable. Comments received during the 401 Water Quality Certification public notice period will be evaluated before a final decision is made by the Agency.