

**Illinois NEPA/404 Merger Meeting
February 25, 2021**

WEBINAR MEETING

<https://connectdot.connectsolutions.com/il-nepa404>

Toll Free No: 877-336-1839

Access Code: 5289000

10 am – 12 noon

- Caton Farm Bruce Road, District 1, Will County
 - Concurrence – Preferred Alternative
- North Lake Shore Drive, District 1, City of Chicago, Cook County
 - Information – Level 3 screening of alternatives carried forward

END PROJECT DISCUSSION

12:00 noon – 1:00 pm

LUNCH

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

- NEPA-404 Merger Agreement – Updated Memorandum of Understanding
 - Next steps – obtaining signatures
- “Environmental Process Review” (23 USC 139(g) “Coordination and Scheduling”)
 - Coordinating “permit” timeframes with resource and regulatory agencies on EAs and EISs

**Sign-in Sheet
NEPA-404 Merger Meeting
February 25, 2021**

**District 1 - Caton Farm-Bruce Road - Will County
Concurrence - Preferred Alternative**

Name	Agency	e-mail address	Participation Location
Matt Fuller	FHWA	matt.fuller@dot.gov	Teleconference
Madelaine Johnson	Civiltech Engineering	MJohnson@civiltechinc.com	Teleconference
Mary Young	Civiltech Engineering	myoung@civiltechinc.com	Teleconference
Ken Westlake	USEPA	westlake.kenneth@epa.gov	Teleconference
Shawn Cirton	USFWS	Shawn_Cirton@fws.gov	Teleconference
Liz Pelloso	USEPA	pelloso.elizabeth@epa.gov	Teleconference
Christina Kupkowski	Will County	ckupkowski@willcountyillinois.com	Teleconference
Brad Hayes	Illinois DNR	Bradley.Hayes@illinois.gov	Teleconference
Matt Huffman	CBBEL	mhuffman@cbbel.com	Teleconference
Irene Pantoja	FHWA	irene.pantoja@dot.gov	Teleconference
Jon-Paul Kohler	FHWA	Jon-Paul.Kohler@dot.gov	Teleconference
Dwayne Ferguson	IDOT	dwayne.ferguson@illinois.gov	Teleconference
JD Stevenson	FHWA	jerry.stevenson@dot.gov	Teleconference
Stasi Brown	USACE	stasi.f.brown@usace.army.mil	Teleconference
Mike Matkovic	CBBEL	mmatkovic@cbbel.com	Teleconference
Kyle Duff	Metro Strategies, Inc.	kduff@metrostrategiesinc.com	Teleconference
Felecia Hurley	IDOT	Felecia.Hurley@illinois.gov	Teleconference
William Raffensperger	IDOT	william.raffensperger@illinois.gov	Teleconference
CJ Wallace	IDNR-SHPO	carol.wallace@illinois.gov	Teleconference

**IDOT District 1, Will County
Caton Farm – Bruce Road Phase I Study
Environmental Assessment
New Preferred Alignment – Concurrence Point #3**

DECISIONS:

Concurrence of Caton Farm Road – Oak Avenue – Bruce Road – Gougar Road as the Preferred Alternative, pending approval from the United States Coast Guard (USCG).

NEXT STEPS:

The project team will forward existing USCG coordination to Mr. Fuller, and he will reach out to the USCG for concurrence.

DISCUSSION

Ms. Johnson (Civiltech) opened the meeting with a PowerPoint presentation discussing the history and developments of the project. The project was last presented on September 10, 2020 with a project update discussing reexamination of the preferred alternative. She stated the project is located in Will County north of Joliet, and covers a study area approximately 11 miles by 3 miles. The project commences at the intersection of U.S. Route 30 and Caton Farm Road and continues across the Des Plaines River Valley and ends at the intersection of IL Route 7 (159th Street) and Cedar Road. In March of 2005, Concurrence Point #1 – Project Purpose and Need was reached. In January of 2007, Concurrence Point #2 was reached with six alternatives to be carried forward, which included two different River Valley crossing locations and 6 build alternatives. The following alternatives were carried forward:

- Caton Farm – Bruce – Gougar Alignment
- Caton Farm – Bruce – Middle Alignment
- Caton Farm – Oak – Bruce – Gougar Alignment
- Caton Farm – Oak – Bruce – Middle Alignment
- Caton Farm – Oak – Gougar Alignment
- Caton Farm – Oak – Middle Alignment

In July of 2009, the Will County Board passed a resolution adopting the Caton Farm – Oak – Bruce – Middle as the locally preferred alternative.

Since Concurrence Point #3 in 2012, detailed environmental and design studies have occurred as well as coordination meetings with IDOT/FHWA, the project Transportation Corridor Committee (TCC), and the Fairmont Community. Over the past several years, local agencies have expressed the desire for the preferred alternative to be reexamined for the north-south alignment portion east of Gougar Road due to the loss of development opportunities with the current alignment and close proximity to the newly constructed William E. Young Elementary School. The school's property is directly adjacent to the 2009 preferred alignment and construction of the new roadway would require right-of-way from the property where recreational fields are located and/or planned.

Alignment alternatives considered east of Gougar Road included changing the eastern logical terminus, using I-355 as a north to south link for the east to west portions of the alignment, and reevaluating Gougar Road and Cedar Road as north to south links. The alternative to use I-355 was eliminated because it was not believed roadway users would utilize a toll road to go such a short distance, when a non-tolled option is in close proximity. The eastern logical terminus was not changed as it would mean going back to the beginning of the project development process. It was agreed that reevaluation of the Gougar Road and Cedar Road alternatives would be undertaken.

The three eastern alternatives reexamined were:

- Caton Farm – Oak – Bruce – Gougar Alignment
- Caton Farm – Oak – Bruce – Middle Alignment
- Caton Farm – Oak – Bruce – Cedar Alignment

These alternatives were reexamined on the basis of environmental impacts and showed comparable impacts between each of the three alternatives, with the Gougar Road alternative having the least amount of impacts overall. The results of the alternatives reevaluation were presented to the TCC and the public. The public comments received were mixed with no clear preference. After further discussion, the TCC selected the Caton Farm – Oak –Bruce - Gougar Road Alignment as the new north-south preferred alternative due to its proximity to I-355, use of existing infrastructure, and its ability to not hinder development opportunities. Resolutions in support of the Gougar Road alternative have been passed by the County and the local agencies.

New wetland delineations for the project study area were completed in Fall 2019. An Addendum Environmental Survey Request (AESR) was submitted to IDOT in April 2020. Upon IDOT's request, an updated AESR was submitted August 2020 detailing only the Environmental Survey Area for the newly selected Caton Farm – Oak –Bruce – Gougar Preferred Alternative.

Liz Pelloso mentioned questions sent prior to the meeting regarding the status of incorporating the project into the TIP and coordination for Environmental Justice (EJ). Mike Matkovic (CBBEL) responded that the project team is aware of the TIP and Conformity requirements for the project and that they need to be addressed before NEPA approval can occur. The project team has met with IDOT/FHWA/CMAP to discuss the requirements, which the project team anticipates addressing by the end of this year. Mary Young (Civiltech) stated that since 2013, there have been several community, public, and working group meetings with the Fairmont community. Coordination with the community has slowed in the process of developing the new preferred alternative, but will pick back up shortly. The project team and County intends to re-engage with the Fairmont Community in the coming months, which is anticipated to include a newsletter and meetings. Ms. Pelloso requested that this be more substantively documented in the Environmental Assessment (EA).

Ken Weslake asked if design considerations have been made for the two 90 degree turns in the alignment to ensure they do not become choke points. Ms. Young responded that 2050 projections have been obtained and the design has factored these values to ensure traffic meets the appropriate level of service.

Shawn Cirton asked the status of the Biological Assessment (BA). Ms. Young responded that coordination has been occurring with Felicia Hurley, and a draft should be complete by the end of next week.

William Raffensperger asked if the project has considered applying for Rebuild Illinois program funds. Christina Kupkowski responded that the County has not begun seeking funding at this time because it is still being determined which entities will have jurisdiction of the roadway corridor. Mr. Raffensperger responded by asking if a coalition of the local communities has been created. Ms. Kupkowski stated that the County is still in the early stages of coordination with the local communities.

Matt Fuller requested concurrence from the agencies. Concurrence was received from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), United States Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS), Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), and United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE). Ken Westlake asked if concurrence from the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) is required. Mr. Matkovic confirmed that a USCG permit (Section 9) is anticipated to be required for the project. Mr. Fuller stated he will follow-up with the Coast Guard for concurrence. Ms. Young stated she will forward available project correspondence from the USCG to Mr. Fuller.

The meeting concluded at 10:40 A.M.

From: [Orzechowski, David A CIV](#)
To: [Fuller, Matt \(FHWA\)](#)
Cc: [Washburn, Eric CIV](#)
Subject: RE: Caton Farm - Bruce Road Coast Guard Coordination
Date: Thursday, March 11, 2021 10:44:23 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Department of Transportation (DOT). Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Matt,

The preferred alternative is acceptable from a permitting perspective and our letter dated March 27, 2006 still is applicable for a bridge at this location. Once the actual pier placement and alignment for the new bridge has been determined, please forward these drawing to us for review and approval. Final concurrence cannot occur until we process a public notice and receive public input. There are no pier protection requirements based on span lengths, however, piers shall be built to withstand barge impacts and AASHTO standards and pier placement, due to river bend, could affect the minimum horizontal clearance.

Any other questions, please advise.

Thank you,

David Orzechowski

Coast Guard Bridge Branch
St. Louis, MO 63103
314.269.2382

From: Fuller, Matt (FHWA) <Matt.Fuller@dot.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 10, 2021 10:19 AM
To: Orzechowski, David A CIV <David.A.Orzechowski@uscg.mil>
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] FW: Caton Farm - Bruce Road Coast Guard Coordination

Good morning David – Will County is working on the Caton Farm-Bruce Road project and advancing it through NEPA. The project proposes a new river bridge over the Des Plaines River. The project has been around for quite some time, and has been dormant for several years. The preferred alternative was presented in 2012 at a NEPA-404 merger meeting and concurrence was obtained. Recently (Feb 2021), the project team presented a modification at the eastern end of the project, which doesn't affect the bridge crossing, to the NEPA-404 merger team and the resource agencies concurred with the new preferred alternative (see attached "2020_05_21-Caton Farm-Bruce Preferred Alternative.pdf").

The consultant provided a few letters from USCG (attached) they have received over the years that the project has been in development, and we wanted to check-in with you to make sure the USCG

finds the preferred alternative acceptable from a permitting perspective. Please let me know if USCG has any concerns with the proposed bridge location or you need additional information and I'll work with the project team to provide it. Thanks!

Matt Fuller
Environmental Programs Engineer
Federal Highway Administration
3250 Executive Park Drive
Springfield, IL 62703
Phone: 217-492-4625
E-mail: matt.fuller@dot.gov