



Illinois Department of Transportation

2300 South Dirksen Parkway / Springfield, Illinois / 62764

February 22, 2016

CIRCULAR LETTER 2016-03

MAHOMET SOLE SOURCE AQUIFER – NEPA STATEMENT

COUNTY ENGINEERS / SUPERINTENDENTS OF HIGHWAYS
MUNICIPAL ENGINEERS / DIRECTORS OF PUBLIC WORKS / MAYORS
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS – DIRECTORS
TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONERS
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

On March 11, 2015 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) designated a portion of the Mahomet Aquifer system as a sole source aquifer (SSA) under Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act, as shown in the attached map. When the USEPA designates an area as a SSA there are special environmental review requirements for construction projects in the designated area to assess potential for contamination. The requirements for review are based on the unique characteristics of each SSA. The requirements for construction projects in the SSA area are normally defined in a memorandum of understanding between the USEPA and FHWA.

Since USEPA's designation of the Mahomet Aquifer as a SSA, the FHWA Illinois Division has been working with USEPA Region 5 to develop a memorandum of understanding that defines review requirements for roadway construction projects within the SSA area. Until the memorandum of understanding is finalized, all projects in the affected area that are processed as a Categorical Exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) shall include the following statement in the NEPA documents, including the project development report:

On March 11, 2015 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) designated a portion of the Mahomet Aquifer system as a sole source aquifer (SSA) under Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act, as shown in the attached map. The Safe Drinking Water Act gives USEPA authority to designate all or part of an aquifer as a "sole source" if contamination of the aquifer would create a significant hazard to public health and there are no physically available or economically feasible alternative sources of drinking water to serve the population that relies on the aquifer. The designation authorizes EPA review of projects that receive Federal financial assistance to assess potential for contamination of the aquifer system that would create a significant hazard to public health.

CIRCULAR LETTER 2016-03

Page 2

February 22, 2016

This project is within the review area of the Mahomet SSA. Once FHWA and U.S. EPA Region 5 update their memorandum of understanding, the agencies will follow the agreed upon review procedures to ensure compliance with the requirements of Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Projects processed as an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) normally require an Individual Section 404 permit under the Clean Water Act, and therefore coordination with USEPA will be through the NEPA-404 merger process. EA and EIS projects not included in the NEPA-404 merger process will be coordinated with USEPA in a manner approved by FHWA.

If you have any questions regarding this circular letter, please contact the Local Policy and Technology Unit at (217) 785-5048 or DOT.LocalPolicy@illinois.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Salmon O. Danmole".

Salmon O. Danmole, P.E.
Acting Engineer of Local Roads and Streets

TP/tw

Attachment

Cc: Matt Fuller – FHWA Illinois Division
Scott Stitt – IDOT Design & Environment
Eric Seibring – Illinois Association of County Engineers
Joe Schatteman – Illinois Municipal League
Bryan Smith – Township Officials of Illinois
Christine Filbert – Township Highway Commissioners of Illinois

Mahomet Sole Source Aquifer Project Review Area

