

FILE

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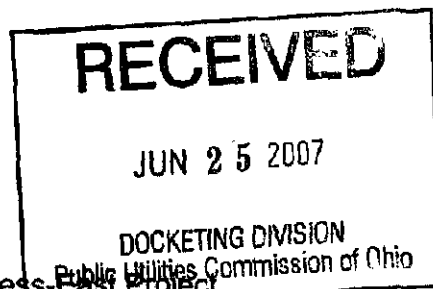


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06-1142-GA-BIN

May 3, 2007

Joyce Collins
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Marion Illinois Suboffice
8588 Route 148
Marion, IL 62959



RE: Rockies Express Pipeline LLC, Rockies Express-East Project
Proposed Crossing Methods for the Mississippi River

Dear Ms. Collins: *Joyce*

As you are aware, Rockies Express Pipeline LLC (Rockies Express) is proposing to cross the Mississippi River with the use of horizontal directional drill (HDD) techniques. As proposed, this crossing will involve a first segment bore between Missouri and Blackburn Island, and a second segment bore between Blackburn Island and Illinois. To accomplish the proposed activities, Rockies Express will require riverside access to Blackburn Island for offloading of drill equipment. Equipment will be transported by barge to the east side of Blackburn Island, where it will be placed for drilling activities. The landing area is shallow and will require dredging of an area approximately 200 feet along the shore by 100 feet into the river to a depth of 10 feet, excavating about 4,500 cubic yards of sediment. Excavated material will be transported approximately three miles downstream and deposited south of Louisiana, Missouri, at the Wayne B. Smith, Inc. quarry (please see attached map). All dredging activities will be performed within Missouri waters and in accordance with permit conditions administered by Missouri Department of Conservation, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, St. Louis District U.S. Corp of Engineers, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Columbia Ecological Services Field Office (Columbia ESO).

Federally listed unionid species may occur in this area. Rockies Express has contracted Ecological Specialists, Inc. (ESI) to conduct unionid surveys of the proposed dredge site. Surveys will be conducted in accordance with the attached Proposed Mussel Survey Protocol in the Mississippi River, as approved by the Columbia ESO. If mussels or mussel beds are found, Rockies Express will provide survey results to the Columbia ESO for their review and future consultation regarding appropriate conservation measures to avoid negative impacts on these species.

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Technician *[Signature]* Date Processed *6-26-07*

If you have any questions regarding construction activities proposed for the Mississippi River crossing, please contact me at (612) 359-5678 or jrthommes@nrginc.com.

Sincerely,

Natural Resource Group, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JR 72', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jeff Thommes
Sr. Natural Resource Specialist

Enclosures: Dredge Material Disposal Site Map
Proposed Mussel Survey Protocol in the Mississippi River

cc: Rick Pietruszka, Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Jim Thompson, Rockies Express
Elizabeth Dolezal, Natural Resource Group
Project File

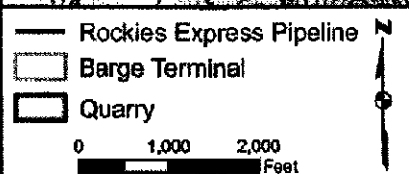
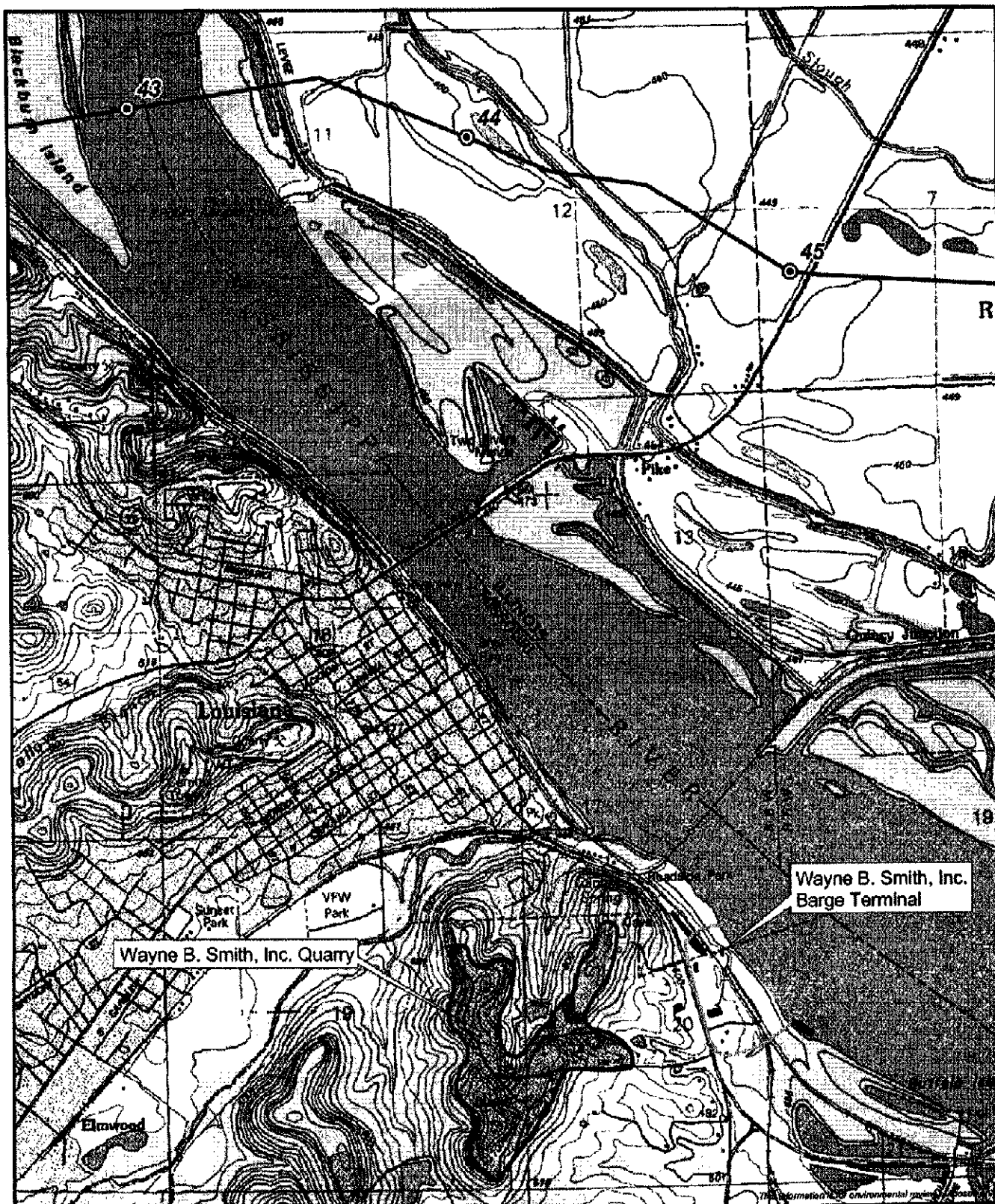


Figure 2-1
Rockies Express Pipeline-East Project
Wayne B. Smith, Inc. Quarry



Non-Internet Public

Rockies Express Pipeline – East Project

Proposed Mussel Survey Protocol in the Mississippi River

As discussed during the project meeting held on March 20, 2007, the pipeline will cross the Mississippi River at river mile 285.5 using the horizontal directional drill (HDD) method. Instream disturbance associated with the pipeline crossing would be limited to dredging about 200 feet along the island bank extending 100 feet in the river to a required 10 foot depth on the western side of Blackburn Island. Dredging would be required to accommodate barges offloading HDD equipment onto the island.

Federally listed unionid species may occur in this area; therefore, Ecological Specialists, Inc. (ESI) has been contracted to conduct unionid surveys at the proposed dredge site. ESI proposes to establish five 150-meter-long transects perpendicular to flow and spaced every 100 meters along the western bank of the Mississippi River. Transects will cover an area from 100 meters upstream to 400 meters downstream of the proposed dredge site. Depth and substrate composition will be recorded for each sample point along the transect lines. Substrate will be visually estimated by the collector/diver and classified by particle size using the Wentworth Scale.

ESI will use two sampling methods to survey unionids at this site: semi-quantitative and qualitative. Semi-quantitative sampling is often used to estimate unionid distribution, relative abundance, and the age and length structures of the community. Semi-quantitative sampling will consist of collecting unionids within 1 meter of one side of a weighted transect line. Each 10-meter segment of the transect line is considered a sample point. Qualitative methods are used to estimate species composition, detect rare species, and further identify their distribution. Qualitative searches will entail a diver searching a more general area (e.g., between transect lines or in areas with the highest abundance of unionids) for a specific period of time. Qualitative searches will be conducted in the best unionid habitat in 10-minute intervals for a minimum of 0.5 person-hour and a maximum of 1.0 person-hour.

All live unionids encountered, as well as shell material, will be placed into a mesh collecting bag and held in flowing river water before and after processing. Unionids will be characterized as follows:

- live;
- fresh dead shell – with or without tissue, nacre still lustrous, periostracum intact, probably dead <1year;
- weathered shell – without tissue, nacre chalky, probably dead several months to many years; or
- relic shell – without tissue, nacre chalky, no periostracum, dead many years or decades.

A maximum of 25 individuals of each species will be measured (length in mm), aged (external annuli count), sexed (sexually dimorphic species), and checked for gravidity, if applicable. Zebra mussel infestation of unionids and/or habitat will also be noted. Following processing, unionids will be returned to their collection location. Global Positioning System (GPS; Trimble Ltd. ProXR receiver, Asset Surveyor v.4.0.3 software, TSC1 data logger, accuracy=±0.5m)

coordinates of sampling locations and reference points will be recorded. Digital images of each study site and listed unionid species will also be recorded.

If any live federally listed species are recovered or significant unionid densities are found (e.g., 1 unionid per square meter (m^2)), then at least 10 quantitative samples will be collected to better estimate unionid density. All unionids will be identified, counted, and recorded as either juvenile (≤ 5 years old for Ambleminae and ≤ 3 years for Lampsilinae and Anodontinae) or adult.

ESI estimates it will require two field days with a five-person crew (one malacologist, one dive tender, one diver, one stand by diver/boat driver, and one technician) to perform the survey as described above. Unionid surveys would begin soon as water temperatures and stream levels permit. During periods of cooler water temperature, unionids are typically buried deeper in the substrate, feed less, are less active, and respond more slowly to disturbance. Therefore, ESI will not typically survey for unionids in water temperatures below 50 °F so as not to cause additional stress or overlook buried unionids. In order to maintain survey efficiency and safety, stream levels will be checked prior to commencing fieldwork.