

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 24, 2014

CONTACTS:

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****Notice of Availability – Public Notice****

Illiana Tier Two Draft Environmental Impact Statement Released for Public Comment

Lowell, IN and Wilmington, IL – The Illinois and Indiana Departments of Transportation (IDOT and INDOT) will host public hearings for the Illiana Tier Two Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which is evaluating transportation improvements in Will County, Illinois and Lake County, Indiana.

The Tier Two Draft EIS is a compilation of stakeholder outreach and comprehensive information about the project's purpose and need, proposed plans and alternatives, and potential effects on environmental resources such as wetlands, wildlife, cultural resources and noise, as well as potential effects on future traffic operations caused by proposed alternatives as well as the "no-build" alternative. **The Tier Two Draft EIS Notice of Availability (NOA) was made available for public review and comment on January 24, 2014 at www.IllianaCorridor.org**, as well as local libraries in the study area and DOT offices. A complete listing of these locations can be found on the project website. The NOA begins the 45 day public review and comment period which runs through March 10, 2014.

The public hearings will be held in an open house format, and interested persons may attend anytime between 5:00 and 8:00 p.m. There will be a continuous presentation, and the public is encouraged to attend, review and comment on the:

- Purpose and need for the improvement
- Alternatives under consideration
- Preliminary road closure plan
- Social, economic, and environmental impacts and proposed mitigation strategies
- Section 106 Effects Assessment Report (effects on historic properties)
- Proposed Section 4(f) De Minimis Impact Determination regarding improvements at Wauponsee Glacial Trail near Symerton Illinois
- Air Quality, including PM2.5 Hot-Spot analysis

The public hearings will be held:

INDIANA

Tuesday, February 18, 2014

5:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Lowell Middle School

19250 Cline Avenue

Lowell, IN 46356

ILLINOIS

Wednesday, February 19, 2014

5:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Local 150 Training Facilities

19800 West Arsenal Road

Wilmington, IL 60481-8256

Land acquisition specialists will also be available to answer questions about right-of-way acquisition and residential or business relocation that may be required as part of the project. In Illinois, the Division of Highways will process a permit for construction in a regulated floodway whenever such permits are required for the project. Attendees are encouraged to provide oral or written testimony to court reporters to be included in the public record and speak with IDOT, INDOT and study team representatives on a one-on-one basis. A public forum will be held at 6:00 p.m. each day where the public is invited to make 2-minute statements to a court reporter and to the public.

In the event the hearing is cancelled due to the Town of Lowell school closings, the rescheduled date will be March 5, 2014, and will be held at the Hebron High School located at 509 S. Main Street, Hebron, IN 46341. In the event the hearing is cancelled due to City of Wilmington school closings, the rescheduled date will be March 6, 2014, and the hearing will still be held at the Local 150 Training Facility listed above.

The Tier Two Draft EIS was made available for public review and comment on January 24, 2014 at www.IllianaCorridor.org, as well as local libraries in the study area and DOT offices. A complete listing of these locations can be found on the project website. In addition, comments on the Tier Two Draft EIS will be accepted through March 10, 2014.

Consistent stakeholder input throughout the study process has been critical to the development and evaluation of a broad range of transportation improvements. After the hearings and the public comment period have concluded, IDOT and INDOT may continue to make refinements to the recommended Preferred Alternative based on stakeholder input and technical findings. The final Preferred Alternative will be documented in the Final EIS and Record of Decision for the project, anticipated to be released in late Spring 2014.

**The meeting is accessible to individuals with disabilities. Anyone needing specific assistance should contact Sarah Copeland of Images, Inc. at (630) 510-3944. Persons planning to attend who need a sign language interpreter or other similar accommodations should notify the TTY/TTD number (800) 526-0844/or 711; TTY users (Spanish) (800) 501-0864 or 711; and for Telebraille dial (877) 526-6670 at least five days prior to the meeting.*

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