



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St. Paul District

Information Paper

Regulatory Program: St. Croix Crossing (Stillwater Bridge) Minnesota/Wisconsin

Contact

Daniel J. Seemon, Project Manager
(651) 290-5380
daniel.j.seemon@usace.army.mil

Location/Description

The Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation (MnDOT and WisDOT) propose to construct a public bridge across the St. Croix River. This project would replace the 80-year-old two-lane Stillwater Lift Bridge with a four-lane bridge over the river, connecting Minnesota State Highway 36 to Wisconsin State Highway 64. The proposed bridge (red route below) would be constructed south of the existing bridge (grey route below). The existing lift bridge would be converted to a pedestrian/bicycle facility.



The proposed crossing is an extradosed-type bridge design, which is a hybrid of a concrete box girder structure and a cable-stayed structure. The bridge would span approximately 2,800 feet across the river. The bridge piers, approaches, stormwater management activities, and removal of the Xcel Energy Barge Unloader Facility would result in the discharge of fill material in approximately 12.43 acres of the St. Croix River and its abutting wetlands.

Background

This project has been decades in the making and has required significant coordination among multiple agencies, including MnDOT, WisDOT, the National

Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office, and the Federal Highway Administration, which is the lead federal agency for the preparation of the EIS.

The Stillwater Lift Bridge is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed to address potential effects to this structure during the Supplemental environmental impact statement process. Four mussel species require a Biological Opinion from the FWS pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act – the Higgins' eye pearly, Winged Mapleleaf, Spectaclecase and the Snuffbox mussel. Finally, the St. Croix River is a National Wild and Scenic River, designated under Section 7(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The NPS determined that the bridge crossing would have a direct adverse effect on the Lower St. Croix River and the National Wild and Scenic River System. As a result, congressional approval is required. Approval was granted March 14, 2012, when President Barack Obama signed Public Law 112-100.

Status

MnDOT and WisDOT are completing foundation load tests at the crossing site. The Biological Opinion from the FWS is anticipated in the next few months. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2013 and end in 2016. The Corps received an incomplete permit application for the project on August 1, 2012, and requested additional information on August 3. On August 18, the Corps posted a public notice describing the project with a 30-day public comment period. The Corps permit review is anticipated to be completed prior to the planned February 2013 contract award date for the first phase of the bridge (Minnesota approach).

Authority

The discharge of dredged or fill material in the St. Croix River and its abutting wetlands is regulated under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Load testing and other work in the river associated with the project is regulated under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act.