



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
St. Louis District®

News Release

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Editor's Note: This release discusses the biological opinion issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Columbia, Mo. finding that with appropriate conservation measures there should be no adverse impact to the federally endangered Indiana bat should permits be granted to Holcim Incorporated. Additional background information and interviews are available upon request.

Proposed Cement Plant Poses no Threat to Endangered Species

Neither the federally endangered Indiana bat nor any critical habitat should be impacted by the construction of Holcim (U.S.) Incorporated's proposed cement plant in Ste. Genevieve County, Mo. as concluded in a biological opinion released Wednesday by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) in Columbia, Mo.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – St. Louis and FWS have been working on various levels of consultation since July 1999 on several endangered species that may occur at or near the proposed Holcim facility.

Holcim Inc. conducted studies reviewed by the Corps and submitted to FWS on the Indiana bat, gray bat, pallid sturgeon, bald eagle, interior least tern, peregrine falcon and Hines emerald dragonfly. The Corps concluded there would be no adverse impact to the continued existence of these species.

FWS concurred on all but the Indiana bat. Because Indiana bats had been physically captured and possible habitat were found in the vicinity, the FWS and Corps entered into formal consultation resulting in the biological opinion.

This formal consultation is a requirement under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act when any proposed project requiring a Section 404 permit under the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbor Act could potentially impact an endangered species.

Holcim Inc. is working to obtain Section 404 and Section 10 permits to construct a cement plant, open quarry and barge loading facility on approximately 4,000 acres of land adjacent to the Mississippi River in northern Ste. Genevieve County, Mo. The permits are required because there is approximately 14 acres of jurisdictional wetlands and slightly over three miles of intermittent streams on the site.

The Corps is required to evaluate numerous public interest factors when deciding whether to issue or deny a permit. The biological opinion for endangered species is one of the key factors that must be evaluated.

Corps officials indicated that the biological opinion from the FWS is one of several steps that needed to be completed before the Corps can begin to consider whether or not it will approve the permit request.

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