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Major Illinois Project for Mississippi River Bridge Gets Underway

Federal, State and Local Officials Break Ground on Illinois Project Expected to Improve Safety, Create Jobs and Stimulate the Economy

BROOKLYN - Illinois Transportation Secretary Gary Hannig joined U.S. Congressman Jerry Costello and other officials today for a groundbreaking ceremony to mark the official start of construction for the Illinois approach to the new Mississippi River Bridge.

The approach project includes construction of new, dual 10 span (Eastbound and Westbound) bridge structures on relocated Interstate 70 from Illinois Route 3 to the new Mississippi River Bridge. The construction of this project alone is expected to create nearly 100 construction related jobs. The overall MRB project is expected to create more than 2,200 jobs and spur more than \$25 billion in regional economic activity over the next 45 years.

“With the busiest construction season in our state’s history in full swing, we are excited to start the work in Illinois on a major portion of the Mississippi River Bridge project,” said Secretary Hannig. “Construction of the Illinois approach will contribute to the safety improvements, congestion reduction and job creation that the overall MRB project will bring to the region.”

The Illinois Department of Transportation is the lead agency in the construction of the Mississippi River Bridge Illinois approach, which allows for the utilization of Project Labor Agreements (PLAs), to help ensure that the project is completed on time and within budget. The project also includes a Mentor-Protégé special provision encouraging the Prime Contractor, a joint venture between Keeley & Sons and Keller Construction, to act as a Mentor to a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) sub-contractor.

The \$46.3 million approach project, which is funded by federal and state funds, was on the May 2010 letting. The construction for the Illinois approach is expected to be complete by Summer 2013.

The MRB project is a joint undertaking by the Illinois and Missouri Departments of Transportation. It will provide congestion relief across the region, especially on the Poplar Street Bridge. The new bridge will be a four-lane, cable-stayed structure that will relocate Interstate 70 from the Poplar Street Bridge, which now carries I-55, I-64 and I-70. The main span contractor is a joint venture of Massman Construction, Traylor Brothers and Alberici Constructors.

The estimated \$670 million project to build the bridge and approaches is funded through a combination of federal and state funds, which includes funds from the federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, or SAFETEA-LU. The entire project is expected to be completed in 2014.

For more information on the new Mississippi River Bridge project visit www.newriverbridge.org.

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