



STATE OF IDAHO
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

650 Addison Avenue West, Suite 110 • Twin Falls, Idaho 83301 • (208) 736-2190
www.deq.idaho.gov

Governor Brad Little
Director John H. Tippetts

May 8, 2020

Preston N. Carter
Givens Pursley, LLP
P.O. Box 2720
Boise, ID 83701

Jim Phillips, Chairman
Hiawatha Canal Company
PO Box 1604
Hailey, Idaho 83333

RE: Water Quality Certification for NWW-2017-00622-102, Big Wood River / Bypass Canal
Periodic Excavation and Re-deposition of River Cobbles and Gravels

Dear Mr. Carter and Mr. Phillips:

The Twin Falls Regional Office of the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has considered water quality certification for the construction related to the referenced project. Comments received during the public comment period have been considered in DEQ's Response to Comments.

This letter is to inform you that DEQ is issuing the enclosed §401 Water Quality Certification subject to the terms and conditions contained therein. Please review the general and specific conditions of the certification.

If you have any questions please contact Balthasar B. Buhidar, Ph.D. at (208) 736-2190, or via email at Balthasar.buhidar@deq.idaho.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sue Switzer".

Sue Switzer
Regional Administrator

BBB:SS:sg

Enclosure (2)

c: Rob Brochu, USACOE – Robert.A.Brochu@usace.army.mil
Loren Moore, DEQ State Office



Idaho Department of Environmental Quality Final §401 Water Quality Certification

May 7, 2020

404 Permit Application Number: NWW-2017-622-I01 / Hiawatha Canal Diversion Maintenance Project over a 10-year period

Applicant/Authorized Agent: Hiawatha Canal Company, Inc.

Project Location: Latitude 43° 34' 2" N, Longitude -114° 20' 43" W, within the SE ¼ of the NE ¼ of Section 19, Township 03 North, Range 18 East, Blaine County, Idaho

Receiving Water Body: Big Wood River

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 401(a)(1) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act), as amended; 33 U.S.C. Section 1341(a)(1); and Idaho Code §§ 39-101 et seq. and 39-3601 et seq., the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has authority to review activities receiving Section 404 dredge and fill permits and issue water quality certification decisions.

Based upon its review of the joint application for permit, received on March 12, 2020, DEQ certifies that if the permittee complies with the terms and conditions imposed by the permit along with the conditions set forth in this water quality certification, then there is reasonable assurance the activity will comply with the applicable requirements of Sections 301, 302, 303, 306, and 307 of the Clean Water Act, the Idaho Water Quality Standards (WQS) (IDAPA 58.01.02), and other appropriate water quality requirements of state law.

This certification does not constitute authorization of the permitted activities by any other state or federal agency or private person or entity. This certification does not excuse the permit holder from the obligation to obtain any other necessary approvals, authorizations, or permits.

Project Description

The Hiawatha Canal Company (HCC) proposes to conduct periodic excavation and re-deposition of river cobbles and gravels below the ordinary high water mark of the Big Wood River, including a side-channel locally known as the By-Pass Canal/Channel (BPC), to maintain and control flows to the Hiawatha Canal headworks. This will be accomplished through a continuation of established removal practices that include the relocation of sediment obstructing HCC facilities that could cause increased turbidity; and, the removal of large woody debris that interferes with water deliveries. The project proposes to be in effect for over a 10-year period from 2020 through 2029.

Antidegradation Review

The WQS contain an antidegradation policy providing three levels of protection to water bodies in Idaho (IDAPA 58.01.02.051).

- **Tier I Protection.** The first level of protection applies to all water bodies subject to Clean Water Act jurisdiction and ensures that existing uses of a water body and the level of water quality necessary to protect those existing uses will be maintained and protected (IDAPA 58.01.02.051.01; 58.01.02.052.01). Additionally, a Tier I review is performed for all new or reissued permits or licenses (IDAPA 58.01.02.052.07).
- **Tier II Protection.** The second level of protection applies to those water bodies considered high quality and ensures that no lowering of water quality will be allowed unless deemed necessary to accommodate important economic or social development (IDAPA 58.01.02.051.02; 58.01.02.052.08).
- **Tier III Protection.** The third level of protection applies to water bodies that have been designated outstanding resource waters and requires that activities not cause a lowering of water quality (IDAPA 58.01.02.051.03; 58.01.02.052.09).

DEQ is employing a water body by water body approach to implementing Idaho's antidegradation policy. This approach means that any water body fully supporting its beneficial uses will be considered high quality (IDAPA 58.01.02.052.05.a). Any water body not fully supporting its beneficial uses will be provided Tier I protection for that use, unless specific circumstances warranting Tier II protection are met (IDAPA 58.01.02.052.05.c). The most recent federally approved Integrated Report and supporting data are used to determine support status and the tier of protection (IDAPA 58.01.02.052.05).

Pollutants of Concern

The primary pollutant of concern for this project is sediment that has built up in the BPC inlet on the Big Wood River over a period of historical high flow events that have created a channel bar immediately in the area of the inlet channel on the Big Wood River. As part of the Section 401 water quality certification, DEQ is requiring the applicant comply with various conditions to protect water quality and to meet Idaho WQS, including the water quality criteria applicable to sediment.

Receiving Water Body Level of Protection

This project is located on the Big Wood River within the Big Wood River Subbasin assessment unit (AU) ID17040219SK007_05 (Big Wood River - North Fork Big Wood River to Seamans Creek). This AU has the following designated beneficial uses – cold water aquatic life, salmonid spawning, domestic water supply, and primary contact recreation. Each of these designated uses is an existing use in this AU. In addition to these uses, all waters of the state are protected for agricultural, industrial water supply, wildlife habitat, and aesthetics (IDAPA 58.01.02.100).

According to DEQ's 2016 Integrated Report, this AU is not fully supporting one or more of its assessed uses. The aquatic life uses are not fully supported. The identified cause of impairment is other flow regime alterations. The contact recreation beneficial use is fully supported. As such,

DEQ will provide Tier I protection (IDAPA 58.01.02.051.01) for each designated and existing use and Tier II protection (IDAPA 58.01.02.051.02) in addition to Tier I for the contact recreation use (IDAPA 58.01.02.052.05.c).

The only pollutant of concern associated with this project is sediment. However, sediment is not relevant to recreational uses since sediment will not degrade water quality necessary to support recreation uses, and it is therefore unnecessary for DEQ to conduct a Tier II analysis.

Protection and Maintenance of Existing Uses (Tier I Protection)

A Tier I review is performed for all new or reissued permits or licenses, applies to all waters subject to the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act, and requires demonstration that existing uses and the level of water quality necessary to protect existing uses shall be maintained and protected. The numeric and narrative criteria in the WQS are set at levels that ensure protection of existing and designated beneficial uses.

Water bodies not supporting existing or designated beneficial uses must be identified as water quality limited, and a total maximum daily load (TMDL) must be prepared for those pollutants causing impairment. Once a TMDL is developed, discharges of causative pollutants shall be consistent with the allocations in the TMDL (IDAPA 58.01.02.055.05). Prior to the development of the TMDL, the WQS require the application of the antidegradation policy and implementation provisions to maintain and protect uses (IDAPA 58.01.02.055.04).

During the construction phase, the applicant will implement, install, maintain, monitor, and adaptively manage best management practices (BMPs) directed toward reducing erosion and minimizing turbidity levels in receiving water bodies downstream of the project. In addition, permanent erosion and sediment controls will be implemented, which will minimize or prevent future sediment contributions from the project area. As long as the project is conducted in accordance with the provisions of the project plans, Section 404 permit, and conditions of this certification, then there is reasonable assurance the project will comply with the state's numeric and narrative criteria. These criteria are set at levels that protect and maintain existing and designated beneficial uses.

In addition, the project will be consistent with the *Big Wood River TMDL* (DEQ 2002) by implementing the following best management practices:

1. Low Flow Period. The project work will operate during the low flow period.
2. Existing Channel Pools. Utilizing existing channel pools at the BPC inlet and at the check structure headgate to retain any dislodge sediment.
3. Work to Occur as Required. Work during the 10-year period will not occur every year, but will be conducted when required and only in limited amounts of gravel at the top end of the BPC.
4. Short-Term Activity. The duration of work is short-term and will not take more than a few hours.
5. Confinement of Work. The majority of the work will be confined and conducted to the BPC itself, which can be accessed by an existing road through the adjacent private property.

6. Riparian and Wetland Vegetation Disturbance. The project will minimally disturb riparian or wetland vegetation and maintain a natural-like appearance in terms of vegetation along the canal and the canal slopes.
7. Fill Material Relocation. Any fill material will be kept within the BPC or relocated onto vegetated land along either the BPC or, if necessary, along the return ditch that is downstream of the check structure at elevations no higher than the adjacent land. The relocation will stabilize the banks of the BPC that were previously eroded during the 2017 flood. Relocated material will be back-graded to generally smooth contours following deposition. Any abrupt piles of relocated material will be avoided.
8. Hiawatha Canal to Absorb Turbid Waters. Any sediment that could increase NTU will be constrained to times when the affected flow is diverted down the Hiawatha Canal; which general is during low flows in the BWR and generally when there is no flow past the check structure.
9. Turbidity Control via BPC. Turbidity will be controlled via the flow that passes through the BPC which will enter a pool created by the Check Structure and maintained to divert water into the Hiawatha Canal. Turbid water that might occur as a result of working in the BPC is anticipated to be diverted into the Hiawatha Canal delivery system, which does not return to the BWR. Except for operational losses, no return flows are anticipated to reach the BWR.
10. Maintaining the Natural Gravel Transport Functions. The project proposes to maintain the natural gravel transport functions of the BWR and will simply relocate the material away from the point of diversion. It will not excavate the material blocking the diversion channel and transport it to a remove landfill site. Thus, the natural stream will be maintained and any additional off-site land is not utilized for landfilling of native river sediments.
11. Future Flood Events Substrate Sediment Relocation. During future flood events, the materials relocated along the stream corridor will be available for sediment transport, and the maintenance of a natural riverine system sediment transport function will be continued.
12. Toxic Pollutants. No toxic pollutants are used.
13. Equipment Fueling. All motorized equipment is parked and fueled in upland areas adjacent to the canal but away from the BWR.

There is no available information indicating the presence of any existing beneficial uses aside from those that are already designated and discussed above; therefore, the permit ensures that the level of water quality necessary to protect both existing and designated uses is maintained and protected in compliance with the Tier I provisions of Idaho's WQS (IDAPA 58.01.02.051.01 and 58.01.02.052.07).

Conditions Necessary to Ensure Compliance with Water Quality Standards or Other Appropriate Water Quality Requirements of State Law

General Conditions

1. This certification is conditioned upon the requirement that any modification (e.g., change in BMPs, work windows, etc.) of the permitted activity shall first be provided to DEQ for review to determine compliance with Idaho WQS and to provide additional certification pursuant to Section 401. Such modifications may not be implemented until DEQ has determined whether additional certification is necessary.
2. DEQ reserves the right to modify, amend, or revoke this certification if DEQ determines that, due to changes in relevant circumstances—including without limitation, changes in project activities, the characteristics of the receiving water bodies, or state WQS—there is no longer reasonable assurance of compliance with WQS or other appropriate requirements of state law.
3. If ownership of the project changes, the certification holder shall notify DEQ, in writing, upon transferring this ownership or responsibility for compliance with these conditions to another person or party. The new owner/operator shall request, in writing, the transfer of this water quality certification to his/her name.
4. A copy of this certification must be kept on the job site and readily available for review by any contractor working on the project and any federal, state, or local government personnel.
5. Project areas shall be clearly identified in the field prior to initiating land-disturbing activities to ensure avoidance of impacts to waters of the state beyond project footprints.
6. The applicant shall provide access to the project site and all mitigation sites upon request by DEQ personnel for site inspections, monitoring, and/or to ensure that conditions of this certification are being met.
7. The applicant is responsible for all work done by contractors and must ensure the contractors are informed of and follow all the conditions described in this certification and the Section 404 permit.
8. If this project disturbs more than 1 acre and there is potential for discharge of stormwater to waters of the state, coverage under the EPA Stormwater Construction General Permit *must* be obtained. More information can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/npdes-permits/stormwater-discharges-construction-activities-region-10>.

Fill Material

1. Fill material subject to suspension shall be free of easily suspended fine material. The fill material to be placed shall be clean material only.
2. Fill material shall not be placed in a location or in a manner that impairs surface or subsurface water flow into or out of any wetland area.
3. Placement of fill material in existing vegetated wetlands shall be minimized to the greatest extent possible.

4. All temporary fills shall be removed in their entirety on or before construction completion.
5. Excavated or staged fill material must be placed so it is isolated from the water edge or wetlands and not placed where it could re-enter waters of the state uncontrolled.

Erosion and Sediment Control

1. BMPs for sediment and erosion control suitable to prevent exceedances of state WQS shall be selected and installed before starting construction at the site. One resource that may be used in evaluating appropriate BMPs is DEQ's *Catalog of Stormwater Best Management Practices for Idaho Cities and Counties*, available online at <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/media/494058-entire.pdf>. Other resources may also be used for selecting appropriate BMPs.
2. Permanent erosion and sediment control measures shall be installed in a manner that will provide long-term sediment and erosion control to prevent excess sediment from entering waters of the state.
3. Permanent erosion and sediment control measures shall be installed at the earliest practicable time consistent with good construction practices and shall be maintained as necessary throughout project operation.
4. Top elevations of bank stabilization shall be such that adequate freeboard is provided to protect from erosion at 100-year design flood elevation.
5. Structural fill or bank protection shall consist of materials that are placed and maintained to withstand predictable high flows in the waters of the state.
6. A BMP inspection and maintenance plan must be developed and implemented. At a minimum, BMPs must be inspected and maintained daily during project implementation.
7. BMP effectiveness shall be monitored during project implementation. BMPs shall be replaced or augmented if they are not effective.
8. Disturbed areas suitable for vegetation shall be seeded or revegetated to prevent subsequent soil erosion.
9. Maximum fill slopes shall be such that material is structurally stable once placed and does not slough into the stream channel during construction, during periods prior to revegetation, or after vegetation is established.
10. To the extent reasonable and cost-effective, the activity submitted for certification shall be designed to minimize subsequent maintenance.
11. Sediment from disturbed areas or able to be tracked by vehicles onto pavement must not be allowed to leave the site in amounts that would reasonably be expected to enter waters of the state. Placement of clean aggregate at all construction entrances or exits and other BMPs such as truck or wheel washes, if needed, must be used when earth-moving equipment will be leaving the site and traveling on paved surfaces.

Turbidity

1. Sediment resulting from this activity must be mitigated to prevent violations of the turbidity standard as stipulated under the Idaho WQS (IDAPA 58.01.02). *Any violation of this standard must be reported to the DEQ regional office immediately.*

2. All practicable BMPs on disturbed banks and within the waters of the state must be implemented to minimize turbidity. Visual observation is acceptable to determine whether BMPs are functioning properly. If a plume is observed, the project may be causing an exceedance of WQS and the permittee must inspect the condition of the projects BMPs. If the BMPs appear to not be functioning to their fullest capability, then the permittee must modify the activity or implement additional BMPs (this may also include modifying existing BMPs).
3. Containment measures such as silt curtains, geotextile fabrics, silt fences, and fiber wattles (as appropriate) must be implemented and properly maintained to minimize instream sediment suspension and resulting turbidity.
4. Turbidity monitoring must be conducted, recorded, and reported as described below. Monitoring must occur each day during project implementation when project activities may result in turbidity increases above background levels. *A properly and regularly calibrated turbidimeter is required.*

A sample must be taken every 2 hours at a relatively undisturbed area approximately 100 feet up-current from in-water disturbance or discharge to establish background turbidity levels for each monitoring event. Background turbidity, location, date, and time must be recorded prior to monitoring down-current.

Monitoring must be taken every 2 hours approximately 100 feet down-current from the in-water disturbance or point of discharge and within any visible plume. The turbidity, location, date, and time must be recorded for each sample or observation.

Results from the compliance point sampling must be compared to the background levels (up-current) sampled during each monitoring event. If the downstream (or down-current) turbidity exceeds upstream (or up-current) turbidity by 50 nephelometric turbidity units (NTU) or more, the project is causing an exceedance of the WQS. If an exceedance occurs, the permittee must inspect the condition of the projects BMPs. If the BMPs appear to be functioning to their fullest capability, then the applicant must modify the activity (this may include modifying existing BMPs).

Copies of daily logs for turbidity monitoring must be submitted to DEQ (Balthasar B. Buhidar, Ph.D.) in Excel format at Balthasar.buhidar@deq.idaho.gov. The log must include background (up-current) measurements (in NTUs) or observations; compliance point measurements or observations (down-current); comparison of background and compliance point monitoring as a numeric value (in NTUs) or in narrative form; and location, time, and date for each sampling event. The report must describe all exceedances and subsequent actions taken and the effectiveness of the action including subsequent monitoring.

Turbidity Monitoring and Compliance Requirements

To ensure compliance with Idaho's WQS, required monitoring steps shall include the following:

1. Choose and identify the following locations for each crossing:
 - a. Background location: A relatively undisturbed location unaffected by the construction activity, up-current from the permitted activity; and,

- b. **Compliance location:** A location downcurrent from the permitted activity, within any visible plume, at the distance that corresponds to the size of the waterbody where work is taking place as listed on the table below:

| Wetted Stream Width | Compliance Distance |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Up to 30 feet | 50 feet |
| >30 feet to 100 feet | 100 feet |
| >100 feet to 200 feet | 200 feet |
| >200 feet | 300 feet |

2. Conduct Compliance Monitoring with a Turbidimeter
- Measure turbidity at both background and compliance locations at the frequency directed in the tables below and record the date, time, location, and turbidity measurements in the daily log. The permittee must also record all controls and practices implemented at the start of the work.
 - Turbidity measurements must be representative of stream turbidity when the activity is being conducted. *Measurements cannot be taken during a cessation of activity.*
 - If the project causes turbidity levels to increase above 50 NTU over background, the permittee must implement additional controls and practices, resume work, and monitor both points again. A description of the additional controls and the date, time, and location where they are implemented must be recorded in the daily log.

Compliance Monitoring With a Turbidimeter

| Allowable Exceedance in Turbidity | Action Required at 1st Monitoring Interval | Action Required at 2nd Monitoring Interval |
|---|--|--|
| 0 to 24 NTU above background | Continue to monitor every 2 hours | Continue to monitor every 2 hours |
| 25 to 49 NTU above background | Continue to monitor every 2 hours | STOP work after 8 hours/24-hour period |
| 25 NTU above background for 10 or more consecutive days | STOP work and follow instructions in 2.c. above | |
| 50 NTU or more above background (first occurrence) | STOP work and follow instructions in 2.c. above | |
| 50 NTU or more above background (second occurrence) | STOP work and follow instructions in 2.c. above and notify DEQ Regional Office | |

3. Reporting—Copies of daily logs for turbidity monitoring must be made available to DEQ and other local, state and federal regulatory agencies upon request. The log must include:
- Background NTUs, compliance point NTUs, comparison of the points in NTUs, and location, time, and date for each reading.
 - A narrative discussing all exceedances, controls applied and their effectiveness, subsequent monitoring, work stoppages, and any other actions taken.

In-water Work

1. Work in open water is to be kept at a minimum and only when necessary. Equipment shall work from an upland site to minimize disturbance of waters of the state. If this is not practicable, appropriate measures must be taken to ensure disturbance to the waters of the state is minimized.
2. Construction affecting the bed or banks shall take place during periods of low flow, when possible.
3. Heavy equipment working in wetlands shall be placed on mats or suitably designed pads to prevent damage to the wetlands.
4. Work in waters of the state shall be restricted to areas specified in the application.

Pollutants/Toxics

1. The use of chemicals such as soil stabilizers, dust palliatives, sterilants, growth inhibitors, fertilizers, and deicing salts during construction and operation should be limited to the best estimate of optimum application rates. All reasonable measures shall be taken to avoid excess application and introduction of chemicals into waters of the state.

Vegetation Protection and Restoration

1. Disturbance of existing wetlands and native vegetation shall be kept to a minimum.
2. To the maximum extent practical, staging areas and access points should be placed in open, upland areas.
3. Fencing and other barriers should be used to mark the construction areas.
4. Where possible, alternative equipment should be used (e.g., spider hoe or crane).
5. If authorized work results in unavoidable vegetative disturbance, riparian and wetland vegetation shall be successfully reestablished to function for water quality benefit at pre-project levels or improved at the completion of authorized work.

Dredge Material Management

1. Upland disposal of dredged material must be done in a manner that prevents the material from re-entering waters of the state.

Management of Hazardous or Deleterious Materials

1. Petroleum products and hazardous, toxic, and/or deleterious materials shall not be stored, disposed of, or accumulated adjacent to or in the immediate vicinity of waters of the state. Adequate measures and controls must be in place to ensure that those materials will not enter waters of the state as a result of high water, precipitation runoff, wind, storage facility failure, accidents in operation, or unauthorized third-party activities.
2. Vegetable-based hydraulic fluid should be used on equipment operating in or directly adjacent to the channel if this fluid is available.
3. Regular inspections of all fluid systems on equipment to be used in or near waters of the state shall be done to ensure no leaks or potential leaks exist prior to equipment use, while the permittee is actively working on-site.

4. Equipment and machinery must be removed from the vicinity of the waters of the state prior to refueling, repair, and/or maintenance.
5. Equipment and machinery shall be steam cleaned of oils and grease in an upland location or staging area with appropriate wastewater controls and treatment prior to entering a water of the state. Any wastewater or wash water must not be allowed to enter a water of the state.
6. Emergency spill procedures shall be in place and may include a spill response kit (e.g., oil absorbent booms or other equipment).
7. In accordance with IDAPA 58.01.02.850, in the event of an unauthorized release of hazardous material to state waters or to land such that there is a likelihood that it will enter state waters, the responsible persons in charge must
 - a. Make every reasonable effort to abate and stop a continuing spill.
 - b. Make every reasonable effort to contain spilled material in such a manner that it will not reach surface or ground waters of the state.
 - c. Call 911 if immediate assistance is required to control, contain, or clean up the spill. If no assistance is needed in cleaning up the spill, contact the appropriate DEQ regional office during normal working hours or Idaho State Communications Center after normal working hours (1-800-632-8000). If the spilled volume is above federal reportable quantities, contact the National Response Center (1-800-424-8802).
 - Twin Falls Regional Office: 208-736-2190 / 800-270-1663
 - d. Collect, remove, and dispose of the spilled material in a manner approved by DEQ.

Required Notification

The permittee must notify the Twin Falls Regional Office when authorized work begins and when the authorized work ends and when it is finalized. Please contact Balthasar B. Buhidar, Ph.D., by phone at (208)-736-2190, or by email (Balthasar.buhidar@deq.idaho.gov).

Right to Appeal Final Certification

The final Section 401 Water Quality Certification may be appealed by submitting a petition to initiate a contested case, pursuant to Idaho Code § 39-107(5) and the “Rules of Administrative Procedure before the Board of Environmental Quality” (IDAPA 58.01.23), within 35 days of the date of the final certification.

Questions or comments regarding the actions taken in this certification should be directed to Balthasar B. Buhidar, Ph.D., Twin Falls Regional Office, (208) 736-2190, and Balthasar.buhidar@deq.idaho.gov.



Sue Switzer
Regional Administrator
Twin Falls Regional Office