UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

JAN 03 2012

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:
E-19J

Diana Olinger
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management
1305 East-West Highway, N/ORM 3
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

RE: Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Illinois Coastal Management Program (CEQ # 20110424)

Dear Ms. Olinger:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has received National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) correspondence dated December 9, 2011, requesting EPA's review of and comments on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Illinois Coastal Management Program (ICMP). ICMP goals include preserving, protecting, restoring, and where possible, enhancing coastal resources through coordination among local, state, and Federal agencies and organizations, and leveraging ICMP resources and other funds to maximize the impact of local projects.

EPA previously reviewed the Draft EIS for the aforementioned project; EPA comments were provided to NOAA in correspondence dated October 13, 2011. This letter provides our comments on the Final EIS, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA Implementing Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

As in the Draft EIS, the Final EIS presents proposed actions by NOAA's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) to approve the Illinois Coastal Management Program, pursuant to Section 306 of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972, as amended (16 USC 1451). The proposed federal action and preferred alternative is OCRM's approval of the ICMP.

The Final EIS reiterates that implementation of the preferred alternative would result in primarily beneficial environmental, institutional, and socio-economic effects. Specifically, ICMP implementation would allow for improved regulation and enforcement, balanced coastal

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community development, improved economic development for water-dependent uses, better natural resource and hazardous-areas management, improved intergovernmental coordination, and greater public awareness of coastal management issues.

EPA appreciates your diligence in responding to comments raised during the Draft EIS comment period and for responding to both written and oral comments in the Final EIS. At this time, EPA does not have substantive comments on the preferred alternative or the Final EIS.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this Final EIS. Please send us a signed copy of the Record of Decision (ROD) once it is available. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact Ms. Liz Pelloso, PWS, of my staff at 312-886-7425, or via email at pelloso.elizabeth@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Kenneth A. Westlake, Chief
NEPA Implementation Section
Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance

cc: Todd Main, Illinois Department of Natural Resources