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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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James R. Rakow Road Dedication Ceremony

WOODSTOCK, IL – On Wednesday, April 27, 2011, McHenry County dignitaries met at Rakow Road in Crystal Lake for the dedication of the James R. Rakow Road Construction Project. While the rain did force event attendees to gather under a tent, those that spoke highlighted the positive impacts this project will have on McHenry County residents once completed. Speakers included: Transportation Committee Chairwoman Anna May Miller, County Recorder Phyllis K. Walters, County Board Chairman Ken Koehler, and United States Congressman Don Manzullo.

The speakers highlighted how this long awaited project will provide expanded roadway capacity to serve the existing and growing travel demand on Rakow Road between Ackman Road and Illinois Route 31 within the City of Crystal Lake, the Village of Lake-in-the-Hills, newly opened Three Oaks Recreation Area, and the Lake-in-the-Hills airport.

Since 2006, the McHenry County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) has been studying Rakow Road for capacity and safety improvements with construction beginning in 2010. Currently, Rakow Road handles over 30,000 vehicles a day and by 2030, Rakow Road is anticipated to handle up to 66,000 vehicles a day. Rakow Road will be widened to 3 lanes in each direction between Ackman Road and Pyott Road and 2 lanes in each direction between Pyott Road and Illinois Route 31. Turn lanes will be added at all intersections within the project corridor.

This large-scale undertaking is in direct response to the existing and projected traffic demand and the need for safe and efficient mobility along this heavily traveled and important east-west thoroughfare in southern McHenry County. The project will also involve the construction of a bicycle/pedestrian bridge which will carry the McHenry County Conservation District Prairie Trail over Rakow Road just east of Pyott Road. The project is scheduled to be completed in late 2012.



James R. Rakow Road Dedication Ceremony Dignitaries - (Left to Right): U.S. Congressman Don Manzullo, County Transportation Committee Vice-Chairwoman Paula Yensen, McHenry County Recorder Phyllis K. Walters (the late James R. Rakow's wife), McHenry County Transportation Committee Chairwoman Anna May Miller, Former County Board member and Transportation Committee Chairman Dan Shea (retired from the County Board in 2008), County Board Chairman Ken Koehler, and County Board member Jim Heisler.

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Through the efforts of Congressman Donald Manzullo, \$5.72 million was secured in SAFETEA-LU for this project toward the construction cost total of approximately \$26 million. This will be the highest single value contract MCDOT has ever undertaken. The cooperation from numerous local, State, and Federal agencies helped this project become a reality.

While the speakers highlighted the impact this project will have on McHenry County, event attendees also remembered its namesake, James R. Rakow. James Rakow was the McHenry County Superintendent of Highways/County Engineer for more than 24 years until his retirement in 1993. Mr. Rakow also played a vital role in the planning and design for the road connecting Route 31 with Randall Road. His efforts lead to the naming of this road, James R. Rakow Road, in his honor.

In addition, Mr. Rakow was instrumental in the planning, construction, replacement and expansion of many transportation projects in McHenry County including the Pearl Street and Charles Miller Bridges in McHenry, the Rawson Road Bridge in Cary, the Randall Road north/south corridor, the Algonquin Road widening, and the Western Algonquin Bypass. Mr. Rakow passed away in December, 2010.

For more information on James R. Rakow Road, visit the project website: www.RakowRoad.com or contact Adam Lehmann at 815-334-0309 or aflehmann@co.mchenry.il.us.



McHenry County Board Chairman Ken Koehler highlighting the positive impact the Rakow Road project will have on the County. In the photo (Left to Right) – County Recorder Phyllis K. Walters, Chairman Ken Koehler, Transportation Committee Chairwoman Anna May Miller, and U.S. Congressman Don Manzullo.



Congressman Don Manzullo discussed how important the Rakow Road project is with the current level of congestion. In the photo (Left to Right): Chairman Ken Koehler, Transportation committee Chairwoman Anna May Miller, and U.S. Congressman Don Manzullo.

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“McHenry County government is dedicated to providing the highest quality services for the health, safety, and welfare of the County’s residents and communities. We foster representative and transparent government to ensure social, economic and environmental justice.”