

I-74 bridge to get makeover

\$14 million paint job part of 6-year construction program

By Brandy Donaldson
bdonaldson@qconline.com

The Interstate 74 bridge over the Mississippi River will get a \$14 million paint job as part of a \$11.5 billion, six-year construction program unveiled by Gov. Pat Quinn on Thursday.

According to estimates released by Gov. Quinn's office and the Illinois Department of Transportation, the program, which will be implemented in fiscal years 2012 through 2017, will create 155,000 jobs throughout the state based on an average of 13 jobs per every \$1 million spent.

With the Illinois Jobs Now! capital improvement program as its driving force, the statewide multiyear plan will improve 3,248 miles of road and replace or rehabilitate 611 bridges.

"The last two construction seasons have been the busiest in Illinois' history, thanks to Illinois Jobs Now!," Gov. Quinn said Thursday in a written statement. "This plan will ensure we have record-breaking construction seasons in 2012 and beyond that exemplify my commitment to creating jobs and supporting our economic recovery through critical investment in our roads and bridges."

In its first year — fiscal year 2012 — 490 miles of road and 105 bridges are expected to be improved.

The I-74 bridge is on a list of seven projects in IDOT District 2, which covers Rock Island, Boone, Carroll, Henry, JoDaviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside and Winnebago counties.

Illinois and Iowa will share the cost of painting the bridge at \$7.16 million each.



John Greenwood / staff

The vast amount of rust covering the Interstate 74 bridge over the Mississippi River will be painted when it gets a \$14 million makeover as part of a \$11.5 billion, six-year construction program unveiled by Gov. Pat Quinn on Thursday. The program will be implemented in fiscal years 2012 through 2017.

The job is slated for the 2012 fiscal year, which means it could begin as quickly as the present construction season or early next year, IDOT officials said.

The 2012 fiscal year is from July 1 to June 30, 2012.

The only other local project on the list is the resurfacing of 7.2 miles and culvert replacements, including land acquisition and utility adjustments, on Illinois 94 from just south of Illinois 192 to Illinois 94 in Rock Island County for an estimated \$3.61 million,

also in the 2012 fiscal year.

According to the governor's office, the \$11.5 billion construction program will be paid for with \$7.2 billion from federal funds and \$3.6 billion from state funds, including \$2 billion from Illinois Jobs Now!, the \$31 billion capital program passed by Gov. Quinn and the Illinois General Assembly in 2009.

No source was listed for the remaining \$700 million.

While the state awaits an Illinois Supreme Court decision on the legality of the

capital bill, IDOT plans to move ahead, Illinois Transportation Secretary Gary Hannig told reporters during a statewide conference call.

"We're moving forward with the program full speed ahead with the belief the court will rule in our favor," he said. "Until someone tells me to the contrary, we are going to continue to move forward with this road program."

On the Internet: www.dot.state.il.us/