

Need for Dredging Channels Causing Economic and Safety Concerns at Les Cheneaux Islands

Dredging: From page 1

Citizen groups at Les Cheneaux are pushing legislators to have funds appropriated for the waterway. The September 20 meeting is part of that effort.

"We hope senators [Carl] Levin and [Bart] Stupak will see our need for maintenance of the federal channel, and help earmark funds in the president's budget," Mr. Dunn said.

"It is very exciting that this is citizen-led," said Clark Township Supervisor Linda Hudson. "This is not just a Les Cheneaux issue," she added, as groups in other areas are taking similar measures.

Local, state, and federal politicians has been invited to the meeting in Cedarville. Several members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have been asked to come, and Waterways Restoration has invited representatives of the Michigan State Waterways Commission, the Department of Environmental Quality, and several private organizations.

"There is a good chance we will have representatives from several important leaders," Mrs. Hudson said.

Governor Jennifer Granholm and Congressman Stupak have expressed interest in sending representatives. Amy Berglund of Senator Levin's office is coming, Mrs. Hudson said. Commissioners Bob Brown and Dennis Bailey of the Michigan Waterways Commission will be there, Mr. Dunn added.

The navigation channel was maintained by the Army Corps of Engineers in the late 1960s, however, with the exception of one area near the middle entrance of the island chain, no dredging has been done since the early 1970s, Mr. Reid said.

The Clark Township Board of Trustees submitted an application for dredging in April.

Members of the Corps have studied the area and estimated that \$3.5 million is needed for dredging. Earlier estimates were at least twice that amount, she added.

The township's request is for 2009.

To fully re-open the waterways, a heavy nutrient load flowing from Clark Township sewer lagoons must be dealt with. It is this nutrient load that is promoting excessive weed growth in Cedarville Bay, Mr. Reid said.

The discharge from the sewer lagoons includes phosphates, generated from materials like detergents, which nourish weeds, Mr. Dunn added.

"It's like nurturing them with Miracle-Gro, and they are choking off the economy," he said. "It's exasperating. It is spreading all through the area."

Sewer discharges into Cedarville Bay increased dramatically in 1990, when the state demanded that the township increase the size of its sewer system. Compounding the problem, Eurasian watermilfoil, an

invasive weed that flourishes rapidly and takes root easily, appeared in waters.

Owing to the weeds and sedimentation, the Cedarville area has lost significant transient boating traffic, notably the Great Lakes Cruising Club, which alerted its boaters that the area is difficult to pass, Mr. Dunn said.

The group put out notices regarding the diminishing depth of the channel and entanglements in weeds that had damaged boats. As a result, hundreds of thousands of tourist dollars have been lost, he said.

"Their boats used to come through every few days, heading to [Lake Huron's] north channel or Drummond Island," he said, and they stopped at Cedarville businesses.

Large vessels draw weeds into their intake systems, he said. If enough are drawn in, coolant flow can be blocked. Some motors have been destroyed this way.

Hessel continues to receive Cruising Club boats, which bypass Cedarville but can still access Government Bay. Residents are unsure how much of the former traffic Hessel is capturing, Mr. Dunn said.

The drop-off in traffic began about five years ago, he said. This year, a mechanical harvester was used in Cedarville Bay to cut down the weeds, however, Eurasian watermilfoil has proven to regrow quickly. Only weeks after cutting, the

weeds had nearly reached the surface again.

Waterways Restoration plans to address sewer lagoon discharge and its impact on weeds at the September 20 meeting, he said.

"We want to redesign the discharge system," he said.

The group proposes to relocate sewer lagoon discharge about one-quarter mile west of Cedarville, where it would nourish a marshland, rather than weeds in the bay.

Sediment from the proposed

dredging could be used to augment the Cedarville harbor project, he added. The township is considering using sediment to expand the launch ramp and parking area, enabling businesses to offer island residents more parking, and contractors a better staging site to provide more services to the islands. The township is considering using sediment to lengthen the local airport.

Federal earmarks for the kind of project proposed in the Les Cheneaux Islands have been suc-

cessfully secured in northern Michigan this year, such as when legislators earmarked \$3 million in federal funding to repair the break-wall at Petoskey Harbor, Mr. Dunn said.

Long term, Waterways Restoration seeks to achieve harbor-of-refuge status. This would qualify Cedarville for state funding that could be used for improvements to docks, for example. This has been done at St. Ignace, Mackinac Island, and Mackinaw City, he said.

Seeking 4th Term, Bart Stupak Shares Top Goals

Stupak: From page 9

Will Push for Energy Reform
"I'll continue my efforts in the energy area," he said. "I have been a leader in issues at the Congress. I will continue with my price-gouging legislation, and the Pump Act to prevent the unfair manipulation of prices to get oil-futures speculators out of the market to quit manipulating the price of oil."

It is an unregulated market that Mr. Stupak seeks to regulate, he said.

He used Hurricane Gustav as an example.

"Oil prices jumped \$5 overnight. Hurricane Gustav was not as powerful, thank God, as they thought it was going to be. [Prices] dropped \$8 overnight. Now it's up again because there are two more hurricanes coming into the Caribbean, not the [Persian] Gulf where the oil is, but the Caribbean. Whatever excuse they can find to raise the price of oil, they do."

The price swings must end, he said.

"When the Israeli transportation minister said 'sooner or later there will be war with Iran, oil [prices] jumped \$11 overnight, the largest increase in the price of oil, just because someone said something. That is not based on supply and

demand. That is pure speculation."

"Oil futures used to be a \$13 billion industry. Five years later, it is more than \$260 billion.

"We used to move about 700,000 contracts a year for oil. Now we're over \$3 million contracts. Every time these contracts roll over, someone is willing to pay a higher price for it. Who's running up these prices? Who's in this? Who's putting their money in? Harvard University Endowment Fund has over a billion dollars in oil futures. California Retirement Fund is pushing

\$2 billion in oil futures contracts."

"What are they doing in the oil future industry? Ninety-eight percent of these people have no interest in providing us with a product. They are interested in only making a profit," he said. "So when it comes time to deliver the oil on the contracts they have, they are selling, and they are selling at the peak times, which raises the price."

By getting speculators out of the market, oil prices can be reduced 30% to 50%, he said.

Local Family Sees Olympic Win

Olympics: From page 3

Both Mr. Wheeler and Aset Mambetov of Kazakhstan received bronze medals.

Mr. Wheeler's dream of making the Olympic team took a dramatic turn at the trials in Las Vegas in June, where he defeated Justin Ruiz, five-time reigning national champion, two matches to one. Mr. Wheeler, a California native, and Mr. Ruiz have battled on the mat since 2004, but this was the first time Mr. Wheeler has come out on top.

Training at the United States Olympic Education Center on the campus of Northern Michigan

University (NMU), Mr. Wheeler studied criminal justice and psychology and was coached in wrestling by former Bulgarian Olympian Ivan Ivanov and United States Olympian Jim Gruenwald. During his studies and training at NMU, he met his future wife, Marley Garceo, who was earning her degree in education.

During their eight days in China, Mrs. Pope and her family enjoyed touring Beijing and the Great Wall and enjoyed a variety of Chinese foods and the architecture.

"We all enjoyed our stay, the wrestling events were tremendous, and the Chinese were great hosts," said Mrs. Pope.

St. Ignace Truck Show Judges Explain Criteria

Judges: From page 1

road," he said.

For engines, he first looks at cleanliness, and then special touches. Some truck owners will add chrome details and tie together or put electrical wires in a colorful conduit to give a clean and tidy appearance.

The presentation, said Mr. Goudreau, is important.

Judges see different levels of maintenance.

"Some are always squeaky clean, nice," he said, "and, of course, some are a little less than that."

When a new truck enters the show, said Mr. Goudreau, judging becomes more difficult, as it is compared to other trucks that have many working miles and hours of use.

Theme trucks are interesting and creative, he said, and some owners will even dress to match the artwork painted on the vehicle. He remembers a truck at a previous show that was decorated to look like a casino, and the owners dressed as casino employees.

"That's the kind of thing that really makes them different," said Mr. Goudreau, "the schemes, the paint, the themes, and most of all, the people."

The attraction of displaying a truck in the show, he said, is the owner's pride in their vehicle.

As many of the drivers live in their vehicles, the judges are seeing more home-like amenities, including television, microwaves, and refrigerators. He also sees custom interior lighting.

The show, he said offers people the rare opportunity to look at the interior of the cabs.

"They're very, very well maintained," he said. "You'd never know anyone sat in them."

As a judge, he has the opportunity to talk with drivers about their trucks and also about their travels.

The St. Ignace show is popular among drivers, and many bring

families and vacation here, which makes the show more personal, said Mr. Goudreau. It offers the local judges an opportunity to serve as ambassadors to the community.

"I always thought that being a judge at this show is kind of a privilege," he said.

Other local judges include Jason Soblasky, Phil Schnicke, Tayler Schnicke, and Lee Ortman.

The St. Ignace show, organized by Nostalgia Productions of St. Ignace, is on a circuit as one of about six shows of the National Association of Show Trucks. Drivers earn points at each show based on judging. At the end of the show season, the national winners are announced.

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