

# Citizens Appeal to Army Corps of Engineers, Lawmakers for Help With Les Cheneaux Channels

**Dredging:** From page 1  
Smith, environmental chair for the Les Cheneaux Islands Association; Bob Dunn of Les Cheneaux Islands Waterways Restoration, and John Torsky of Les Cheneaux Waterways Restoration. The meeting was attended by members of Mackinac County government, the township government, state agencies, including Waterways Commissioner Bob Brown, private businesses, and other groups concerned about the waterway, including the Nature Conservancy.

Mr. Reid called the system "flawed" because it forces individual recreational harbors to push to have their own projects earmarked for federal money, and he stressed the economic importance of recreational harbors, while providing data to back his position.

The budget proposed by the president for 2008 would have limited dredging projects in Mr. Schloop's region to 15, all of them commercial harbors, but congressional earmarks raised the number to about 40, including several recreational harbors. For example, U.S. Congressman Dave Obey of Wisconsin successfully pushed for \$1.5 million that addressed the needs of three Lake Superior harbors, three Michigan harbors, and one Minnesota harbor.

After doing tests in the Les Cheneaux area this year, the corps estimated that about 85,000 cubic yards of material should be removed, to ensure that the entire channel is seven feet deep. He said he doesn't know the composition of the sediment to be removed, but assumes it is contaminated, and, therefore, estimates the cost to dredge it and to dispose of it on land would be \$20 to \$25 per cubic yard, making the cost approximately \$1.9 million.

shallow-draft projects, a maintenance schedule spread across all harbors would work better, he said, just as it did for the seven harbors dredged this year.

were placed behind it, he added. If no dredging is done, the corps will continue to monitor the condition of the channels and place the results on its Web site, so that mariners will know navigating conditions.

## Chairman Says Tribe Must Bring Spending in Line With Income

**Tribe:** From page 1  
housing, and other services to its members in the eastern and central U.P. The top three tribal membership priorities are health, education, and services for elders, Mr. McCoy has said.

our land claims fund." Mr. McCoy pledged to update tribal membership on changes that are being made, in his September 11 news release.

The Army Corps of Engineers has little control over which harbors are maintained, he explained. Corps funding is part of the federal budget, which requires its priorities to be based on the overall economic impact of each harbor on the U.S. economy. The more tons of material vessels bring through a given harbor, the higher the priority rating of that facility, Mr. Schloop said.

Funding seven harbors in one package is more economical than funding seven individual harbors, he said.

With that amount of funding, the Corps could do a credible job of maintaining all harbors over time, he said.

Citizens at the meeting said a growing reputation for shallow water in Cedarville already has deterred much marine business from the community, and they said they are making an effort to do what can be done without federal help, but are not allowed by law to dredge the channels.

Even before last week's meeting, the tribe cut some jobs and decided to close two health clinics. Approximately 50 jobs, including 17 middle-management and supervisory positions in Upper Peninsula casinos, were cut by the tribe in early August. The layoffs represented 2% of the Tribe's 2,500 employees. In announcing the layoffs, Mr. McCoy reported that, "over the years, millions in tribal reserves has been dwindled down to nothing. According to our financial analysts, if changes are not made, the tribe will not recover."

"We want to stress to members and employees, many of the changes that are being made we consider to be temporary in nature," Mr. McCoy said. "When we are able to balance our deficit, we will look at those services and benefits that have been eliminated to re-evaluate what we are able to re-institute, based on need and available resources....There is a possibility that we may be forced to shut down operations and services if we do not balance our budgets, and limit our spending to what we can afford. We do see a light at the end of this tunnel, and it is our intent to get this balanced and begin our recovery phase early next year."

Since recreational harbors see little tonnage transported, they are low priority, he told *The St. Ignace News*.

After doing tests in the Les Cheneaux area this year, the corps estimated that about 85,000 cubic yards of material should be removed, to ensure that the entire channel is seven feet deep. He said he doesn't know the composition of the sediment to be removed, but assumes it is contaminated, and, therefore, estimates the cost to dredge it and to dispose of it on land would be \$20 to \$25 per cubic yard, making the cost approximately \$1.9 million.

While residents proposed using the dredged material to expand the launch ramp, enlarge parking areas, and possibly augment the airport grounds, Mr. Schloop said that would not be a feasible plan.

They highlighted the efforts of organizations to improve the area, including controlling the watermilfoil with weevils and mechanical harvesting of weeds.

As of October 1, the tribe will close two satellite health clinics in DeTour Village and Kinross to cut costs.

Mr. McCoy, a Sault Ste. Marie businessman, was elected June 26 to the tribal chairmanship. He replaced former chairman Aaron Payment.

Legislators can push for funding to get projects done. A short-term way to enable the Corps to address the needs of Les Cheneaux Islands navigation channels would be to set money aside in this fall's congressional Energy and Water Appropriations Bill.

The dredging itself could be completed next summer, he added.

The material may be able to be used at the shore if a steel sheet pile wall were built and the material

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The tribe recently took out a \$5 million line of credit needed to meet payroll and provide membership services, Mr. McCoy announced September 11, using a land claims fund as collateral for the loan.

In early May, the tribe sold a 40% interest in its Greektown Casino for \$100 million, to reduce its debt. The tribe remains the majority owner of the casino in Detroit. Greektown Casino filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy May 29. The tribe announced plans to reorganize under the protection at that time, and reported its plans to seek \$150 million in additional financing for operations and to complete the construction of a new 400-room hotel and gaming floor expansion.

This is known as a congressional earmark, and they led to completion of many projects that would not have been funded last year.

Rather than earmarks, Mr. Schloop said he favors a fundamental change in the way the United States funds maintenance of recreational and commercial harbors. Rather than basing priorities on tonnage, and requiring earmarks for

My opinion is that we could not place [the material] on the shoreline," Mr. Schloop told *The St. Ignace News*.

Despite the limits to what the Corps can do now, Ms. Davie of Senator Stabenow's office said the meeting in Cedarville was a great start for the restoration project. Noting the sizable turnout by local, county, state, and federal representatives, she said they will be working together for the restoration project of Les Cheneaux Islands navigation channels.

## 'Strike Out Violence' Youth Party Planned

A youth party called "Strike Out the Violence" will be hosted by the Diane Peppler Resource Center at Gateway Lanes in St. Ignace Wednesday, September 24, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

There is no charge for admission. Pizza, soda pop, and prize drawings will be offered. The event is open to all youth of middle school and high school age.

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**231 M-129, PICKFORD** - This large 4 bedroom, 2 bath home with beautiful woodwork throughout, a unique home with lots of room to roam. Large family room with cathedral ceilings. 30x30 garage with upstairs, separate entrance, also spiral staircase going up. Could be an apartment or guest room. Sunroom to enjoy, just off kitchen. You must see this home!! #07-204 \$149,900

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**1540 Lakeside Road, Cedarville** - Beautiful sunsets over the Les Cheneaux Islands. Completely remodeled and winterized cottage on quiet and serene Moscoe Bay, Lake Huron. Fish, boat and swim from your own dock. The area abounds with wildlife. Nicely wooded lot and garage to store your toys. This cottage is turn key with immediate occupancy. What a great spot to enjoy a carefree lifestyle. \$199,500 07-120

**118 S. Holland Drive, Cedarville** - 125 ft. of sandy beach, large crib dock and warm southern exposure are yours to enjoy with this 3 bedroom, 2 bath home in the Les Cheneaux Islands. Beautiful mainland home is in move-in condition with fresh paint, new roof and other updates. Protected bay is great for family sports or canoe up McKay Creek and enjoy the wildlife. Includes 2+ acre adjacent building lot. \$459,000 08-383

**751 N. State Street, St. Ignace** - Location! Location! Location! Great opportunity to own your own business. 19 unit motel complete with 3 bedroom owners home within walking distance to ferry docks, restaurants, boat launch and downtown. High traffic location with good visibility. Call today! \$235,000 08-742

**1912 Dutcher Lane, DeTour Village** - Magnificent Arrow full log home, quiet and secluded lot, on Lake Huron's deep water Seymour Bay. 2 bedroom, 2 bath with loft and sunset views. Two story gas log fireplace. Relax in the waterfront hot tub and enjoy the sights and sounds of the four season wonderland of the U.P. Includes appliances, wardrobes and kitchen updates. Seller is very motivated and will look at all offers! Adjacent lot available. \$375,000 08-695

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**ST IGNACE** - Views of Mackinac Bridge & Lake Huron from 2 BR home. Family/kitchen w/FP, storage building & extra lot. 200' from the waters' edge. (08-526) **Reduced!** \$179,000

**ST IGNACE** - Within walking distance to downtown is this 3 BR, 2 bath home w/attached 2 car garage. Partially fenced backyard. TLC needed. (07-1097) **Reduced!** \$24,900

**CEDARVILLE** - Wonderful year around home w/200' of waterfrontage. Uniquely styled w/special touches. Deck overlooking Government Bay. Boat house. (08-799) **\$725,000**

**DETOUR** - 1 BR cottage w/view of DeTour Passage. DeTour RiverView Association. Includes a 1/5 interest in dock, land & common elements. (08-703) **Reduced!** \$69,900

**DETOUR** - Secluded 83 acres virgin hardwoods mix close to town & lake w/blacktop access. 36x56 bldg. has 4 car garage & 36x18 living area, sleeps 6+. (08-415) **Reduced!** \$250,000

**KINROSS** - 2 BR on corner lot in Arbor Ridge Estates. Wooded, country setting w/paved drive, 2 car garage & deck. Association dues approx \$82 yr per lot. (08-621) **Reduced!** \$59,900

**DETOUR** - 10 acres close to Caribou Lake, year-round recreation area w/public boat launch. Easy access, 330' on blacktop road, nice mix of trees. (08-346) \$19,000

**HESEL** - Deeded access to Lake Huron included w/150 x 240 wooded property. Short distance from I-75, perfect location. (08-732) \$40,000

**HESEL** - Beautiful sunset views from heavily wooded Marquette Island property in low density bay w/sandy beach & vast hard packed sand bay. (07-994) \$200,000

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