

New listings of
local real estate.

CLICK HERE CLICK HERE



Compare Hotel Rates & Save With mlive.com

Book A Room Online Today

[SEARCH](#)

[FIND A BUSINESS](#)

Search

[Back To Your Search Results](#) | [Search Again](#)

THE BAY CITY TIMES

Click here
to subscribe!

[» More From The Bay City Times](#)

Oscoda homeowner can finally get rolling

Friday, July 4, 2003

By Crystal Harmon
TIMES WRITER

After three years of staring at a huge puddle of stagnant water between his Oscoda Township home and Lake Huron, Jerry Suedkamp got the green light on Monday to bring back the beach.

Suedkamp, 66, planned to fire up his tractor and get going after officials from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers faxed him their approval to his request: To level out his beach as he'd done since building the house in 1997.

"He loves riding that tractor," said his wife, Carol, 61. "But for three years, all he's done is write letters" seeking approval to clean up his beach and fill in the mini-ponds, which breed mosquitoes and stench.

Suedkamp was among the first shoreline residents to get approval, under a new regional permit authorized by the Corps, for shoreline maintenance the government deems to have minimal impact on the environment.

Although getting permission to grade the beach took three years, Suedkamp said he likely would still be fighting for it if his property wasn't a sandy beach.

The only plant life to speak of is the Kentucky No. 31 tall fescue grass Suedkamp planted to fight erosion near the house, which Suedkamp says proves he's not living on a wetland.

The fax from the Corps on Monday authorized Suedkamp's request to redistribute up to 200 cubic yards of sand along the beach behind his house.

MORE SEARCHES

Classifieds

- [» Jobs](#)
- [» Autos](#)
- [» Real Estate](#)
- [» All Classifieds](#)

Obituaries

- [» Death Notices & Guest Book](#)

Flint Journal archives

- [» Search back to 1995](#)

Grand Rapids Press archives

- [» Search back to 1995](#)

Local Businesses

- [» Find A Business](#)

Entertainment

- [» Movies](#)
- [» Music](#)
- [» Arts & Events](#)
- [» Dining & Bars](#)

Local Web Sites

- [» Community Connection](#)

[» Contests & Games. Click here!](#)

The official warm weather travel guide of Michigan

Win a Mackinaw City Family Getaway

[CLICK HERE!](#)



[» Advertise With Us](#)

OUR AFFILIATES

Advance

[» SEND THIS PAGE](#)

[» PRINT THIS PAGE](#)

Suedkamp built his home at 7400 N. US-23 in 1997, the same year he and his neighbors built a seawall to protect their homes from the rising water, with permission for the project coming from the Corps.

As water levels receded, the residents wanted to smooth out the evolving beachfront. They hired a bulldozer operator for \$50 per hour.

"Everybody's been doing that since 1975, at least," Suedkamp said. When bulldozer operators raised their price to over \$100 per hour, Suedkamp decided to buy a used tractor and do it himself.

"Nobody really worried about it," he said. The Suedkamps are former resort owners, having sold nearby Huron Shores when they retired. Suedkamp said the area has always relied on its beaches as the basis of its economy.

"This whole thing is zoned residential-tourist," he said. "And tourism depends on this beach."

It wasn't until 2001 that a woman from the U.S. Corps knocked on Suedkamp's door, said she'd spotted his tractor and his nice beach, and warned him to cease and desist beach grooming until he had a proper permit.

The visit was followed up with a letter from the Corps, informing him he was in violation of the Clean Water Act and the Rivers and Harbors Act, which provide for federal control of navigable waters and wetlands. If he violated the act again, he was warned, he could be fined \$25,000 per day.

The Corps turned down Suedkamp's initial application for a permit in 2001, telling him the leveling of his beach would be "contrary to the overall public interest." He appealed, and several U.S. Army Corps officials came to his home to hear him out.

They denied that appeal, and with the looming fines, Suedkamp didn't do any leveling after that.

The process got a whole lot simpler in May, when the Corps established the regional permit for parts of the Great Lakes.

Suedkamp was the first person to get his hands on the one-page permit application to be part of that "blanket" permit and finally got the approval this week. He's one of about 50 folks approved under the new guidelines so far, Corps officials say.

Suedkamp was delighted to finally get permission to do what he was accustomed to doing, but said he remained upset by the whole experience.

"I don't like my tax dollars being used to threaten me," he said. "It made me feel like I was in communist Russia, being ordered by the government what to do with my own property."

© 2003 Bay City Times. Used with permission

FIND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Select Newspaper:

Select Category:

Select Time Frame:

AND Enter Keywords:

(Example: governor, capitol)

[The Best Local Classifieds: Jobs](#) | [Autos](#) | [Real Estate](#) | [Place An Ad](#)



Special Home Delivery Offers!

[Ann Arbor News](#) | [Bay City Times](#) | [Flint Journal](#)
[Grand Rapids Press](#) | [Jackson Citizen Patriot](#) | [Kalamazoo Gazette](#)
[Muskegon Chronicle](#) | [Saginaw News](#)

[About Us](#) | [Help/Feedback](#) | [Advertise With Us](#)

Use of this site constitutes acceptance of our [User Agreement](#). Please read our [Privacy Policy](#).

©2003 [MLive.com](#). All Rights Reserved.



[Home](#) | [News+Biz](#) | [Travel](#) | [Sports](#) | [Forums+Chat](#) | [Cams+Radio](#) | [Living](#) | [Entertainment](#) | **CLASSIFIEDS**

Get The Best Local...
[Jobs](#) | [Autos](#) | [Real Estate](#)
[All Classifieds](#) | [Place An Ad](#)