



## What do you want for Michigan's Beaches?

Michigan has 3300 miles of fresh water shoreline and its 2nd largest industry is tourism. Tourists mostly from Michigan spend 8.5 billion dollars a year on leisure travel in our state. Half of these dollars are spent on activities near the water and beaches.

Perhaps you and even your parents came to the Saginaw Bay area because of the nicely maintained beaches. Saginaw Bay alone has 4 state parks and many county parks along it because of its beautiful sandy shoreline. People built cottages on the shoreline because of these great beaches. Public beach trustees and private beach owners have always groomed their beaches to keep them clean and safe. But, decades of history may come to an end. The Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) want to stop beach grooming, so future generations will not be able to enjoy these beaches anymore. The ACOE are rigorously enforcing no beach grooming in the Saginaw Bay area first and then plan to go into Traverse City with their enforcement policies. Traverse City is our state's second most popular tourist destination.

Did you know that if you dig sand more than 4 inches deep on Michigan beaches or move sand over sand below the high water mark, or fill in standing, swampy, mosquito-infested water areas on your beach without a permit from the ACOE and MDEQ that you are in violation of Federal and State laws as they interpret them? You might prevent a weed from growing on the beaches. You could be sued by the Federal government and fined \$25,000 a day.

The ACOE lets developers ruin existing, working wetlands for a fee and a permit if they promise to replace them. But, ACOE has not followed through to make sure these 'created wetlands' work. Thus, 40% of existing wetlands are non-working. So, ACOE needs more. They want Michigan beaches for wet-

lands and claim these new wetlands will clean all of the Great Lakes of the 55 billion gallons of partially treated raw sewage spilled each year, not to mention chemicals dumped illegally. Instead of fining corporations for illegal discharges, they are fining public and private beach owners for grooming their beaches without a permit, which is 25 pages long and takes them 90 days or longer to process. Permits filed are then being denied.

Cease and desist letters come first with threats of \$25,000 a day fines and jail for grooming beaches, then a lawsuit follows if you touch your beach again. Three lawsuits were filed so far - one in Caseville. Sleeper State Park, Caseville County Park and Oak Beach Park were issued cease and desist letters last fall 2001 for grooming beaches as they have done for 50 years without a permit. They had to pay \$500.00 for the permit and were only allowed to groom a certain amount of beach - not all that they had in the past.

Do you want your family to vacation on dirty beaches of weeds and muck, or have your kids walk through standing swampy water full of mosquitoes and who-knows-what else? Do you believe that beaches should be wetlands? If not, please help Save Our Shoreline Inc. (SOS) stop this outrageous power-grabbing of our property rights to our public and residential beaches. SOS is trying to correct these misguided regulations that will result in a very negative and costly impact on our tourism industry and cause serious tax losses for our state if beach front properties are taxed as wetlands.

You can join our effort as a member or donate to our legal fund to help preserve Michigan's beautiful shoreline and our economy. Please pick up a membership form and/or donate to our legal fund before you leave. Our SOS membership thanks you for your concern and for vacationing in Michigan.



**SAVE OUR SHORELINE** P.O. Box 2307 • Bay City, MI 48707-2307 • 989-667-2910



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