

# State acts on shore erosion

By ELMER E. WHITE  
Ugly, angular metal chunks jutting from the tiny beach at Point Betsie on Michigan's western "coastline" may do nothing for the seascape. But their goal is to cut shoreline erosion, more than balances the blight.

Shore erosion, the loss of land because of the energy of waves and current produced by large wind storms, has been such a problem in Michigan that the Legislature authorized the Department of Natural Resources to take "action to avert catastrophic consequences" in 1972.

A Demonstration Erosion Control Program, involving the University of Michigan Coastal Zone Laboratory, resulted.

Anyone who owns shore property and has experienced or fears erosion might well take a look at what that program is doing, because one principle aim was to help private and owners make decisions about protecting their property.

IN FACT, a particular effort was to add "increasingly effective methods which could be constructed by the property owners themselves."

Research began with selection of more than a dozen sites around the state where there are severe erosion problems.

Then some type of protective method—sand fill, groins, revetments, sea walls, off-shore breakwaters—was installed and its effectiveness evaluated with respect to reduction of erosion rates, cost, construction difficulties and durability.

Those evaluations now are available in a comprehensive report, complete with photographs and specific diagrams. Folks who want a copy of that report can obtain one by writing to: Water Development Services Division, Department of Natural Resources, Mason Bldg., Lansing, MI 48928. Ask for: Michigan's Demonstration Erosion Control Program Evaluation Report.

THE REPORT cautions that the one-year study cannot come up with final conclusions. "Many shore installations appear to perform well temporarily but fail after several years," it notes.

Thus, the report recommends the monitoring portion of the study continue for five years.

But it does contain some clues for property owners who may have taken to the water in bathing trunks to shore up their shores with sand bags.

ARE PENALTY points an incentive to slow down?

State Rep. Ernest Nash, R-Dimondale, an 18-year veteran of Michigan's State Police force, thinks they are, and he's trying to tempt legislative consideration of stiffly points to drivers caught violating the 55 mph limit.

"Lawmakers thought the 55 mph limit was only temporary when they adopted it almost a year ago," Nash points out. "Its purpose was to save gasoline during the shortage and they didn't want to penalize people for something that was only temporary."

But now that the federal government has made the 55 mph limit permanent, Nash figures it's a different story.

"People didn't pay any attention to the lower limit," he says. "In order for that limit to have any effect, it's going to be necessary to put points back in the system."

Nash's proposal calls for two points to be added to the record of a driver caught doing 10 miles or less over the speed limit. Anyone going 10-15 miles over the limit would be penalized three points, and that would be boosted to four for exceeding the limit by more than 15 miles an hour.

MICHIGAN NEEDS to look ahead, develop long-range goals and identify potential problem areas—and that's something the Legislature is not equipped to do.

So says House Republican Leader Dennis Cawthorne of Marquette.

Cawthorne says legislative bodies "are primarily equipped to meet problems on a piecemeal, crisis-by-crisis basis." What's needed in addition, he says, is a "commission on the future."

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## OU teacher to be feted

Ken Meade of Franklin, assistant to the dean of the Oakland University School of Engineering, will be honored with a Meadow Brook Hall reception and dinner May 30. Meade will be retiring on July 1, after eight years at OU.

During his more than 30 years in the engineering profession, Meade has taught high school and university-level physics and engineering and has held many supervisor positions with the General Motors Association.

He is a past president and fellow of the Engineering Society of Detroit, a member of the Board of Governors of the Cranbrook Institute of Science, vice president and secretary of the Executive Committee of the Thomas Alva Edison Foundation, a member of the American Society for Engineering Education and the American Association of Physics Teachers.

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