

I-275 result grinds resident

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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The I-275 diamond grinding process has left the freeway's surrounding landscape looking less than emerald green.

Limestone runoff from the mixture of concrete debris has created a problem for the surrounding area, according to one Livonia resident. The Michigan Department of Transportation ground down existing grooves as part of a \$2 million remedy to lower traffic noise.

Workers completed the project in mid-October. An MDOT sound study revealed noise levels dropped by 5 decibels.

"Their job is done, but now Livonia has another problem — an eyesore," said Livonia resident Tom Ziemba.

Such runoff is common during grinding projects, an MDOT spokesman said. The residue doesn't pose an environmental hazard.

The Department of Environmental Quality was aware slurry was disposed into the median, MDOT said. Silt fencing was put

around drainage areas as an added precaution.

A lack of wet weather last month played a part in the freeway's greenbelts looking beleaguered, though December's rainy streak is making up for it.

"We pretty much let nature take its course," said Rob Morosi, MDOT spokesman. "With the rain and snow, it pretty much washes away."

If the problem persists, MDOT would replant grass seed along the embankment in the spring, Morosi said.

Farmington Hills man indicted for buying endangered species hides

BY PAUL R. PACE
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A Farmington Hills resident is among three Michigan men indicted for illegally purchasing hides of federally endangered tigers and leopards.

George F. Riley, 69, of Farmington Hills has been charged with three felony violations of endangered animal protection laws and two misdemeanor violations of the Endangered Species Act in connection with his

alleged purchase of two tiger hides and one black leopard hide. Two other Michigan men, one from Milford and one from Jackson, were also charged in the investigation.

According to a press release issued by the U.S. Attorney's Office, service investigators of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service worked with the U.S. Attorney's Offices in Missouri, Illinois and Michigan and uncovered a group of residents and small business owners in

the Midwest who allegedly bought and killed exotic tigers, leopards, snow leopards, lions, mountain lions, cougars, mixed breed cats and black bears with the intention of introducing meat and skins into the lucrative animal parts trade.

The three Michigan men were not charged with killing any of the animals.

If convicted, Riley faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison and/or fines up to \$250,000.

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