



Citizens Concerned for Michipicoten Bay

# NEWSLETTER

## Caring for Lake Superior's Coastline

Special Edition, October 2006

### News Flash.....

#### Superior Aggregates submits new aggregate licence application

October 11, 2006

As expected following withdrawal of its previous licence application, Superior Aggregates Company (SAC) has submitted a new application, this time for a Category 1 and Category 2 licence, which would allow them to quarry below the water table. **The public now has 45 days to review the application and to file objections to the company and MNR by the end of the public review period.** Details regarding the public consultation process can be found on Ontario Environmental Bill of Rights registry here:

<http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envregistry/028704ei.htm>

Why the new application? SAC was essentially forced to submit a new application once it had been determined that their original estimates of the groundwater table depths at the proposed site were grossly inaccurate. In order to recover the same tonnage they had originally envisioned, SAC had to apply for a new licence category.

**The public has until November 27, 2006 to submit their concerns and objections regarding the**

**application to SAC and MNR.**

CCMB is attempting to make arrangements to have the licence application made available to the public at other locations in Ontario.

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#### Is Lake Superior's Northshore Coastline Really Protected?

During its deliberations over concerns with the possible negative impacts from a quarry proposal at Michipicoten Bay, Citizens Concerned for Michipicoten Bay (CCMB) have begun to wonder what ever happened to the Great Lakes Heritage Coast initiative introduced by the Ontario Government in 1999? This initiative had been heralded as the centerpiece for a suite of "signature sites" of protected areas across Northern Ontario at that time. Those of us who have been involved with the quarry issue, where a Detroit-based construction company wants to establish a large traprock quarry on Lake Superior's Michipicoten Bay coast, now question the Province's commitment to this initiative.

#### The signs are not good.....

The Province's *Ontario Living Legacy* land use planning strategy for northern Ontario had received extensive public consultation. Documents specifically produced for the Great Lakes Heritage Coast (GLHC), including *The Great Lakes Heritage Coast Discussion Paper* (2000) and *Charting the Course* (2001), declared that the GLHC had been established "as a premier Featured Area that has a range of highly significant values that warrant special strategies. In addition, the strategy indicates that the coast contains extremely significant tourism and recreation potential

that merits increased planning, management and promotion....”

*Charting the Course* was the last document related to the GLHC program that was officially released by the Province back in 2001. This document contained a number of recommendations, which included establishing an advisory panel, preparing a strategy for the coast, holding further

consultations, improving the tourism and recreational infrastructure along the coast, and making special efforts to raise the profile of the GLHC initiative.

**What the Ontario government has done since that time, instead, is disband the GLHC office, cut all funding of the initiative, and close down the website.**

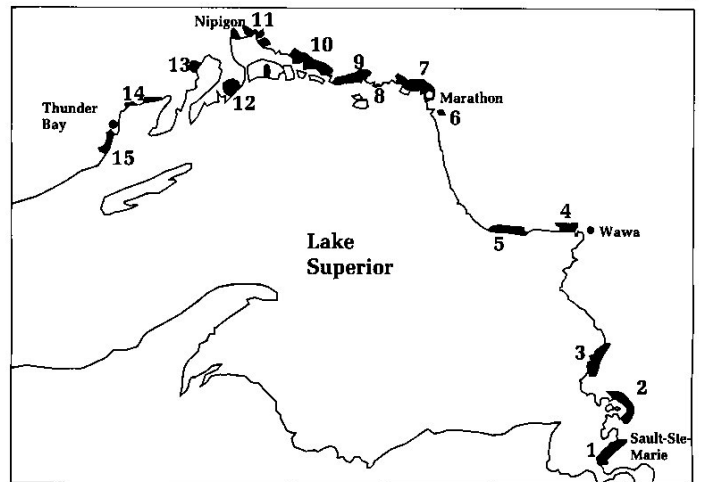


*This is what greets visitors to the Ontario Government's Great Lakes Heritage Coast web page.*

As far as the public is concerned, there has been no work on the program since 2001.

## What might be the real agenda for the Lake Superior coast?

Those of us following the traprock quarry issue at Michipicoten Bay were surprised to discover that, while the Ministry of Natural Resources was seeking to protect the coast, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (MNDM) had other plans. In 2001, MNDM issued *Open File Report 6072 - Physical evaluation and assessment of bedrock aggregate resource potential, North of Lake Superior*. This report identifies 15 extensive stretches of shoreline as having potential for aggregate development – the same coastline that the same government identified as having “extremely significant tourism and recreational potential...” Obviously, there was an immense disconnect between two branches within the government. **One important difference, however, is that MNDM's Open File Report has NOT undergone any public consultation process.**



*Map showing locations of 15 potential aggregate quarry sites on Lake Superior's north shore identified by the Ontario Government in 2001. From: Open File Report 6072 - Physical evaluation and assessment of bedrock aggregate resource potential, North of Lake Superior*

## Why the Michipicoten Bay quarry issue should concern us all....

What happens with the Michipicoten Bay quarry issue will all too likely set the precedent for any future quarry proposals for Lake Superior's coastline. That's why CCMB believes it is important to ensure that all possible impacts associated with developing the Michipicoten Bay quarry must be thoroughly assessed

while the proponent's aggregate license application is undergoing review by the Government of Ontario. It is expected that the license application will be referred to the Ontario Municipal Board for resolution, along with the appealed Plan Amendment and Zoning By-Law Amendment. CCMB will be fully involved in the tribunal hearings. Participating in such tribunals is costly, involving expert witnesses, legal counsel, planning experts, etc. which is why CCMB is seeking donations in preparing for the hearings. We believe that the ramifications to the Lake Superior coastline will be immense if we are unable to mount an effective case at the OMB hearings. That's why we need your help! CCMB is operated totally by volunteers, so every dollar donated is directed toward expenses for hiring professional and legal experts.

## Join us in our campaign to have the Ontario Government re-commit itself to the Great Lakes Heritage Coast initiative.

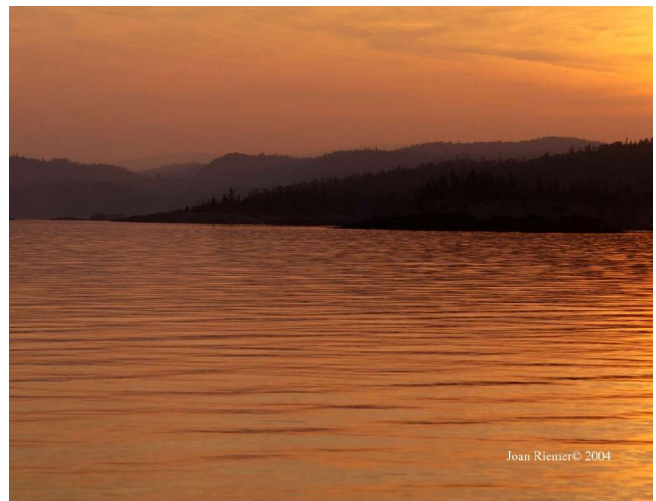
We think the government was on the right track with its GLHC project. In fact, many Ontarians and others who have grown to appreciate the uniqueness of Lake Superior supported the government's Heritage Coast proposal when it was first unveiled. We think it's time for the government to get the GLHC initiative back on track. In his 2004-05 Annual Report Supplement, Ontario's Environmental Commissioner, Gord Miller, also encourages the government to take action on the GLHC: *"...the ECO encourages MNR to develop a strategy for the GLHC in order to give further focus to the [Heritage Coast] concept. Through discussions with the public, MNR should clarify what the concept really means in practical terms, particularly what protections against aggregate operations and other industries are afforded to what Crown lands along the coast. MNR should not wait until future proposals for key development projects along the GLHC emerge to have this important public debate."*

CCMB fully endorses the Commissioner's recommendation and is now in the formative stages of mounting a new campaign that would call on the Province of Ontario to place a moratorium on all new large-scale industrial development on the Great Lakes Heritage Coastline until the Province develops a clear strategy for this "Featured Area".

## How can our American neighbours help?

What is driving the need for aggregate from Lake Superior's coast is the need for aggregate in the U.S. for building highways. We are willing to bet that most Michigan residents would be appalled if they were aware that their aggregate was being sourced from the scenic shores of the world's largest freshwater lake.

We are asking Michigan residents to help us by asking their State Government to bring in policies that will restrict where aggregates are sourced for their highway construction projects. Sensitive ecosystems such as the pristine coastline of Lake Superior should be protected from aggregate development.



## Who we are.....

The Citizens Concerned for Michipicoten Bay (CCMB) are a group of landowners on Michipicoten Bay; residents in the Wawa/northeastern Lake Superior area; and supporters across Ontario, Canada, the United States of America and elsewhere throughout the world.

We care about what happens to the coastline of northeastern Lake Superior.

We know Lake Superior. Our members have paddled around the whole lake; paddled and boated along the shore and amongst the islands of northeastern Lake Superior; surveyed and researched the natural features and human history of the area.

The current threat to our area is a proposed traprock quarry at the west end of Michipicoten Bay. We are concerned with the future of the Michipicoten Bay. We are also concerned with northeastern Lake Superior (from Pukaskwa National Park south through to Lake Superior Provincial Park), the longest stretch of wilderness shoreline of all the Great Lakes.



## What is CCMB's focus?

The work that the Citizens Concerned for Michipicoten Bay does is on three levels of scale:

- 1) Northeastern Lake Superior: Our caring for this coast includes being part of any land-use planning or resource management projects that include the coast. Some of our members were actively involved in Ontario's Lands for Life/Ontario's Living Legacy and they recommended protection of the Lake Superior shoreline. There are now 2 new Conservation Reserves and a new Waterway Provincial Park. A decision on the Lake Superior Highlands Conservation Reserve is still pending.

We are concerned with recommendations of a report prepared in 2001 for the Ontario Geological Survey showing the aggregate potential for 15 areas along the Canadian shore of Lake Superior.

- 2) Michipicoten Bay: We are concerned about the future of Michipicoten Bay. The bay is home to permanent and seasonal residents in the Township of Michipicoten (Town of

Wawa). It is a popular area for sport fishing and for day-use recreation (swimming, boating, surfing, etc.).

We have provided advice and assistance to the resource management activities of the Lake Superior Fisheries Management Unit and to research conducted by McMaster University and by the University of Guelph.

- 3) We take an active role in the government review processes for proposed development on the shore of Lake Superior.

Our current project is reviewing the proposed trap rock quarry by the Superior Aggregates Corporation. We have taken an active role in the public participation opportunities provided in the review of the proposed municipal land use zoning and in the review of the applications for an Aggregate Permit under the Aggregate Resources Act and for a Certificate of Approval under the Environmental Protection Act.



*Please visit our website at*

[www.ccmb.ca](http://www.ccmb.ca)