

## This is the fourth in a series of updates

outlining the water treatment and disposal options being considered right now by CMS Land and government officials. As part of the Little Traverse Bay Environmental Project, millions of gallons of groundwater, high in alkalinity and containing trace amounts of mercury and other contaminants, are collected at the shoreline in order to protect the Bay. Collection of this water will go on for the foreseeable future, but what to do with it for the long term remains a crucial unanswered question. Any final solution must answer the following questions:

- Does the solution **protect human health and Little Traverse Bay?**
- Does it provide a **local solution** to this local problem?
- Is it **supported by sound science?**
- Does it **significantly reduce the mercury levels** of the water?
- Does it **relieve local road congestion and safety issues** associated with tanker truck traffic?
- Does it **minimize disruption to the community, economy and tourism?**
- Is the solution **economically reasonable?**



## Exploring Options for Protecting Our Bay

### **OPTION:** Send collected water through underground pipes to the Petoskey Water Treatment system for treatment and release into Little Traverse Bay.

Discussions with City of Petoskey officials have been ongoing over the past two years in an effort to develop a plan that would allow water from the Little Traverse Bay Environmental Project to be sent to the city's water treatment facility for treatment and release into the bay.

In a number of ways, reaching an agreement with the City of Petoskey to take the water meets many of the goals needed for a long-term solution. It is a scientifically proven method that allows the water to be released in a manner that protects the bay and public health (the Grand Traverse Water Treatment Facility is currently mixing, treating and releasing water to the bay that is trucked from the project to Traverse City). It is a local solution to a local problem. It would basically eliminate truck congestion on local roads and is more reasonable from a cost perspective.

However, despite the extensive study of both city and CMS representatives, a number of technical challenges still need to be addressed before this option can be considered viable. Technical issues that need to be overcome include reaching agreement how much project water the city can accept without compromising its discharge permit. If the plant is not able to accept the entire amount of water this option would result in a partial solution which would still require extensive trucking. Additional challenges, from the CMS perspective, include: the extent of infrastructure improvements to the water treatment plant required; the ability and necessity of installing a dedicated pipeline along an already crowded right of way on U.S. 31 to transport the water collected from East Park and Bay Harbor to the treatment plant; and the ability to install a one million gallon water storage tank above the wastewater treatment facility. The box to the right contains a question mark in the mercury removal category because the mercury contained in the water collected at the environmental project is predominantly dissolved mercury. This type of mercury is much more difficult for treatment plants to remove than the elemental and less soluble mercury typically found in municipal waste water streams. If a dedicated line is able to be installed, it would result in considerable public disruption during the construction period.

### A Solution for Northwest Michigan

	Trucking	Injection Wells*	Local Injection Well	City of Petoskey	Local Discharge
Local Solution	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Supported by Science	✓	✓	?	✓	✓
Reduces Mercury	✓	✓	?	?	✓
Relieves Traffic Congestion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Minimizes Local Disruption	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Economical	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Protects the Bay & Human Health	✓	✓	?	✓	✓

\*Antrim and Osago Counties

Next: Local discharge



Cleaning our shore.  Protecting our bay.

LITTLE TRVERSE BAY ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT

Learn more at [www.protectingourbay.com](http://www.protectingourbay.com)