

This is the first 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 the solution 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: Continue trucking water to the Grand Traverse Water Treatment Facility for treatment and disposal into Grand Traverse Bay.

Of the approximately 150,000 gallons of water collected each day as part of the Little Traverse Bay Environmental Project, about 60,000 gallons of the water is carried by tanker truck from the Bay Harbor development and East Park, south on US 31, to the Grand Traverse Water Treatment Facility. Each truck carries up to 11,500 gallons of water, weighs about 75 tons and makes a 140 mile round trip to dispose of the water. Once the water reaches Traverse City, it is treated and mixed with other wastes before it is released into Grand Traverse Bay.

Using the Grand Traverse Water Treatment Facility to dispose of the collected water is an option supported by science (approved discharge permits). However, this option relies primarily on mixing to meet mercury discharge standards. Mixing is a method used by waste water treatment plants across the state and country to meet discharge requirements. Mixing means the waste water is diluted so that the overall concentration of mercury is lower, but it does little to reduce the actual amount of mercury entering the lake. Additionally, the 140 mile round trip adds to congestion and wear and tear on local roads, and increases the potential for traffic accidents. Environmental gains also are offset by the known negative environmental impacts of truck traffic. Currently about 300,000 miles a year are driven just between Petoskey and Traverse City on Northwest Michigan roads to accomplish what can be accomplished locally. In addition, this option is neither a cost-effective nor a local solution to the question of how to treat the collected water.

Next: Utilizing injection wells for water disposal.

WHAT WORKS? Answering the water question.

	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	✓				

*Antrim and Otsego Counties

Cleaning our shore.  Protecting our bay.

LITTLE TRAVERSE BAY ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT

Learn more at www.protectingourbay.com