



St. Marys Cement, Inc. (U.S.)
Charlevoix Plant

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St. Marys Cement Thanks Citizens Advisory Committee for Thorough Examination and Debate of Possible Land Swap

CHARLEVOIX, Mich. — St. Marys Cement today expressed its gratitude to a committee of 20 local citizens who spent the past four months examining a possible land swap between the company and the State of Michigan at Fisherman’s Island State Park (FISP).

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) members met six times to examine the possible land swap, discussing potential benefits to the park and community, their concerns with the project, and how FISP might be protected and improved if the project should move forward.

By an 11-1 vote, the committee agreed that “Some form of swap is best for the community.” The committee also created a list of priority improvements it would recommend for the park if the land swap occurs.

“As one of the county’s largest employers and taxpayers, we at St. Marys Cement were impressed with the committee’s thoroughness, debate and scrutiny of the proposal,” said St. Marys Environmental Manager Cortney Schmidt. “Clearly, committee members want FISP protected and improved as a community and state resource. The committee proposed specific ways to protect and improve the park, and we are grateful for their diligence, thoughtfulness and work.”

A final report summarizing the CAC’s actions will be written and released to the public in the coming months. St. Marys will decide within the next year whether it will formally ask the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) to approve the land swap.

Under the proposed land swap, St. Marys Cement would trade some un-mined land it owns at the south end for some un-mined land owned by the State at the north end of the park. The state park and the cement plant share a border along Bells Bay Road, with the main entrances to the plant and the park within a few hundred yards of each other. The company believes the project would benefit the local economy, the environment, the company and our neighbors, and the people who visit and camp at the state park for generations to come. Some facts about the possible land swap:

- No beach or shoreline will be affected.
- Not a single campsite will be lost.
- With MDNR approvals, improvements including modern facilities would be added to some of the camping areas.

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- There are no changes planned to the 81 rustic campsites in the park.
- All trails would be preserved. New trails — including bicycle trail — could be added.
- Under the current land swap concept, the existing entrance to FISP on Bells Bay Road may be re-located. One or more new entrances might be built. However, any changes to the park, including to the entrances, would need MDNR approval.
- The park would gain access to 4,000 feet of trout stream/McGeach Creek.
- The park would realize a net gain of about 40 acres of land.
- The park would gain natural wetlands and critical habitat.
- Wear and tear on nearby roads would be reduced because SMC trucks would be travelling shorter distances.
- Groundwater impacts from mining operations would decrease.

Complete facts about the land swap proposal can be found at www.LandSwapFacts.com.

Schmidt said the CAC process will help county residents understand “what is true and what is false about the possible land swap.”

“Given the amount of misinformation that has made its way into the community about the land swap, CAC members now fully understand the facts about what we are considering,” Schmidt said. “At the end of the day, St. Marys Cement will simply not support a land swap that does not benefit the community, the park, the environment, and the company.”

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