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Pure Michigan: Charlevoix



THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT GREAT LAKES WATER LEVELS AND SHORELINES:

- Lake fluctuations are a natural process that cause long-term erosion on most of Michigan's Great Lakes shores – they are overwhelmingly powerful and remorseless.
- There are no hard shoreline protection structures yet devised (e.g., sea walls, revetments, bulkheads, riprap) that permanently stop erosion.
- **BUT ALL** hard shoreline protection structures:
 - Eventually fail, imposing great costs on property owners, local government, and the state to repair, enlarge, move, or remove;
 - AND ALL armoring severely degrades and even eliminates entirely the natural beach in the meantime.
- Under Michigan law stretching back to the founding of the state, the citizens of Michigan (and visiting tourists) have a right to access and walk the state's Great Lakes public trust beaches – even along privately owned shoreline property (see *Glass v. Goeckel*, Michigan Supreme Court, 2005).
- Shoreline property owners have a right to use their Great Lakes beaches and upland properties, but they do not have a right to destroy beaches with armoring in an attempt to protect their properties.
- The state has a duty to protect its public trust beaches for public access and use; the permitting process is the mechanism for doing so.

Legislation that would accelerate EGLE permit writing for shoreline armoring will result in the widespread and costly loss and degradation of Michigan's Great Lakes beaches without actually providing permanent protection to shoreline property owners. It will severely undermine coastal community economies dependent upon seasonal populations and tourism. The best way to help property owners is to help them move back.



Armoring destroys the natural beach and accelerates erosion on neighboring properties.



Past armoring fails and the debris continues to degrade the shore and beach. (All photos: MLive.com)