

December 20, 2004

Ms. Dusty Shultz, Superintendent  
Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore  
9922 Front Street  
Empire, MI 49630

RE: Homestead Wastewater Disposal Environmental Assessment

Dear Superintendent Shultz:

The Board of Directors of Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear has reviewed the Environmental Assessment for the Homestead Resort Wastewater Disposal at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. Preserve has taken this action in the context of Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear's mission and goals. We have examined the Alternative 1, the West Study Area, and the No Action Alternative. It is our understanding that Alternative 2, the East Study Area, is no longer under consideration.

Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear has a demonstrable interest in the effects of the Homestead Resort Wastewater Disposal undertaking on the Port Oneida Rural Historic District, a district that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Under Section 106 of 36 CFR 800, the Protection of Historic Properties, of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear has assessed the effects of the undertaking on the aforementioned Port Oneida Rural Historic District. We have applied the Criteria of Adverse Effect and find an **adverse effect in Alternative 1, the West Study Area.**

The installation, operation and maintenance of an underground leach field for the Homestead Resort Wastewater Disposal system in a meadow southwest of the Thoreson Farm buildings would alter directly the characteristics of the Thoreson Farm and its cultural landscape that qualify the farm and its landscape to contribute to the character of the Port Oneida Rural Historic District in a manner that would diminish the integrity of the farm's setting, feeling and association.

Further, the undertaking would destroy and damage part of the farm field; change the character of the farm's physical features within its setting; introduce visual and atmospheric elements that diminish the integrity of the farm's significant historic features; and possibly transfer the property out of federal control without adequate and legally enforceable restrictions or conditions to ensure the long-term preservation of the property's historic significance. And finally, the undertaking is likely to disturb both historic and prehistoric archaeological sites.

Again, it is our understanding that Alternative 2, the East Study Area has been withdrawn from consideration; therefore we have no comment on Alternative 2. We find no adverse effect with the No Action Alternative.

Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear is committed to preserving the historical structures, cultural landscapes and archaeology in the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. Some examples of Preserve's vested interest in the future of the Port Oneida Rural Historic District include Preserve's leadership role in the rehabilitation of the Olsen Farmhouse; stabilization of structures at the Martin Basch Farmstead; and the development of a cultural landscape interpretive model for the Port Oneida Rural Historic District.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to continuing our work with you to reach our mutual goal of saving and interpreting the cultural history of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 231.590.7637.

Sincerely yours,

Lanny Sterling, Chairman

cc: Brian Conway, MI SHPO  
Nancy Finegood, MHPN  
Brian Price, Leelanau Conservancy  
Hans Voss, MLUI