

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SAVE OUR SHORELINE PRESS RELEASE

BAY CITY, Michigan – July 2, 2012

Governor Snyder Signs Beach Grooming Bill into Law

Bay City, Michigan. Save Our Shoreline announces today that Governor Rick Snyder has signed the Beach Grooming Bill, 2012 PA 247, into law. Under the law, most shoreline owners along the Great Lakes can maintain their beaches without first seeking a permit from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. More specifically, the law clarifies that the state may not use laws governing wetlands or submerged lands to prohibit “leveling of sand, removal of vegetation, grooming of soil, or removal of debris” in typical beach areas of sand, rock, or pebbles. The new law also allows the mowing of vegetation below a defined “ordinary high water mark” regardless of soil type. This mowing exemption should help shoreline owners remove the invasive, non-native plant *phragmites* from their property. In an effort to protect established wetlands, the St. Clair Flats area is excluded from the law’s provisions, as is any area designated as an “environmental area” under a separate state law.

“It has been twelve long years, but finally we have an important piece of the relief we have been asking for,” said Ernie Krygier, SOS President. “Under this bill, we expect to see a significant reduction in *phragmites*, better beaches, and more tourism money flowing into Michigan,” he said. While the law takes away the need for state permits, a permit for many activities is still required by the Corps of Engineers-Detroit District. The exception is mowing, which the Detroit District says it does not regulate. As a result, with the new law, most Great Lakes owners may mow immediately without the need for seeking a permit.

2012 PA 247 passed by broad margins with bi-partisan support. “We worked very hard to accommodate the concerns of the MDEQ and various environmental organizations that this bill would threaten established wetlands,” said Krygier.

For more information about mowing, discing, and plowing as effective *phragmites* control methods, several authorities will be included on our homepage at www.saveourshoreline.org.

Founded in 2001, Save Our Shoreline is a nonprofit membership basis corporation of approximately 3,000 households committed to the preservation of beaches and waterfront areas, and to the protection of riparian rights, including the right to maintain beaches and waterfront areas. For more information, contact David Powers, SOS Attorney, at (989) 892-4861.

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