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**Public Comment**

**South Bar Lake Drain Commission Scope Meeting April, 14 2022**

Our family has owned the property on which the outlet flows since the late 1960's--11443 S Lake Michigan Drive. We have seen its constantly changing conditions over many years! As options are being considered for improving or moving the outlet, we do hope that all options are studied thoroughly including the options for moving the outlet to the Empire Beach Park and that the following issues are addressed.

The outlet's primary function is drainage for South Bar Lake, but it should also be understood that it attracts the public for its recreational value. As the Empire Beach Park has seen incredible increases in use, a significant number of beach walkers from the park are now coming to the outlet to "hang out" and bring their kids to play (or even sending their kids to play without adult supervision). Since the outlet is on private land, this public recreational use is not desirable and is difficult to control. We also find that beach walkers would like to find a dry path around the outlet as they head north up the beach. This causes them to clamber over our dune and then cross over the outlet on our private drive. Dune preservation is important to all of us, and this activity is also undesirable and very difficult to control.

Considering the need for publicly-funded maintenance of the drainage solution and the public's interest in recreation at the outlet, we do hope that options that move the outlet to public property (such as option 1 and 2) are given primary consideration. These options, along with option 3, have the added benefit that beach walkers from the park or from properties (including National Park land) from the north can proceed along the beach unimpeded by the outlet. Option 4 would be especially challenging for beach walkers as it blocks the path along the shoreline.

The options (1-4) that have been provided for review appear to be very preliminary and do not address potential impacts on and changes to the private property on which the outlet is currently located. We can only assume and definitely do expect that further study and design work will address this.

Option 4 is especially concerning to us as it includes new structures on our property that will have potentially undesirable impacts--installing a pump station and extending a "rip-rap" drainage channel from the existing outlet opening to the "Lake Michigan shoreline." While this may seem like a straightforward solution, simple observation of the following natural processes would suggest otherwise:

- the extraordinary wave action and dramatic movement of sand along the Lake Michigan beach and shoreline,
- the constantly changing location of the shoreline and its distance from the outlet as the Lake Michigan water level changes--changes that have historically added and/or subtracted well over 100' to the beach.
- and the significant meandering of the outlet (both to the north and to the south) in response to wind, wave and ice movement that allows it to continue flowing in response to ever changing conditions (except when Lake Michigan is at its historically highest level).

Our observation over the past 50 years of the interaction of the outlet with Lake Michigan suggests that trying to constrain the outlet path within a "rip-rap" channel simply will not work.