



MEMORANDUM

To: Village Council
From: Dean Martin, Village Manager
Date: 12/4/2025
Subject: Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Recommendation – Enbridge Horizontal Drilling Proposal

Background:

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board met on December 2nd to discuss a conservation easement held by Little Traverse Conservancy on the Headlands Property (owned by Emmet County), and the potential impacts of a [proposed alternative](#) to the Enbridge Great Lakes Tunnel, horizontal drilling.

Horizontal drilling was previously considered unviable for the transmission of the Line 5 pipeline, though the US Army Corps of Engineers apparently received new data to indicate that it may be feasible. They performed an Environmental Impact Statement on the alternative, which indicated the pipeline would be constructed along 4 miles of land, crossing the Headlands Park, May Woods, and French Farm. 80 feet of trees and foliage would have to be cleared along this 4 mile stretch. It is likely that horizontal drilling will result in less materials being dredged from the Straits and stored in Village limits. The size of the tunnel will reduce in diameter from 21 feet to about 4 feet in diameter. The US Army Corps of Engineers note there is “no man-made secondary containment” for oil, should a spill occur – it would “result in product entering the surrounding bedrock and potentially nearby groundwater resources.”

Both the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the Village Parks and Recreation Subcommittee recommended drafting a letter in support of the tunnel and in opposition to the Horizontal Drilling alternative.

I have drafted a letter for consideration by the Council.

Village Council Action:

- Discuss this recommendation.
- If in agreement with this recommendation, direct Manager Martin to provide this public input to the US Army Corps of Engineers.