

Meeting to explore AuTrain River flooding

By JOHN PEPIN
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MUNISING — The Alger Conservation District is hosting a meeting next week in AuTrain to explore “all possible approaches” to solving ice jam flooding problems along the AuTrain River.

The conservation district is helping AuTrain Township and Alger County develop proposals to remedy seasonal flooding which occurs when a build-up of sand or ice near the mouth slows or prevents the river from emptying into Lake Superior.

Local residents who have experienced flooding of their homes, basements or crawlspaces are being invited by organizers to share their written stories and photographs to help document the history of the changing river mouth and consequent flooding damage.



A shovel digs sand from near the mouth of the AuTrain River in 2005 in Alger County. Winds from recent storms had blown beach sands across the river, slowing flow and backing up water into homes upstream. (Nancy Ford-Cihak photo)

Residents are also being asked to bring copies of insurance claims and repair bills related to river flooding events.

The meeting is set for 7 p.m. Thursday at the AuTrain Township Hall.

Staff from the Superior Watershed Partnership in Marquette and Gene Clark, a coastal engineering specialist from the University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute in Superior, will assist with preliminary discussions about possible options.

Those presentations will also help attendees better understand coastal dynamics at work and the implications of proposed actions,

including cutting a new outflow channel for the river.

“In the past, AuTrain Township has dredged at the river mouth, but that’s a very temporary solution and one that is not practical for ice blockages further out in the shallow bay,” said Teri Grout, executive director of the Alger Conservation District. “We’re looking to



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