

## Gravy for a dune

By **ROD SMITH - HP Correspondent** | **Posted: Saturday, October 15, 2016 6:00 am**

SOUTH HAVEN — Thanks to two \$50,000 grants – one a surprise – work to stabilize the dune straddling the North Point Land Preserve and Syndicate Park subdivision may begin next spring.

The Van Buren County Board of Commissioners has authorized County Administrator Douglas Cultra to sign a grant agreement with the Michigan Coastal Zone Management Program for \$50,000.

“It’s going to preserve a pristine dune,” Cultra said. “It’s absolutely gorgeous.”

The state grant was based on a \$56,000 match from the county of in-kind services.

But that changed, Cultra told commissioners. The Van Buren County Conservation District is giving the county another \$50,000 toward the project in South Haven Township.

“They tell me we’re not going to have to contribute anything,” Cultra said, though he figured the county may still have to chip in \$4,000 to \$8,000.

He credited A.J. Brucks, the conservation district’s executive director, and Marcy Hamilton, senior planner of the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission.

The money will be used to restore the vegetation on the sides of the dune along with building a path from Syndicate Park to Lake Michigan. It will pay for fences to control sand movement.

“One of the grandest features of Van Buren County is Lake Michigan,” Cultra said.

Cultra said work should begin in April or May.

The North Point Land Preserve is on the north side of Van Buren State Park. Syndicate Park is a subdivision bordering the land preserve on the preserve’s northern boundary. The sand dune is threatening to crush some homes there.



### Gravy for a dune

Dunes in the North Point Land Preserve, located north of the Van Buren State Park, are pictured in 2013.