

Dike lowering approved

The first of Army Corps of Engineers dikes to come down in Estral Beach received court approval to do so last week. It won't be a total removal, but for

Ted Cuda who has been fighting the government for almost two years now, it is a "godsend."

Cuda received a ruling from Monroe County Circuit Court

Judge William J. Weipert Jr. to alter his rock crib dike to an approved height.

Erected by the Corps after 1973 floods, the

Operation Foresight dikes had a life expectancy of three years. The corps gave all responsibility to local municipalities for maintaining the dikes.

The corps and the local communities have been at odds in recent years over the threat of the rising waters and earlier in the year the corps agreed the lower

lake levels no longer posed a threat.

The ruling issued by Judge Weipert at Cuda's request now means that Estral Beach property owners only can lower the dikes no more than three feet and the project must receive prior approval from the village council and dike coordinator.

Earth dikes constructed by the corps in 1952 will remain standing in order to protect the low-lying areas of the village which are prone to flooding.