

B I A

Spring / Summer 2009

ISLAND CURRENTS

Beaver Island Association

Supporting Environmental
and Economic Sustainability

Mission Statement

1. Represent the combined interests of our membership on issues of mutual concern that may affect the fundamental character of Beaver Island.
2. Support the preservation of the natural resources and beauty of Beaver Island and appropriate environmental conservation policies and/or methods.
3. Work with local government units in support of property owners' shared perspectives, concerns, and investments.
4. Foster and support economic growth that is consistent with the preservation of the natural beauty of Beaver Island and the quality of life, which is the reason for our original and continuing attraction to Beaver Island.

2009 Great Lakes Islands Symposium

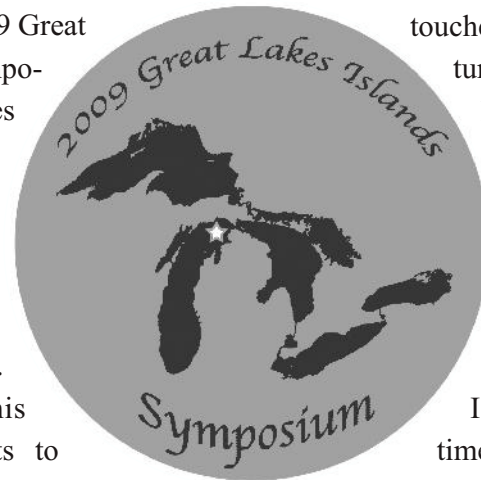
As reported in our previous newsletter, Beaver Island will be the site of a major Great Lakes basin initiative to bring interested island parties together at the 2009 Great Lakes Islands Symposium. Great Lakes islands are significant because they are home to species that are found in no other places in the world. Understanding this uniqueness, threats to islands, necessary protection measures, and setting up a framework for continued island alliance building will be the focus of this weekend conference. The dates for the event are August 28-30th and will be held at CMU's Biological Station.

During the winter, board members of the Beaver Island Association along with Mark Brederland from Michigan Sea Grant, Dr. Karen Vigmostad

from the Great Lakes Islands Collaborative, and Dr. Jim Gillingham from Central Michigan University, have been putting the finishing touches on this rare opportunity to bring stakeholders, researchers, and policy makers to one of the Great Lakes most biologically significant islands, Beaver Island. For the first time, based on new data,

Priority Island Conservation Areas will be presented. The speakers have an impressive record on island centered best practices and research. These individuals will be discussing strategies using land trusts, conservancies, and sovereign nation attempts to protecting our biologically unique islands. In addition, a Call for Posters will invite individuals

continued on page 2.



In This Issue and online at www.BeaverIslandAssociation.org



Invasive *Phragmites*
Update



Natural Resources
Conservation Service



Off Road Vehicles
on Beaver Island Roads



Beaver Island
Wildlife News



Wind Energy
Potential - June 22

Beaver Island Association

Board of Directors

Paul Glendon – President paulglendon@gmail.com

18 Southwick Ct.
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

29390 Betsy Smith Trail
Beaver Island, MI 49782
(231) 448-2772

Ken McDonald – Vice President KJMcDonald@comcast.net

31570 Eastside Drive
Beaver Island, MI 49782
(231) 448-2981

Jane Dwyer - Secretary janeedwyer@gmail.com

31520 East Side Drive
Beaver Island, MI 49782
(231) 448-2868

Annette Dashiell – Treasurer annetted@biip.net

2343 North Oak St.
Falls Church, VA 22046

30225 Green's Bay Dr.
Beaver Island, MI 49782
(231) 448-2542

Sue Avery cabinbythelake1@gmail.com

28629 Fox Point Trail
Beaver Island, MI 49782
(231) 448-2670

Pam Grassmick mcgrass@ameritech.net

30710 East Side Drive
Beaver Island, MI 49782
(231) 448-2314

28629 Kendallwood Dr.
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 489-0784

Peter Igoe pigoe@verizon.net

26145 Beaver Harbor Drive
Beaver Island, MI 49782
(231) 448-2582

Bruce Jacobson bgordonj@gtlakes.com

29616 East Side Drive
Beaver Island, MI 49782
(231) 448-2894

Jacque LaFreniere jacquel@tds.net

27435 Paid Een Og's Road
Beaver Island, MI 49782
(231) 448-2220

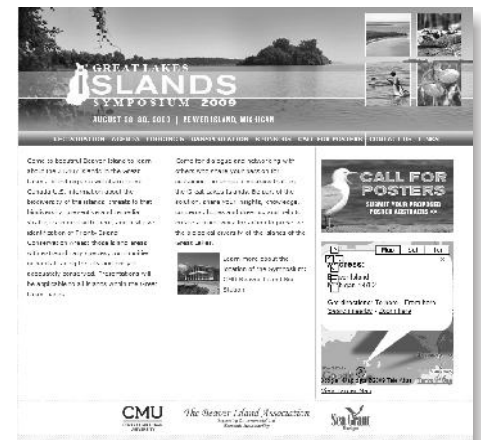
Craig Schrottenboer cschrottenboer@ghfc.org

26652 Hemlock Point Road
Beaver Island, MI 49782
(231) 448-2973

Dan Wardlow danbeaverisland@yahoo.com

31061 Camp 3 Trail
Beaver Island, MI 49782
(231) 448-3196

Great Lakes Islands Symposium, continued from front cover. to share research or projects involving island conservation that enhance our understanding of island ecosystems within the Great Lakes basin. Simon Otto from the Chippewa-Ottawa tribes will regale the audience with First Nation stories from our region. Tours will be offered throughout several days to allow participants to view first hand Beaver Island's inland lakes, marshes and other natural feature areas. Evening activities will lend themselves to fun island inspired experiences and networking. Obviously, this is an ambitious undertaking and the Beaver Island Association continues to secure funding for this very important event and sponsorship is being pursued from environmental agencies.



The website for this event is: www.miseagrant.umich.edu/workshops/glislands2009

For further information, please see www.beaverislandassociation.org or contact Craig Schrottenboer cschrottenboer@ghyfc.org or Pam Grassmick mcgrass@ameritech.net

DID YOU KNOW - If you have a medical emergency and call 911 there is up to a 30 second delay. **DO NOT HANG UP**

Phragmites update

Beaver Island's Phragmites project has been presented and discussed on various levels across Lake Michigan, Lake Charlevoix, and northern Lake Huron. Based on the positive Beaver Island results for a rapid response to an invasive species such as Phragmites, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality will offer other communities similar township/county wide permits for herbicide treatment thus allowing for large tracts of shoreline owners to participate. In addition, it is expected that funding will be flowing from Washington for work in preserving our state's coastal wetlands.

It cannot be left to government intervention alone to solve the precious wetland crisis. It will necessitate that property owners fully understand the consequences of their stewardship practices in terms of habitat, water quality, and enjoyment of our Great Lakes. Examples of constructive Phragmites programs being undertaken can be found at www.charlevoixcd.org. Kelly Martin from the Charlevoix Conservation District has put together a wonderful web site.

The Grand Traverse Watershed Council hosted a Grand Traverse Regional Phragmites workshop on

June 6, 2009 and updates can be found at www.gtbay.org. Also Huron Pines is developing a Cooperative Weed Management Plan for northwestern Lake Huron to target several invasive plant species, including Phragmites.

As for our little corner of the world, in January, a letter was signed by both township supervisors, requesting that those Beaver Island shoreline owners who did not have a current permission slip on file submit a new form. This letter and form can be found on www.beaverislandassociation.org. The letter went on to discuss that as a last resort under last year's adopted ordinance where invasive Phragmites is found, treatment action will be taken even without the owners' consent but only after written notice is sent to the property owner's tax address, public notice in local papers, and possibly court action.

We have had a tremendous return response from this request which will be used to update our GIS (Geographical Information System) maps for the 2009 island-wide survey. As you will recall, our first treatment year was so successful that 27.1 acres was reduced to 3 acres. In 2009, we expect acreage needing to be treated to be even less. Our 2009 SOS program is fully

funded; no donations will be required.

During a recent planning conference call, Brian Mastenbrook from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources again offered his department's assistance with the permitting and award of the bid. The next mass mailing will take place in August to shoreline owners outlining the anticipated treatment dates and the chemicals to be used. Last year, 80% of all Phragmites was hand swiped directly to the Phragmites plants. A meeting with the herbicide contractor will take place prior to herbicide application in late August. In addition, the DNR will also continue to treat the infestations on the outer islands.

The composition of the team may change from year to year but the same commitment to preserving our shoreline is evident. The townships have hired Jacque LaFreniere as the Phragmites Administrator for 2009. Beaver Island exemplifies the point that small isolated communities can achieve an ecological victory by working together. Every property owner that contributed any dollar amount or signed a permission slip to the *Save Our Shoreline* project should feel a sense of pride in this preservation project. — Pam Grassmick

SOS Phragmites program an example for other areas

At the Grand Traverse County Phragmites meeting that was held on March 18, a radio piece was recorded for Interlochen public radio about the early detection and rapid response program in the Grand Traverse Bay area.

They are focusing on educating local county and township officials around the GTBay area. Their goal is to work with townships in each NW county that border Lake Michigan and develop a survey, treatment and moni-

toring program for each township. Beaver Island's phragmites program was described as a great success story that other areas can emulate as they set up their own programs to eradicate phragmites from their shorelines.

Beaver Island Association

NRCS - "Helping People Help the Land"

The purpose of this article is to reacquaint the landowners and residents of Beaver Island with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the services the agency has to offer. The goal of the NRCS is to increase the stewardship of private lands resulting in clean water and air, improved soils and abundant wildlife habitat. This is mainly done by working with landowners to develop conservation plans which address resource concerns and meet the objectives of the landowner.

We also work with the local conservation districts to help carry out their goals of addressing local resource issues. The Charlevoix Conservation District is located in Boyne City and they have an annual tree sale in both the spring and fall where native trees, shrubs and other plants are available for re-forestation and wildlife purposes. The Emmet Conservation District has a no-till drill for planting hayfields or wildlife plantings and the Charlevoix District rents a no-till cornplanter and a tree planter. They both have access to an abundance of resource information. The Charlevoix District has a beachgrass nursery from where beachgrass is harvested and sold by the bundle to property owners to stabilize sand dune and beach areas.

To help the landowner carry out his or her plans for the land we have several cost-share programs available and access to numerous amounts of technical information which is free of charge to the general public. In these

very difficult times we find ourselves in, any financial incentives can be helpful in getting beneficial conservation projects completed. We have several cost-share programs which are briefly explained below.

Applications for these programs are accepted at any time. All applications are ranked which means it is competitive, there's no guarantee of approval, but there is usually adequate funding for most. The new 2008 Farmbill rules are not final yet, so some of the criteria for eligibility and what practices are funded will have changed. At the time of this printing the programs will most likely have had applications approved and funding obligated, but there should be funds available through the summer and unfunded applications are placed on a pending list to be approved as more funding becomes available.

Beaver Island is quite remote and physically removed from the rest of Charlevoix County, but I want to make Island residents aware of our services and to let them know that they have the same opportunity and access to the NRCS programs as everyone else. We have worked with several islanders in the past, but in the last few years there has been little contact and request for services. There can be an issue with access to the Island due to availability of funds for travel, but this can be worked out and we will respond to requests for site visits.

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) – In this

program the land must be considered agricultural. This includes private non-industrial forestland. A minimum 1 year contract and up to 10 years is possible. There is a long list of eligible practices including: Animal Waste Storage Systems, Agrichemical Handling Facilities, Erosion Control Practices, Windbreaks, Prescribed Grazing Systems, Closure of Waste Impoundments, Livestock Stream Crossings, Tree/Shrub Establishment, Well Decommissioning and many others. Cost-share is provided at an approximate rate of 50 percent and limited resource and beginning farmers receive a rate 15 percent higher. To be eligible there must be a resource concern identified and possible other criteria. Under the new 2008 Farmbill there may be some funding for developing forest stewardship plans and fish and wildlife habitat plans.

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) – Nearly all private land is eligible and the landowner must agree to a 5-10 year contract. Approximately 75% of the cost to install the practices is cost-shared (paid by NRCS). This program has the main focus of developing and improving critical wildlife habitats using Native plant species. Several practices can be included in a contract such as Wildlife Corridor development, Tree/Shrub Establishment, Native Grass Seedings, Streambank Habitat Restoration and others including addressing specific invasive species.

The Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP) – This pro-

Supporting Environmental and Economic Sustainability

gram focuses on creating buffers such as filter strips, field windbreaks and riparian corridors. The land must meet the cropping criteria or contain marginal pastureland in order to meet eligibility requirements. There are cost-share incentives as well as an annual rental payment made to the participant who must install and maintain these practices.

There are also easement programs where the landowner allows the government to put an easement on the eligible property in return for either a one time or annual payments.

The Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP) – This program is for long-term protection of grasslands and grazing lands on private or tribal lands. It is designed to maintain and improve “open space” that meet the criteria. 10 to 20 year rental agreements and permanent easements are available and a grazing management plan is required.

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) – The purpose of the WRP is to restore and protect wetland habitats that have been altered or Degraded. The area must contain eligible soils which are considered to be poorly drained and must have been altered by tiling, ditching or pastured by livestock. Areas which are hayed may be eligible if they meet the soils and hydrology criteria. The WRP offers the landowner three different options.

1) *Restoration Only* - This would result in construction of a minimum ½ acre size push-out which is a shallow wildlife pond. The landowner would

receive 75 % cost-share and would agree to keep the push-out for at least 10 years.

2) *30 Year Easement* - Under a 30 year easement agreement the landowner allows the government to place a 30 year easement on the area included and in return receives 75% of an appraised value per acre included and 75% of the cost to install push-outs in the wetland areas.

3) *Permanent Easement* - Under the permanent easement the landowner receives 100% of the appraised value and 100% of the cost to create the wildlife push-outs. The land accepted into the WRP under this easement will remain that way forever and can not be developed or have the wetlands destroyed in any way. There are many acceptable compatible uses which can be included in a contract such as leasing the land for hunting, planting food plots and many others. The rate cap for Charlevoix County is \$1700 which is the maximum which can be received per acre. The land must not have changed ownership in the past 7 years to be eligible.

The Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP) –The FRPP is a program to assist landowners in placing a permanent easement on farmland by purchasing development rights so the land will remain in agriculture. Landowners eligible for this program must be actively working with a land protection entity such as the Little Traverse Conservancy and have a pending offer in the works. The Natural Re-

sources Conservation Service provides 50 % of the agreed to appraised value and the entity and landowner come up with the rest.

There is also a new program which will be available this year that we have not had in this area before which is the **Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP)**. Its purpose is to promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species, to improve biodiversity and enhance carbon sequestration which is talked about a lot now with increasing global warming concerns. There will be easements and cost-share agreements available. Further details will become available in the near future.

There will also be a **Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP)** which will reward agricultural landowners for good stewardship practices that they have done in the past and are still in place. This will involve annual payments for a period of 5 consecutive years.

These programs all start with the development of a conservation plan which can be done at any time. Please feel free to call the office with any questions about these programs or any other environmental or natural resource issue.

– Bill Borgeld, NRCS Petosky
William.Borgeld@mi.usda.gov
(231) 347-5255 www.mi.nrcs.usda.gov

Emmet Conservation District
(231) 439-8996 www.emmetcd.org

Charlevoix Conservation District
(231) 582-6193 www.charlevoixcd.org

Beaver Island Association

Off Road Vehicles on Beaver Island Roads?

The Charlevoix County Commission recently enacted an ordinance authorizing operation of off road vehicles on almost every public road on Beaver Island starting May 1.

Adopted pursuant to a state statute passed last year, the new ORV Ordinance permits operation of “ORVs” on “the far right of the maintained portion” of all “county primary roads” and “county local roads” in Charlevoix County, with only a few exceptions. On Beaver Island, the only exception is “Kings Highway, which includes Main Street, from the Light House, Sec. 26, St. James Twp. to East Side Drive, Sec. 34, Peaine Twp.” So it won't be legal to drive an ORV from the Whiskey Point Light House through town to the Four Corners, but they will be legal on all other county roads on the Island – unless the Township Boards prohibit their operation on some or all of those roads.

The Ordinance says a township board “may adopt an ordinance to close any roads within the boundaries of the township to the operation of ORVs per-

mitted by the county.” It also says that starting July 17 a township board “may adopt an ordinance authorizing the operation of ORVs on the maintained portion of 1 or more roads located within the township” pursuant to state statute.

What's an ORV? As stated in the ordinance, “a motor driven off road recreation vehicle capable of cross-country travel without benefit of a road or trail, on or immediately over land, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other natural terrain [including but not limited to] a multitrack or multiwheel drive vehicle, an ATV, a motorcycle or related 2-wheel, 3-wheel, or 4-wheel vehicle, an amphibious machine, a ground effect air cushion vehicle, or other means of transportation deriving motive power from a source other than muscle or wind,” but not including snowmobiles or farm vehicles “being used for farming.”

Last August the BIA Board of Directors sent letters to the Peaine Township Board and the County Commission opposing authorization for ATV

use on public roads in Peaine Township. Our Board's concern, as stated in those letters, was that such authorization would “create serious safety hazards and aggravate already-existing problems of illegal ATV operation on roads, beaches, and public and private land” and that it would be a practical impossibility on Beaver Island “to monitor or police on-road ATV use to assure compliance with statutory restrictions or prevent danger to ATV operators and other motorists (or bikers or pedestrians) and damage to the environment.”

We made it clear that we had not surveyed BIA's total membership on this matter and did not presume to speak for all members. Indeed, it may be said that there was not and still is not unanimity within the BIA Board on this matter. Also, we recognize that much of the ORV use by Beaver Island residents on Island roads has been responsible and respectful of motorists, bikers, pedestrians and the environment.

The DNR also recommended that the Charlevoix County Commission

To Peaine Township: ORVs on Beaver Island County Roads

May 27, 2009

Dear Peaine Township Board Members:

Now that a Charlevoix County ordinance permits ORV operation on most Beaver Island County Roads, we understand you are being asked to exercise your authority to adopt a township ordinance closing some or all roads in the township to operation of ORVs otherwise permitted by the county. As you may recall, our Board of Directors last

August opposed adoption of a potential township ordinance that would permit ORV operation on township roads. We have carefully reconsidered our position in light of current circumstances, however, and now believe it would be premature for the Township Board to adopt an ordinance closing the roads to ORV operation at this time.

We still question the wisdom of ORV operation on all county roads in

Peaine Township, for two reasons: safety issues, especially on the dustiest, narrowest and curviest roads; and the risk of too-easy access to areas such as beaches, dunes and forests where ORV use is illegal and threatens the environment. But we think the speculation that Beaver Island will be overrun by hordes of ORV riders if a closing ordinance is not passed immediately is unlikely to prove accurate. We also

Yes ... Unless Townships Decide Otherwise

not approve an ordinance allowing ORVs on county roads, but neither our opposition nor the DNR's counted for much with the County Commission, and according to the *Charlevoix Courier*, mainlanders enthusiastically voiced support for the county ordinance. There also have been strong public statements both in favor of and against ORV operation on Island roads by numerous Beaver Island residents, most recently at a special Peaine Township meeting on May 31. In large part, the argument in opposition has focused on speculation that Beaver Island will become a magnet for irresponsible ORV use by visitors from the mainland, both on Island roads and in other areas (beaches, dunes and other public and private property) where it still is illegal to operate such vehicles.

Now that the County Commission has acted and left possible limitation of ORV use on public roads on Beaver Island almost totally up to the Townships, the issue is in the hands of the Township Boards. Whether or not they choose to act is of course up to them,

know, and appreciate, that some Beaver Island residents operate ORVs on county roads responsibly and for legitimate reasons, and there is no good reason that should not continue.

Therefore we believe the best course of action is to wait and see what happens in the next few months before deciding whether a complete or partial closing of township roads to ORV operation is necessary or appropriate. In the meantime,

but the BIA Board has reconsidered the issue in light of these new realities and recommended that no Island roads be closed to ORV operation at this time. Our letter to the Peaine Township Board on this subject is included in this newsletter, and to help understand the total context in which this issue has evolved, we also are including the DNR's November 2008 letter to the County Commission.

As stated in our letter, we believe it is important to learn the opinions of as many Beaver Islanders as possible, not just the most fervent supporters or opponents of on-road ORV operation, and to let enough time pass to see whether predicted hordes of irresponsible ORV-riding tourists actually materialize, before any such action is taken. Therefore we would like to hear from all BIA members who have opinions on this subject. Please send them to me by email addressed to paulglendon@gmail.com or by USPS mail to the BIA post office box, and also make your views known directly to Township officials.

we will be asking our members for their opinions on this important topic and will attempt to get an information sheet on ORV operation on Beaver Island (see attachment) to all visiting ORV users by distribution through the Boat Company and posting at various locations.

We also will urge all our members to be vigilant for violations of the statute and ordinance permitting on-road use as well as unlawful use on beaches,

As our letter also indicates, we encourage everyone on Beaver Island to be vigilant in the observation and reporting of any illegal use of ORVs, on-road or off-road, and we will be working with the Island-stationed Deputy Sheriff to encourage prosecution and thorough reporting of all such illegal activities. We also have prepared an information sheet about ORVs on Beaver Island, to be distributed to ORV-riding visitors and posted at various places on the Island, which also appears in this newsletter.

With this pro-active wait-and-see approach, we believe the Township Boards will best be able to understand all the issues surrounding ORV operation on Island roads and perhaps to fashion a reasonable compromise between the extremes of unrestricted permission and outright prohibition. We are confident they will fairly consider all views on this subject that needs to be thoroughly considered and dispassionately debated. Please help us advance the conversation by letting us – and them – know what you think.

dunes, and other private and public lands and report all such violations to the Deputy Sheriff, and we will work with the Deputy to encourage prosecution of violators and to collect, analyze and publicize reports of violations. We hope the Township Board will join us in these actions.

Respectfully,
Paul Glendon, President
Beaver Island Association

Beaver Island Association

DNR Recommendations to the County

November 12, 2008

Dear Charlevoix County Commissioners:

This letter is in regards to your county's consideration of an ordinance to allow Off-Road Vehicles (ORV) on the county road rights-of-way pursuant to recently enacted Public Act 240. I appreciate the opportunity to offer comment before the Board at your meeting on November 12, 2008 as you gather information in this regard. In general, I want to assure you that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) can not and will not presume to tell you what to do with the roads under your jurisdiction. We would, however, like to share our concerns with the opening of county roads to ORVs. If necessary to open any, I urge your thoughtful consideration and planning efforts to open appropriate roads only to enhance the existing designated ORV system to benefit the recreational trail user. It will be difficult to do this in Charlevoix County as the only designated ORV trail that lies currently within your county lines is 38 miles long and open only to motorcycles. My primary concerns are as follows:

User Confusion: Current State law still limits ORV operation on State land to only those trails posted open to that use. In the forest, it is nearly impossible for riders to tell the difference between seasonal county roads and State forest roads. As the Motorized Trails Program Analyst for the Eastern Lower Peninsula and a representative

of Forest, Mineral and Fire Management Division (FMFM), I encourage the development of designated (signed) routes between local communities that provide access to services, fuel, food, lodging and the State designated ORV system. Having signed routes provides clarity for the recreational trail users as to where they may safely and legally ride their recreational vehicle, particularly for those who are visitors from outside of your county.

Environment: State land ownership in Charlevoix County is limited and the majority of that property includes environmentally sensitive wetlands, erosive ridges and culturally significant areas. Not all public property is well suited to wheeled motorized traffic and as lead State land management agency, FMFM is tasked with managing the State forest for a multitude of uses: from campers, hikers, bird watchers and berry pickers to hunters, fishers, snowmobile and ORV riders. Timber, fire and wildlife habitat management are also key to our mission. Opening county roads adjacent to and through State land to ORVs allows legal access to otherwise illegal areas of operation. This action in other counties has contributed to the development of illegal trails on State forest land, private property trespass and significant degradation of the natural resource.

Safety: ORVs are designed for off-road use as their name clearly states. The arteries of the county roads and forest two-tracks in our State for-

ests are a transportation corridor for cars, trucks and commercial (logging, oil & gas, etc) vehicles. The majority of the roads are narrow and winding with limited visibility and little to no traffic signs or shoulders. It is generally not recommended to mix these uses on public roadways. The Legislative Analysis of House Bill 4323 stated the position of the Specialty Vehicle Institute of America (SVIA), the manufacturer's trade group, are opposed to their use on public roads. The SVIA's position statement on this issue concludes: "SVIA emphasizes that All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) are not designed, manufactured, or in any way intended for use on public streets, roads or highways and urges that on-highway use of ATVs be prohibited and law enforcement efforts be strengthened to eliminate this dangerous practice."

Enforcement: Just like any law, an officer has to catch the individual committing the illegal behavior to charge them with the crime, and only then can you take advantage of the increased monetary penalties set forth in the law. DNR Law Enforcement Division and Michigan State Police generally do not enforce local ordinances. Your Sheriff's Department along with city and township law enforcement personnel will have sole responsibility of enforcing this ordinance. Please consider if those local law enforcement agencies have adequate resources to keep the ORV riders where they can legally operate. Riders seeking a safer

Supporting Environmental and Economic Sustainability

Membership Application

more comfortable place to ride will move off of the county roads and into ditchlines, resulting in damage to the engineered road drainage system and increase the incidence of recreational trespass on private and public property.

In most counties where I've had the opportunity to discuss this topic, I have observed the very vocal ORV riding proponents attending the meetings. I ask that you please also consider your silent constituents who may or may not be opposed to this use of the county's roads and seek out the input of those who may not realize what is happening before its too late. Those are the folks that you will be hearing from later when there are an increased number of trespass, dust, noise and illegal operation complaints on and near the roadways.

In closing, I encourage you to examine the proposed road opening issue very carefully. To that end, I offer my assistance in serving as a resource for you regarding the ORV Trail Improvement Fund Grants, the State's designated system and helping develop an ORV plan that will incorporate the wishes of ORV users while minimizing risks to public and private lands. Feel free to contact me at the Gaylord Operations Service Center, 1732 W. M-32, Gaylord, MI 49735 if I can be of any additional assistance.

Sincerely, Paige Perry,
ELP Trails Program Analyst,
Forest, Mineral and Fire
Management Division, Michigan
Department of Natural Resources

New Member Renewal Update Address

* 2010 Dues: \$20.00 *

Your Name: _____

Island Address: _____

(Address Line 2): _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: () _____ Fax: () _____

Mailing Address (if different than above)

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

(Address Line 2): _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: () _____ Fax: () _____

E-mail Address: _____

Send Beaver Island Association
News Updates via this email address
or
 Send Beaver Island Association
News via postal mail

I would be interested in serving on a committee.

I would like to help with the annual meeting.

I would like to help with special projects:

Please Mail with your Membership Dues of \$20.00 to:

Beaver Island Association

Box 390

Beaver Island, MI 49782

Beaver Island Association

Beaver Island Wildlife Update

Botulism update: Last year, we had over 20 individuals walking the beaches looking for dead birds and fish. We found only one loon and few other birds. It was a relief from the previous year of finding over 80 loons and 50+ other birds. And we weren't the only ones with such low numbers. It seems that this was common in Lake Michigan this year. Whether that had anything to do with the cooler water temperatures, the increase in water levels over the previous year and lack of algae, we aren't sure. Once again, this fall we will organize volunteers to patrol the beaches. If you are interested and will be here, call me.

Also, a Great Lakes Botulism Coordination Network is being formed on a much broader scale. This Network will be a voluntary partnership of representatives of government agencies, academic institutions, and involved stakeholders whose mission is to:

- Exchange information pertaining to type E botulism matters in the Great Lakes basin by working through the existing partnerships, establishment of new networking relationships, and building upon existing programs;
- Communicate botulism information and advice (technical, policy or other) related to the ecosystem of the Great Lakes basin to stakeholders (including the public) through member organizations, as required;
- Influence and support the coordination of botulism activities, including: laboratory research and field investigations, environmental man-

agement decisions, and response actions in the Great Lakes basin. I'll keep the membership updated on this.

Quagga Mussel Population on the increase: Quagga and Zebra Mussels are both invasives who have wrecked havoc in Lake Michigan. While the Zebra Mussels seem to be on the decline, its larger cousin, the Quagga Mussel seems to be increasing. Quagga live in the deeper waters that the Zebra don't live in. Now the problem with the Quagga is that it competes for food (algae) that a critical link on the bottom of the lake food chain needs also. This link, an organism called diporeia, is an important food source for the bottom feeding fish such as whitefish (up to 80% of whitefish diet is diporeia). Diporeia population is declining, the whitefish are getting thinner (while they do consume Quagga mussels, they are low in nutritional value), and its population is also declining. Also declining are prey fish such as the alewife, bloater and sculpin that are critical for salmon and trout.

Baiting Ban: Last fall the Michigan DNR instituted a ban on baiting for deer hunters because one deer in a restricted area (pen) tested positive for Chronic Wasting Disease. This ban extended to feeding deer and other wildlife throughout the winter in an effort to stop the spread of CWD. In addition, 9000 deer were tested during deer season from around the lower peninsula and no evidence was found of CWD in Michigan's wild population.

How did this affect Beaver Island?

Deer were not fed this winter. This ban may have resulted in more deer deaths as we have had a severe winter with record snowfall (only ½ inch from the 105 year record amount), record cold temperatures and a high coyote population. Dr. Jeff Powers has been working diligently to convince the Natural Resource Commission to remove its ban for the future. Studies done in other states resulted in the removing of bans and reinstating of deer feeding when it was found that this ban did nothing to control CWD in the wild.

Turkeys: The Turkey population may have declined somewhat this past year. Last spring's weather severely affected the turkeys' reproduction rate. Few young were seen during the summer. The sizes of the flocks over wintering at feeding stations were also smaller and declined this winter with the severe weather and high coyote population causing more deaths.

Cormorants: Kevin Elsenheimer, state representative, has been meeting with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials regarding the state's cormorant problem. Presenting photos of the damage the cormorants have caused around the Beaver Island archipelago, helped to make his point that this issue needs to be addressed. The Michigan Wildlife Services has pledged \$139,000 to help control the cormorant in Michigan waters. Beaver Island Wildlife Club also is pledging its support and resources to aid in these control measures in the Archipelago.

— Jacque LaFreniere

Off Road Vehicles (ORVs) on Beaver Island – 2009

Pursuant to Michigan statute and Charlevoix County ordinance, ORVs (often referred to as All Terrain Vehicles, or ATVs) may be operated on the far right side of the improved portion of county roads on Beaver Island, subject to restrictions summarized below.

Please respect our environment and operate your ORV with attention to the safety of yourself, your family members and the Beaver Island Community! Using ORVs on public roads is a privilege. Violating any of the following restrictions and requirements will jeopardize not only the environment but also the continuation of this privilege for lawful ORV users.

Restrictions

1. ORVs may not be operated in the town of St. James on Main Street from the Whiskey Point Lighthouse to the intersection of Kings Highway with East Side Drive (the "Four Corners").
2. ORVs may not be driven on any of the island beaches or *off road* on any public land.
3. ORVs may not be driven on private property except with express permission of the property owner.
4. ORVs must have a valid state registration sticker attached (available at McDonough's Market).

Requirements

1. The speed limit for ORVs is 25 mph, or a lower posted ORV speed limit.
2. A child less than 16 years of age shall not operate an ORV on a road unless the child is ***under the direct visual supervision of an adult and the child has in his or her immediate possession a Michigan ORV safety certificate*** or a comparable certificate from another state or Canadian province. In no case may an ORV be operated by a child less than 12 years old.
3. ORVs must be operated in single file, with the flow of traffic, in a manner which does not interfere with other vehicles.
4. Operators and passengers must wear approved helmets, protective eyewear and seat belts.
5. The ORV must be equipped and operated with a spark arrester muffler in good working condition and of a type approved by the U.S. Forest Service. Noise emission ordinances must be obeyed.
6. The ORV must be equipped with a throttle that returns to idle when not under operator pressure.
7. Headlights and taillights are required in reduced visibility and anytime ½ hour after sunset until ½ hour before sunrise. (*Note: beginning in 2010 head and taillights will be required at all times*).
8. A valid drivers license is required for the operation of any ORV registered as a motor vehicle and that is either more than 60 inches wide or has 3 wheels, and a Michigan state registration sticker must be attached to the vehicle.

If you observe other ORV users violating any of these restrictions or requirements, report the violation to the Charlevoix County Sheriff.

The Beaver Island Association

*Supporting Environmental and
Economic Sustainability*

Wind Energy Potential - June 22 at 7:00 pm

There will be a presentation on Monday June 22 at 7pm at the Peaine Township Hall on Wind Farms. Dean Solomon, Charlevoix County Extension Director, will present an overview of wind energy development

potential in Northwest Lower Michigan and Beaver Island.

Issues relating to wind towers, new state renewable energy legislation, planning and zoning issues will be discussed. The lecture is being

sponsored by the Planning Commissions of Peaine and St. James Townships along with the Beaver Island Association. It is open to the public and free of charge. Light refreshments will be provided.

Annual Meeting - July 13 at 7:30 pm

The Annual General Meeting of the Beaver Island Association will be on Monday, July 13, 2009 at 7:30pm

at the Peaine Township Hall. There will be a presentation regarding fire prevention.

Beach Cleanup - September 5 at 9:00 am

The 2009 Beach Cleanup will be Saturday, September 5 from 9am til Noon. Participants should meet at the Community Center at 9am for bags and data sheets. A complementary hot

dog lunch will be provided at the Community Center at Noon. Anyone with questions or wanting their bags and data sheets ahead of time should call Ken McDonald at 448-2981.

We want to hear from you

The goal of the *Island Currents* newsletter and our website www.beaverislandassociation.org is to promote greater communication.

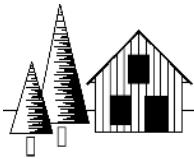
Opinions, stories, informative articles or any issues you feel are of interest are welcome.

The next deadline for submission

Phragmites Donation

Phragmites creator Dave Kellam had an online poll at his www.phragwrites.com web site and the Beaver Island SOS Program was selected as the winner of the Phragmites yearly donation. Phragmites are pens made from the invasive stalks. The donation will go towards the continuing effort to control phragmites along our shoreline.

is October 15, 2009. All articles should be submitted to Sue Avery at cabinbythelake1@gmail.com



Box 390

Beaver Island, MI 49782

Beaver Island Association

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