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ISLAND CURRENTS

Beaver Island Association Newsletter - Spring 2020



IN THIS ISSUE

*President's Corner - Letter to U.S. Army
Corps of Engineers - Lake Levels &
Shoreline Impacts - Beaver Island
Community School Update - Invasive
Species Report - Island Marketing -
Beach Cleanup Report - Treasurer's
Report - Island Twp. Boards - Trails
Update - Report from the Great Lakes
Islands Summit - Broadband Committee
Report*

President's Corner

by Kevin Boyle, President

Winter has settled onto the island with occasional cold and snowy spells, but the harbor remains clear well past its normal freeze date and the island's east side continues to be battered by a bad mix of high water and blows from the east that are more frequent and harsher than has been typical. Your BIA has been in touch with state and federal officials to arrange some informational sessions on responding to these conditions. We'll announce the dates of these sessions when they are set. Although for now there

appears to be no prospect of financial assistance for affected homeowners, we hope these sessions will help in developing mitigation plans that follow required procedures and are more likely to be effective. This issue of Island Currents includes an article from the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council that addresses these issues as well.

BIA Board member and Vice President Dick Mulvhill has been working with me on the island's Joint Telecommunications Advisory Committee to pursue both near and long-term solutions to the broadband service issues on the island. We are making progress. Dick's article below provides an update.

Longtime invasives fighter and BIA Board member Pam Grassmick continues to lead the island's response to the Emerald Ash Borer threat. Her article in this issue includes an update on efforts to fight back that pest as well as other invasive insects and plants. We are also looking for your input on funds BIA members contributed to a fund to help manage invasive phragmites that is now managed by Peaine Township. The township has no plans for fighting invasives at this point, so we are seeking your support for the dispersal of those funds to BIA to be used in our efforts lead by Pam.

Your board is working to provide assistance to the Beaver Island Archipelago Trails Association to develop a trail guide and trails website as a resource for residents and visitors. In connection with this, we also plan to republish the Beaver Island Self-Guided Driving/Biking Tour Booklet that has been out of print for some time. These materials will be available at the BIC Center, Chamber and Library, among other locations. We are also working the with the Beaver Island Dark Skies group to seek a Dark Skies Reserve designation for the public lands on the island from the International Dark Sky Association. In addition to recognition of the exceptional dark sky viewing opportunities on the island (and inclusion in the IDA's directory which should drive additional visits to the island), we believe pursuing this designation will help preserve an important part of the natural conditions that help our island ecosystem thrive.

This issue also has a report on the Great Lakes Islands Alliance meeting that took place late last fall, the favorable resolution of the governor's line item veto of funding for our school, our annual beach cleanup, and progress on island broadband service.

So, as you can see, although late fall through early spring are the "off-season" in terms of population on the island, there is still plenty happening here with lots of news to pass along. Unfortunately, some of that news is sad. In just the past few weeks we've lost three well known island residents each of whom made many contributions to the island. Skip McDonough and Jean Wierenga both passed away at Charlevoix hospital on

January 9. Skip had just celebrated her 88th birthday. Jean was 83. And, on January 19, long-time PABI board member and former Peaine Township supervisor Jack Gallagher passed away at his home on the island. He was 84. Services for Skip have already occurred. We understand that a memorial for Jean is planned for later in the year. Services and a memorial for Jack took place on the weekend of January 25. We will miss all three of these long-time islanders and extend our condolences to their families.

Letter to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

November 12, 2019

Dear Colonel Turner and Ms. Seidel:

I am writing on behalf of the Beaver Island Association (“BIA”) concerning high water levels on Lake Michigan and attempts to protect property from damage caused by a combination of the high water and storms. The BIA is a non-profit association of persons with an interest in the environmental and economic sustainability of Beaver Island and the nearby islands in the Beaver Island archipelago. Our archipelago's shorelines have long been recognized as critical to federally and state threatened and endangered species and as important for fish spawning. Our entire island falls within the State of Michigan Coastal Zone Management Area.

Unfortunately, the high-water threat to homes and other improvements has led to poorly designed attempts to protect the shoreline. These poorly engineered efforts are destructive ecologically, have harmed neighboring property and, in some cases, have resulted in creating hazards to navigation from floating debris. In addition to these issues, our municipal marina and ferry dock are threatened by the high water. They are both critical to the economy of the island.

Our island community presents unique challenges in addressing the issue because of numerous environmentally sensitive locations in the archipelago, limited access to professional assistance and transportation issues. We have learned at a recent coordinating meeting between our local Emergency Services Authority and representatives from regional state emergency management organizations that there is not likely to be state or federal funding to assist in responding to these issues (except in the case of publicly owned critical infrastructure. However, information on the Army

Corps website indicates that it has special tools and programs for analyzing high water impacts and designing approaches to protect as well as restore shoreline. We believe the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy has a unique interest in protecting the archipelago shoreline because of the substantial state land holdings here and the environmental significance of the area (which is a unique home to many endangered plants and animals). Accordingly, we request assistance from both organizations in reviewing the situation and providing engineering assistance to those dealing with high water issues. In that regard, we understand that a regional meeting with the Army Corps is being discussed for the spring. That isn't very practical for the island because logistics on the island demand that spring projects be planned now and mainland meetings are very difficult to attend.

Unique environments are at risk. Home and property values are threatened and, as a result the island's tax base is also at risk. Failure to properly address the issue threatens the island's environmental and economic sustainability. I have attached pictures from some of our members that show some of the damage so far on the east side. If the lake continues to rise as predicted, the consequences could be dire. We ask that you consider arranging to provide information, advice and other available assistance to islanders working to respond to these issues including by arranging informational meetings on the island. We are willing to assist in arranging and provide logistic support for visit(s) to the island, to arrange public meetings and to use our resources to assist in making your advice widely available.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Kevin Boyle, President
Beaver Island Association



Lake Levels & Shoreline Impacts

By Jennifer McKay, Policy Director Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council

The Great Lakes are experiencing the highest water levels since 1986. Lake Superior, Lake St. Clair, Lake Erie and Lake Ontario set new record high water levels over the summer of 2019. Lakes Michigan and Huron are forecasted to reach record high levels in 2020.

According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, water levels on each of the Great Lakes started 2020 higher than they started 2019. Persistent wet conditions across the Great Lakes Basin continue to drive high water levels. Many cities across the Basin set records in 2019 for the wettest period on record. The warmer than average temperatures in December led to greater runoff due to snow pack melting, leading to more water supply--especially on Lakes Superior, Michigan and Huron. The warm and relatively moist air resulted in less evaporation off the Lakes' surface, which contributed to more water in the system. The most recent six-month forecast of Great Lakes water levels shows water levels continuing to be well above average.

This forecast does not bode well for the residents of Beaver Island, who have already experienced severe impacts. While water level fluctuations are considered vital to the health and function of the Great Lakes ecosystem, they can adversely impact those who live on or use the Great Lakes, such as Beaver Islanders. High waters cause erosion, flooding, and can damage structures along the shoreline.

When considering what actions to take along the shore of the Island to combat high waters, it is important to consider the health and the dynamic variability of the Lakes and the potential impacts on neighboring property. Excessive or poorly designed structures can increase damage to neighboring properties and disrupt the natural processes along the shoreline.

Sandbags are not an effective solution for long-term shore protection. Sandbags are temporary, they cannot withstand wave energy or ice movement, the bags break open and become litter that impacts water quality and wildlife on the shoreline and in the lake, and they slump and cannot hold the slope.

Excessive boulders (rock revetment) and seawalls (either concrete or sheet pile) are not ecologically preferred solutions. These options do not allow for absorption of wave energy. As waves hit the large boulders or seawalls, the energy from the waves does not disappear, it is directed downwards and sideways. The energy that is directed down erodes the lake bottom. Scouring of the lake bottom increases with wave height, causing a loss of habitat. In addition, revetment and seawalls cause wave flanking in which the wave energy is deflected sideways to neighboring properties. This can increase erosion on your neighbor's property or cause erosion where there might not have been any.

Often, the best long term option (for the health of the lake and for your pocketbook) is to protect existing structures by moving them back from the shoreline. Structure movers can successfully remove a house from its foundation and put the structure on a new foundation at a safer location. Moving your house further landward gives you a natural buffer from shoreline erosion, and often costs much less than construction and maintenance of permanent shore protection.

Regardless of the action taken, shoreline protection projects, including riprap, revetments, and moving a house, require permits from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), and from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Many shore protection projects qualify for expedited review under general or minor project permits. In addition, permits will be expedited, often within a matter of days, if a house or critical infrastructure is in immediate danger due to high

water levels. EGLE can also issue emergency conditional permits when needed to protect the public health, safety, or welfare. These emergency permits are often granted the same day they are applied for. It is important to note that if there is not active and ongoing erosion onsite, a permit should not be approved for modification of the shoreline, which would be to the detriment of the environment, public trust, and riparian interests of adjacent owners.

It is recommended that anyone considering a shoreline protection project contact EGLE and/or USACE prior to submitting a permit application. Shoreline property owners can request a pre-application meeting with EGLE Water Resources Division staff. A pre-application meeting can provide landowners with a written copy of EGLE's findings regarding the need for a permit, along with any other written comments or suggestions, such as ways to avoid impacts to aquatic resources.

You can contact EGLE's Water Resources Division's Gaylord District Office at 989-731-4920 and reach the US Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District Regulatory Office at 800-439-6838 or by email at Regadmin.LRE_RegAdmin@usace.army.mil.

While it is recognized that high and low water levels can have a significant impact, it is again important to recognize that the Great Lakes are a living, dynamic ecosystem. We cannot force the Lakes to behave in a manner that is acceptable to our current uses or lifestyles. By trying to manipulate the Lakes to accommodate our needs, we are merely creating more problems. Instead, we need to embrace the Great Lakes in their entirety, including the high and low water levels. If you need to protect your shoreline and property, be sure to do so in a manner that preserves the aspects that attracted you to Beaver Island's shoreline in the first place – natural beauty, clean water, abundant wildlife, good fishing, and amazing recreational opportunities.

Beaver Island Community School Update

by Wilfred Cwikel, BICS Superintendent-Principal

The Beaver Island Community School is deep into the middle of the school year. Currently, we have 51 students in our pre-K through 12th grade program. Our students continue to excel in their academic and extra-curricular programs. One athletic highlight was that our boys basketball team won for the second year in a row the Great Lakes Islands Basketball Tournament this December (our girls came in second place).

Beaver Island Community School is committed to serving students as well as community members. We are in the third year of providing senior lunches in collaboration with the Charlevoix County Commission on aging. If you are interested in participating in this program, please contact the COA office on the Island for meal vouchers and contact the school to request a monthly menu. In addition to providing nutrition to our elders, BICS also houses BI Fit, a collection of fitness equipment that provides residents of all ages with the opportunity to exercise inside where it is warm and dry. For more information on hours, fees, and the registration process, contact the school office at (231) 448-2744.

Although things are going well this year with Beaver Island Community School, we faced a funding crisis this fall when Governor Whitmer removed funding for rural and isolated schools through the line item veto process in October. Thanks to the calls and letter writing of residents of Beaver Island and communities served by small schools, as well as support from Senator Wayne Schmidt, Speaker Lee Chatfield, and Representative Triston Cole, the Governor and legislature were able to agree on a supplemental budget bill to restore the funding in late December. In early January, the five principals from the most isolated school districts in the state (see photo caption) travelled to Lansing to meet with Speaker Lee Chatfield, Senator Wayne Schmidt, and Governor Gretchen Whitmer to discuss the importance of funding isolated schools. We hope that we will not face a similar funding crisis in the future.



Photo Caption: Isolated school district superintendents meet with Governor Whitmer. From left: Greg Nyen, Grand Marais; Tom McKee, Paradise, Robert Vaught, Drummond Island; Governor Gretchen Whitmer; Wil Cwikel, Beaver Island; Bob Lohff, Mackinac Island.

INVASIVES REPORT

by Beth Leuck and Pam Grassmick, BIA Board

The emerald ash borer (EAB), an invasive insect from East Asia, is responsible for the death of hundreds of millions of ash trees in 30 states. Ash trees make up an integral part of our island's forest system. Without ash, natural processes and cultural activities are significantly or forever altered.

A decade ago, members of the Beaver Island Association (BIA) reached out to Michigan State University and state and federal agencies for guidance in protecting the island's forests from EAB. At that time the Nature Conservancy's former senior scientist, Dave Ewert, identified that transportation of EAB-infested firewood from the mainland to the island would be the biggest threat to the island's ash species. The state also had a quarantine on transportation of firewood, but it was rescinded in 2018, so for continued protection of the archipelago from EAB, the island's townships enacted a wood transportation ordinance in spring 2019 which prohibited the movement of untreated wood to any of the local islands.

Each year since 2011 BIA volunteers received purple EAB traps with lures from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). During the summer months the purple traps hung in strategic locations collecting insects. Most traps were placed in ash trees on the eastern half of Beaver Island where ashes are most prevalent. In October 2019, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development entomologists confirmed that the summer 2019 traps had captured multiple EABs on both Beaver Island and in Northcutt Bay, Garden Island. This confirmation of EABs is an unwelcome turn of events in the fight for saving the archipelago's ash trees.

The first line of defense in an attempt to keep EAB off the islands was the state and township wood movement quarantines. Because the quarantines appear to have failed, BIA volunteers are now using multiple current research-based activities to assist in controlling EABs on Beaver Island's ash trees. Select ash trees were girdled (damaged by removing bark) to attract EAB from surrounding healthy trees. These girdled trees

will be cut down and destroyed this winter to remove the EABs attracted to them. Three East Asian parasitoid wasp species, which lay their eggs exclusively on or in EAB larvae so the larvae die, were introduced in island ash stands positive for EAB. The parasitoid wasps were supplied from the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) EAB Parasitoid Rearing Facility in Brighton, MI. These tiny bio-control warriors were released using Michigan State University, USDA, and DNR Forestry guidelines. BIA volunteers will attempt to collect adult parasitoids in June 2020 to see if the parasitoids have established themselves where they were released. If successful, these parasitoids will ultimately cause a reduction in the island EAB population. As a third activity, a dozen ash trees on the east side of the island were treated by an arborist with a chemical designed to kill EAB larvae feeding inside the ash trees. The chemical injections were made possible through St. James Township's invasive species budget.

BIA volunteers will continue this winter to engage federal, state, and regional organizations in efforts to control the now present population of emerald ash borers on Beaver Island. The other alternative is to do nothing and let the ash trees succumb to the ravages of an invasive species. The BIA and many off-island agencies believe we have a fighting chance to preserve the archipelago's ash tree population.

For more information contact:

Beaver Island Association Contact: Beth Leuck or Pam Grassmick



One of the EAB lure traps in place on the island.

2020 Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan continues:

Based on multiple conference calls with federal, state, tribal, and other invasive species organizations in January, the 2020 Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) control program has been established. Your Beaver Island Association members will initiate the following

recommendations:

- No purple traps will be hung in 2020. BIA's trapping and mapping indicates where EAB has been found on Beaver and Garden Islands.
- Requests have been made for parasitoids to the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's Rearing Facility.
- Parasitoids to be released at two new sites which will be entered into the APHIS' Bio-Mapping program. These releases will be establishing a parasitoid population on Garden Island and enhance the dispersal rate on Beaver Island to bio-control EAB. Given that our weather in Northern Lake Michigan may not exactly match the mainland's degree day maps, we expect to begin the *Tetrastichus* releases the end of June.
- Trapping for parasitoids during the summer will hopefully document a thriving population of bio-warriors.
- An infestation of gypsy moths were an incidental finding on EAB traps last year in the Donegal Bay area. This finding will require monitoring, survey, and potentially intervention to prevent heavy defoliation of trees.
- BIA will be working with two invasive species interns this year which will be supplied through a CAKE's Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area grant with the Department of Natural Resources.

BIA and agencies remains optimistic that due to the early detection of EAB on our islands and the professional guidance from many agencies that we may be able to preserve ash trees.



BI Fit Now at BICS

BI Fit, with support of private donations and the Charlevoix County Community Foundation, has created the opportunity for island residents to exercise in the Beaver Island Community School (BICS) gymnasium. BI Fit provides members with the opportunity to work out on various equipment, including a treadmill, elliptical, exercise bike, and rowing machine. As well, members can walk the perimeter of the gymnasium. This program is truly a partnership between Island residents and BICS. Trained volunteers oversee the program and monitor use of the equipment during the open sessions. If you are interested in serving as a volunteer exercise monitor, call the BICS office at (231) 448-2744.

During the summer, BI Fit is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays (except *Baroque on Beaver* week) from 7:00 am to 10:00 am. If you are interested in becoming a BI Fit member, please stop by the office during regular business hours and pick up a membership packet. Annual membership fee is \$25.00. If you have any questions, feel free to give Wil Cwikiel a call at (231) 448-2744.

Island Marketing Update

by Sheri Richards

The Beaver Island Association has been working collaboratively with the Beaver Island Chamber of Commerce to market the incredible dark skies on our remote island. The dark sky project has been a work of many community members, including Bill Markey and Pam Grassmick. Moves are being made to establish Beaver Island as an International Dark Sky Community.

DARK SKY ISLAND

A heavenly view like
no other.

55 square miles of
isolated darkness in
the northern reaches
of Lake Michigan.

Discover
BEAVER ISLAND

BEAVER ISLAND DARK SKIES

Beginning at sunset, deepening into evening's rosy dusk, Beaver Island delivers all the glories of the night sky on an unmatched canvas of black. The Milky Way, meteor showers, galactic events, satellite flares, the Northern Lights and more. All in an island atmosphere of quiet peace, little traffic, scenic areas, trails and waterways that mark your path to discovering the joy of relaxing under the stars.

You'll marvel at more
than the stars.

Plan your trip at
beaverisland.org



THE BEAVER ISLAND DARK SKY SANCTUARY IS A
PROJECT OF THE BEAVER ISLAND ASSOCIATION AND
THE BEAVER ISLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.



Beach Clean-Up Report

by Sheri Richards, Secretary

Many good folks turned out for the 2019 Beach Cleanup Event. It was a beautiful day, as usual. We heard from reports of residents participating in the cleanup event on almost every beach around the island. Due to homeowners addressing erosion problems, there were over 100 sandbags collected this year along the Wicklow Beach area (many thanks to Ken Mc Donald!). The day started out with Pam Grassmick giving a presentation, at the Community Center, on invasive species that we might encounter along our hikes around the island. Lunch was provided jointly by the Community Center and the BIA. As usual, there were many micro plastics reported in the collections. To name a few other notable collections: a tire, boat rudder, paddle boat, large deflated floatation raft, and more. Thanks to all who participated in this event, and we look forward to seeing you all on the beach this fall!



Treasurer's Report

by Alan Vicstein, Treasurer

We were involved in many projects during the twelve months ending December 31, 2019. The period, however, was not strong financially as our account balances decreased by \$680, despite earning \$157 by participating in the Bite of Beaver.

Our board, as well as our membership have been active in supporting the economic sustainability of Beaver Island through funding activities and partnering with other non-profit organizations as well as working with both townships to promote the interests of our members

Cash Flow by Project

12/1/2018 through 11/30/2019

Category	Beach Cleanup	BIA	BIBT 2019	Bite of Beaver	Total
Inflows					
Interest Inc		08	0	0	8
Membership Dues		0 1,450	0	0	1,450
Other Income (Business)					
Other Income (Business):BIBT Fees		00	2,458	0	2,458
Other Income (Business):Misc Sal		00	0	192	192
TOTAL Other Income (Business)		00	2,458	192	2,650
Total Inflows		0 1,458	2,458	192	4,108
Outflows					
Advertising (Business):BI		0 250	0	35	285
Advertising (Business):Publications		0 100	0	0	
Total Advertising (Business)		0 350	0	35	385
Insurance (Business)		0 229	0	0	229
Meals & Entertainment (Business)		63 0	1,071	0	1,134
Misc. Expense (Business):Memberships		0 285	0	0	285
Misc. Expense (Business):PayPal Fees		0 23	49	0.	72
Misc. Expense (Business):Rental Fees		00	1,600	0	1,600
Misc. Expense (Business):Web Services					
Misc. Expense (Business):Web Services:BIA		0 600	0	0.	600
Misc. Expense (Business):Web Services:BIBT		00	208	0	208
Misc. Expense (Business):Web Services:Island Jewel		0 84	0	0	84
Total Misc. Expense (Business):Web Service		0 684	208	0	892
Total Misc. Expense (Business)		0 992	1,857	0	2849
Office Expenses (Business)		0 145	0	0	145
Postage and Delivery (Business)		0 46	0.00	0	46
Total Outflows		63 1,762	2,927	35	4788
Net Cash Flow		(63) (304)	(470)	157	(680)

We lost money on the Birding Festival (\$470) , but we will continue to sponsor this event as it has a significant economic impact on the Island. Many of our other projects that are led by our board members involve little or no money. We continue to partner with other non-profit organizations by participating in or sponsoring their events. Some of the organizations we supported in the past year are : The Beaver Island Chamber of

Commerce, The Charlevoix Chamber of Commerce, Beaver Island News on the Net, Beaver Island Cultural Arts Association, Tip of the Mitt - Watershed Council, Michigan United Conservation Clubs, and the Conservation Resource Alliance.

As of the writing of this newsletter, only 59 of our 159 registered members have paid their 2020 dues which were due on July 1, 2019. If we are to continue to support the many programs you will be reading about we need all our members to be current on their dues and to ask your friends and neighbors to become members so that we can continue to advocate on our behalf.

If you wish to pay your dues or make a donation, please visit our Website at <https://www.beaverislandassociation.org/>

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Island Township Boards

ST. JAMES TWP BOARD		PEAINE TWP BOARD	
Kathleen McNamara	Supervisor	William Kohls	Supervisor
Julie Gillespie	Clerk	Carla Martin	Clerk
Diane McDonough	Treasurer	Larry Kubic	Treasurer
Paul Cole	Trustee	Paul Welke	Trustee
Travis Martin	Trustee	Ernest Martin	Trustee
Cynthia Pryor	Deputy Sup.	Krys Lyle	Deputy Sup.
AIRPORT COMMISSION		WASTE MANAGEMENT	
Dave Paul	Chair	Paul Cole	Chair
Kathleen McNamara	Vice Chair	Frank D'Andraia	Secretary
Ronald K Jakubus		Carla Martin	Treasurer
Carla Martin		Paul Welke	
Ernest Martin		Joe Moore	
Joe Moore		Sheri Richards	
John Martin		Travis Martin	
Rachel Teague (Manager) - Rec. Secretary			
BI TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY		EMERGENCY SERVICES AUTHORITY	
Mary Cook	Director	Jim McDonough	
Bob Tidmore	Chair	William Kohls	
Larry Hansz	Vice Chair	Kathleen McNamara	
Mark Engelsman	Treasurer	Bill Turner	
Kevin McDonough		Tammy Radionoff	
Stephen West		Cody Randall	Interim Director

BI DISTRICT LIBRARY		BI TELECOMMUNICATION ADVISORY	
Becca Foli	Chair	Kevin Boyle	Chair
Erin Randall	Chair Elect	Kathleen McNamara	Vice-Chair
Krys Lyle	Secretary	Theresa McDonough	Secretary
Vicki Smith	Treasurer	Neal Green	
Kathy Tidmore	Trustee	Gary Conant	
Kim Mitchell	Trustee	Paul Welke	
John Fiegen	Trustee	Wil Cwikiel	
Sally Rehkopf	Trustee		
ST. JAMES PLANNING COMMISSION		PEAINE PLANNING COMMISSION	
Patrick McGinnity	Chair	William Markey	Chair
Paul Cole	Board Rep.	Krys Lyle	Secretary
Adam Anderson		Larry Kubic	Board Rep.
Beth Croswhite		Dan Burton	
Bob Tidmore		Angel Welke	
Rick Speck	Zoning Admin.	Rick Speck	Zoning Admin.
Amy Jenema	Assessor	Sally Akerley	Assessor



Third Annual Great Lakes Islands Summit

Bob Anderson, GLIA Steering Committee member

The Great Lakes Islands Alliance (GLIA) is a voluntary, collaborative network that brings together island leaders, residents, and advocates from across the region. The mission of the GLIA is to “encourage relationship building, foster information exchange, and leverage resources to address shared challenges and embrace opportunities to benefit islands.”

The 3rd annual Summit took place on October 21-22, 2019 on Mackinac Island. 110 residents of fourteen different Great Lakes islands attended, plus additional partners from multiple Great Lakes mainland organizations and several from outside the region, notably the Rockland, Maine-based Island Institute and the Maine Islands Coalition, a multi-island partnership comparable to GLIA. Beaver Island was well-represented, with nineteen attendees from many aspects of island public and private activities. A list those attendees is at the end of the article.

Mission Point Resort provided the summit meals, meetings and lodging. The summit began Sunday evening with a group dinner where we were welcomed by City of Mackinac Island Mayor Margaret Doud.

Monday was largely dedicated to GLIA business and information sharing on topics

directly relevant to the host island. The morning session was used to orient attendees to the event and to the GLIA, with one-third of the attendees either new to GLIA or attending their first Summit. The audience then heard from members of the Mackinac Bands of Chippewa and Ottawa Indians who provided discussion of their long history with the island as well as their contemporary roles in the region. Next, the director of Mackinac State Historic Parks outlined the European history and more recent evolution of the island community, leading up to the current focus on tourism and designation as a state park (comprising over 80 percent of the island). Attendees then split up to attend one of five breakout sessions, repeated after lunch, that included tourism, housing, medical care, schools, infrastructure, fire/police, community foundations, and recycling. The last group activity was hearing about the Mackinac Island Master Plan, including its development, content, and purpose. This is a significant resource for the host community. Not all of the GLIA communities have island-wide master plans. (Beaver island has two---one for each township). The afternoon finished with guided field trips to key island sites: the water treatment plant, the Butterfly House, and Fort Mackinac. In the evening, a group dinner provided additional networking, followed by a wine and beer tasting, (including beverages from our own Whiskey Point Brewery), art exhibition, and multi-media performance by the Mackinac Island Art Council.

Day 2 took a full GLIA network (14-island) perspective. The morning began with an environmental talk by Mr. Eric Ellis, a project manager at the Great Lakes Commission. Eric discussed the many unique natural resources and environmental attributes of islands and provided some example case studies of restoration projects on islands. Citing the current lack of regional coordination specifically around Great Lakes islands conservation, Eric was excited to work with GLIA as it continues to grow as a regional player. This set the stage for Dr. Brandon Hofstedt, Director of the Center for Rural Communities at Northland College, who introduced a major next step for GLIA. In July 2019 Northland College was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation to address several key needs for GLIA. The grant is guided by the vision for this 18-month project to establish the GLIA as an influential actor in the region via a coordinated policy and communications approach and supported through a new organizational identity with three broad goals covering policy influence, communications, and institutional stability and incorporation. Northland College elected to contract out the project tasks, with oversight and assistance by a project advisory team consisting of the five-member GLIA Steering Committee and key partners: Matt Preisser; Kate Tagai with the Island Institute; and Jon Allan, with Jon W. Allan Group, LLC. The Stewardship Network is the organization selected to lead Mott project. TSN is a nonprofit organization based in Ann Arbor, Michigan which supports environmental stewardship by connecting and mobilizing people and organizations. Executive Director

Lisa Brush discussed her organization and its experience bringing together diverse organizations and facilitating complex conversations. To better understand the GLIA, specifically its membership and self-identified characteristics, the full group participated in an interactive exercise.

Next was a new round of five breakout sessions, three co-lead by Beaver Islanders Kevin Boyle, Angel Welke and Wil Cwikiel. Topics included island education, network of media organizations, tourism tools such as an “island passport,” citizens involved in environmental conservation activities, a community reading program, and faith-based organizations. Each breakout was repeated after lunch, and a full group report-out session was used to share the discussions and next steps for each topic.

A final session then formally closed with the outgoing Summit host team (Mackinac Island) “passing the baton” (or in this case, a note inside a bottle) to the 2020 Summit team, led by a single representative from each of the four major Lake Erie islands. They promised another unique experience in fall 2020, hinting at a progressive-style event involving all four island communities with tentative dates October 4-7, 2020. Finally, attendees were offered three additional field trips to local sites: several community organizations (library, school, Stuart House Museum); health & welfare organizations (medical center, fire department and police department); and significant infrastructure facilities (solid waste handling facility, airport, and wastewater treatment plant).

Overall, the summit was a great experience and opportunity to share and learn. It was quite a contrast to compare our Beaver Island tourism activity to the challenge of Mackinac Island accommodating 22,000 tourists in a single day with all restaurant, store and lodging staffing, supplies, rubbish and recycle handled totally by horse drawn drays and carriages!

Beaver Island summit attendees were: Alana & Bob Anderson, Judy & Kevin Boyle, Wil Cwikiel, Mary Delamater, Pam Grassmick, Dana & Eric Hodgson, Ken McDonald, Patrick McGinnity, Kitty McNamara, Dick Mulvihill, Sheri Richards, Kris Ries, Sheryll Russell, Lori Taylor-Blitz, and Angel & Paul Welke.

Paul Cole was registered but unable to attend due to illness.

A more comprehensive article can be found on the BIA website and a complete official report of the GLIA summit will be linked to the BIA website when it is finalized by the Steering Committee.



GREAT LAKES
ISLANDS ALLIANCE



Beaver Island Archipelago Trails Report

by Louis Post

The Beaver Island Archipelago Trails Association (BIATA) is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the maintenance and development of trails in the Beaver Island Archipelago. For the past two years BIATA volunteers have compiled over 650 person hours clearing and maintaining island trails for the benefit of public use in hiking, biking, skiing, sledding, and hunting. This year BIATA completed installation of signage and map boxes on island trails.

Last year BIATA membership participated in two planning sessions sponsored by the DNR which focused on developing a more formalized trail system for the island. DNR officials challenged BIATA to come forward with a multi-use master plan for trails development which included parking areas, destination points, loop trails, signage, and

an island trails communications plan, which would include maps, a web site, and apps. The Peaine Township Recreation Plan (August 2019 Draft, pg. 32) specifically delineates in Goal Three. *Increase the number of recreational assets/services of Beaver Island and the archipelago that attract tourists, seasonal residents and new full-time residents.* The plan then articulates as an objective to: *Maintain existing trails and expand/connect island-wide hiking and biking trails systems around the island. Action Program 1. Develop a comprehensive non-motorized trails master plan for the island.*

Beaver Island's economy depends, to a large extent, on tourism and the occupancy and rental of vacation/seasonal homes. The island's main renewable resource is its natural beauty. Its remoteness and low population density make it an attractive destination for hikers, birders, and cyclists.

Beaver Island, however, possesses very few trails specifically dedicated to hiking, biking, or walking. Most of the "trails" are actually Charlevoix county roads or old two track logging trails originally created by the DNR. There is no trail infrastructure consisting of interconnected trails, looped trails or destination trails. What exists are old logging and hunting paths and roads which are not improved or leveled. They typically randomly begin and end on county roads.

There are no trails dedicated either to leisure cycling or to mountain biking; with the exception of the short paved bike path on Donegal Bay Road. The only currently available means of cycling on the the island is via gravel covered county roads.

Developing a hiking and biking trail infrastructure on Beaver Island offers an enhancement of outdoor leisure activities for island residents and visitors. As importantly, it offers a means for attracting more visitors, such as hikers, birders, trail runners, leisure cyclists, and mountain bikers to the island, thus assisting the economy of the island and improving the financial wellbeing of its year-round residents.

Developing a destination point mountain biking trails infrastructure would attract a consumer group with disposable income, known to be willing to travel in order to bike in new and different biking venues.

Beaver Island's tourist season, with the exception of hunting, is bracketed by the Memorial and Labor Day holiday weekends. Hiking, birding, running, and mountain biking enthusiasts engage in such activities well beyond the three-month summer season. The presence of a hiking and mountain biking trail infrastructure holds a real

possibility of significantly increasing the length of the island's tourist season, thus offering a real boost to the island economy.

Trails offer a means of using nature, as a renewable resource, for the purpose of activities - hiking, running, birding, cycling, and cross-country skiing- which are very low impact in relation to the island's environment.

The Trails Association is seeking the creation of a master plan for the development of a system of unpaved, multi use trails, to be used for hiking, birding, running, recreational cycling, and cross-country skiing, consistent with the management guidelines for Special Conservation areas approved by the Northern Lake Michigan Islands Collaborative. (The definition of a Special Conservation Area is: Areas of publicly administered lands and water, typically associated with an Ecological Reference Area or rare Natural Community, that will be subject to limited management, and that will be left to undergo natural processes. Should a disease or invasive species issue emerge that threatens the ecological integrity of these areas, management will be scaled appropriately to the scale of the issue, with every effort made to intervene as minimally as possible). Moreover, we acknowledge and support the need to avoid intrusion into sensitive cultural or historical sites deemed of significance by the community or the Little Traverse Bands of Odawa.

The Association is also seeking the creation of a master plan for the development of a destination point, unpaved mountain biking dedicated, trails infrastructure consistent with the management guidelines for Special Conservation areas approved by the Northern Lake Michigan Islands Collaborative.

It is the intent of the Trails Association that both master plans offer recommendations for the most cost-effective means of enhancing the new trail systems by means of incorporating and improving the paths and roads currently existing on Beaver Island.

Both master plans will be used to guide the phased development of multi use unpaved trails and unpaved mountain biking trails on Beaver Island.

The intent of BIATA is to make available, at no cost, both the multi use trails master plan and the mountain biking trails master plan, to any organization seeking to maintain and develop trails on Beaver Island.

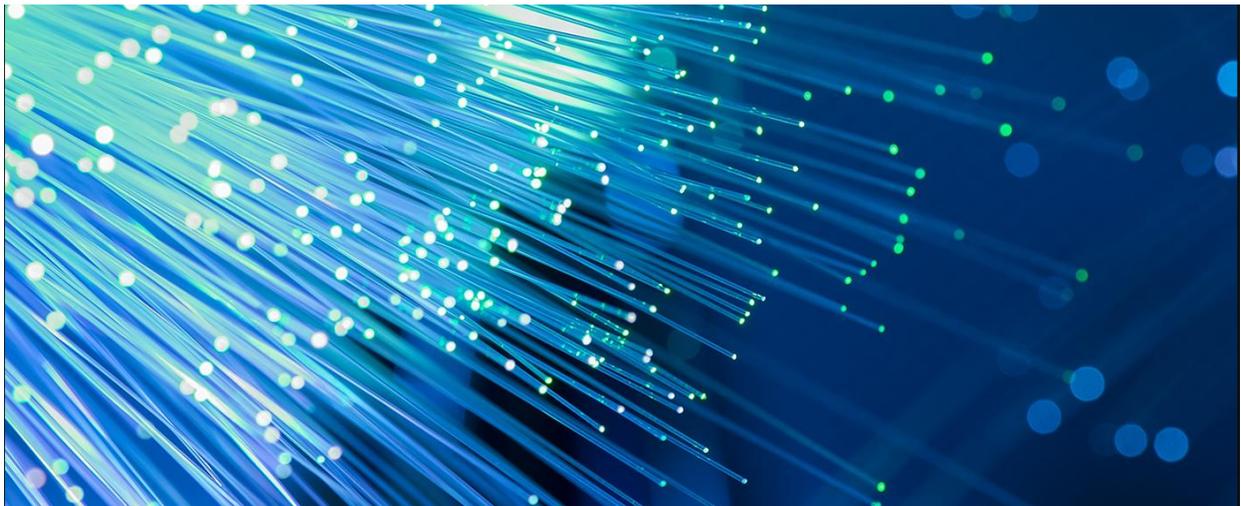
The scope of the current proposal is the area of Beaver Island south of Hannigan Rd. The current plan is to site most of the new trails on land owned by the Michigan DNR.

The Association will seek recommendations as to whether there are any parcels on which BIATA should seek an easement for trail development.

The mountain bike trail planning efforts will be focused on DNR owned land on the Southwest corner of the island in the area known as Andy's Trail, while the multi-use planning will be focused on DNR property in the remainder of the southern half of the island.

The Association envisions the possibility of obtaining one easement to allow for the connection of mountain biking trails on adjoining, but not connected sections of DNR owned land owned, along the south west shore of the island.

The BIATA Board understands that this an ambitious and long term plan. We believe that if successful this initiative can greatly improve the quality of life of island residents and visitors, and improve the economic situation of island residents.



Broadband Update

by Dick Mulvihill

The BIA Communications Infrastructure Committee is working on initiatives to deliver Gigabit service to Beaver Island.

BIA Broadband Roadmap

- Short-term (summer of 2020 or sooner) Interim pools of service to key locations
- Middle-term (2-3 years)
- o Educational Access Network – wireless 20x5 for \$30

o Great Lakes Energy – wireless 50x10 for \$80

- Long-term (2 to 5 years) Quickstart study to begin evaluation of Gigabit-capability connectivity for the island

The BIA and the Joint Telecommunication Advisory Committee (JTAC) obtained St. James and Peaine Township funding for:

- Pools of Service
- Quickstart Program

The Pools of Service is a \$35k to \$40k project to create interim pools of service of 200 Mbps symmetric service for island's anchor institutions. A BI Broadband Consortium was formed comprise of the Community School, Public Library, Community Center, Historical Society, Townships and County who will be the primary recipients of the Pools of Service. Also, the service will be available for township and county business at connected locations - halls, county building, transfer station, governmental center, St. James fire hall, and municipal docks.

We have assembled a toolkits to achieve buildout milestones.

1. Quickstart Program

- a. Review financial scenarios to select the model that meets both township's broadband requirements, budgetary constraints with community support to assure buildout a municipal network
- b. Create an RFP for Gigabit service with ROI metrics to attract the best partner to design, build and managed a future-proof service offering.

2. Create a Community Broadband Education Program

3. Execute the Michigan Moonshot Framework

The Quickstart Program is a mapping and financial modeling tool that provides underserved communities, like Beaver Island, with an inexpensive, means of finding an affordable broadband solution for our community. The Quickstart software can analyze the population, households, geography, terrain, ground clutter on Beaver Island to design any mixture of fixed wireless, fixed fiber, or a hybrid network.

Of the three options, the BIA Committee selected the fixed fiber connection to all premises on the island. The estimated cost of fixed fiber buildout is approximately \$3m. This is a high bar, but it will future proof the island, so we don't have to upgrade in two or three years.

Great Lakes Energy is our ideal partner candidate. Their a rural electric cooperative that's committed to build wireless 50/10 Service on the Island. We want to partner with

GLE to provide service competitive with the GLE's gigabit service offering on the mainland to compete for tourist dollars.

We can leverage the Quickstart Program to demonstrate to GLE that we have committed the time and resource to be a full partner in a gigabit buildout project on the island. The Merit Michigan Moonshot Broadband Framework, <https://www.merit.edu/framework/> will serve as a community primer and the basis line for our broadband roadmap.

Concurrent with the Moonshot Framework is the creation of a Community Broadband Education Program. Without the communities comprehensive understanding of benefits of broadband service and the consequences of inaction the project will fail. On our path forward, we could replicate Beaver Island's sister island Arranmore, Co, Donegal, Ireland creative strategy that elevated them to the highest connectivity of any island in the EU.

After the Irish Government disbanded a rural broadband funding program, the Arranmore Island Business Council contracted an ad agency to increase their exposure. The Council and agency formed a partnership with Ireland, a wireless service provider.

Three days after Ireland launched this ad campaign, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i4PcOZ8xMsA> it hit number 3 on Google Global Search. The ad campaign resonated in islands all over the world. Arranmore is getting visits from islands in Canada, South Korea, and Croatia.

Arranmore's mantra is "If we can do it, anyone can". We can do it!

Draft Annual Meeting Agenda

President's Report - Election of New Board Members - Treasurer's Report - Update from St. James Supervisor on High Water Issues - Marina Plan Update - Invasives Update - Broadband Update - BIA Communications Plan - Building & Real Estate Developments - Other Business - Good of the Order

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LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS

The Beaver Island Association is an organization of dedicated volunteers who seek to represent the interests of all residents and visitors on Beaver Island. From Phragmites and other invasive species control, to township governance, to support of the Community School, and everything in between, the BIA is working to support environmental and economic sustainability. If you have friends or neighbors who are not members, send the BIA their names and addresses and we will send them a copy of this newsletter.

Please pay your dues to support our efforts and to continue to receive the BIA newsletter. Our membership year runs from July 1 to the following June 30. Please join or rejoin us by sending the completed form below along with a check for \$25 to Alan Vicstein, Treasurer, The Beaver Island Association, PO Box 390, Beaver Island, MI 49782. Or, [renew online](#).

Yes, please renew our Beaver Island Association membership for 2020-2021.

Name: _____ **Email:** _____
Street: _____
City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

The Beaver Island Association's mission is to support both the economic and environmental sustainability of the island. We do that by following issues and, where appropriate, speaking out and acting on them. We are hands on. Our current efforts, many discussed in this newsletter, include dealing with invasives, the birding and water trails, broadband availability and balanced economic development. Our past successes include deployment of the island's fire danger warning signs, work with the Maine Islands Institute to help develop plans for the

island and spark the creation of the Great Lakes Islands Alliance, a successful awareness campaign concerning the need for and economic sustainability of paramedic care on the island, the birding and water trails, effective management of invasives-and more. Our success as a group depends on your support of these efforts through membership in BIA.



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