

Thank you Senator Casperson and Committee Members for the opportunity to comment:

Natural resources and biodiversity are the bread and butter of Beaver Island, historically and today. The Core Design Team recognized the unique high quality areas found across the Island and recommended that the island be included in the Biodiversity Stewardship/Living Legacy Area. Other agencies and reports from the EPA, TNC and MNFI recognize that Beaver Island is the highest scoring island for biodiversity in Lake Michigan and is named a key island for biodiversity conservation; yet, with a stroke of a pen, the interior of the island which holds some of the state's finest examples of natural communities was deleted because it "*was incompatible with the Game Area designation.*" The original unbalanced stated reason for deleting Beaver Island's interior is **not valid** according to Director Stokes but the re-establishment of the BSA designation for the interior *state held lands* has not taken place.

Beaver Island meets or exceeds the four criteria set forth by the DNR's Living Legacy. In a bi-national report, Islands of Life, Beaver Island is ranked as one of the top islands of 32,000 islands in the Great Lakes for biodiversity and one of the top 10 most threatened. If this state values biodiversity in its many forms, Beaver Island's interior should be included in the BSA designated areas. Islanders have demonstrated their support of protecting biodiversity on state held lands by repeatedly paying for Phragmites control when the DNR was unable but much more is needed.

The advantages and importance of the BSA designation for our island include:

The potential to assist the region's troubling economy by increasing the Island's status for diverse groups of recreation seekers be that for hunting, bird watching, or plant viewing. It can attract more scientific research. It recognizes the EPA's goals to key protection needs through engaging property owners in a meaningful partnership with the State of Michigan which represents a strong opportunity for long term conservation of the Island's unique high value areas. It also addresses Michigan's Wildlife Action Plan which acknowledges that in order to affect the ability to initiate conservation actions, public perception and understanding of landscapes, species, and management practices must be addressed. It will help make the Island a priority for funding opportunities and assist with needed inventories and monitoring that can be a huge benefit in a way that the Game Area designation cannot.

The BSA designation offers an attraction for both the hunter and the naturalist seeking a special area. I am requesting that if this committee has any influence over the DNR process that they assist us in re-establishing the Core Design Team's recommendation for the BSA designation to public areas on the interior of Beaver Island. These areas are for all to enjoy, treasure, and preserve for future generations. They are truly our "Living Legacy" and it would be illogical for the DNR and the State of Michigan not to recognize the highest biodiversity ranked island in Lake Michigan and one of the highest in the Great Lakes as a BSA site. Thank you for considering this request.

Pamela Grassmick 2/6/12
30170 East Side Drive
Beaver Island, Michigan 49782
(231) 448-2314

From: Pamela Grassmick [mailto:pgrassmick@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 02, 2012 1:24 PM
To: Andrew Pike
Subject: Biodiversity Stewardship Areas Living Legacy Committee Meeting

Dear Mr. Pike:

Thank you for your assistance with submission of the attached letters to the Natural Resources, Environment and Great Lakes Committee members. My letter from December 2010 is embedded following this e-mail. A year ago, Beaver Island wrote letters regarding the Wildlife Division's decision to drop the interior area of Beaver from the Biodiversity Stewardship Area. I and others sent letters to the Living Legacy Department of the DNR for reconsideration. I was only able to attach a few of the letters that I had received. The Living Legacy Department would have others. Our archipelago is noted in a recent bi-national publication, *Islands of Life*, as one of the top ten highest ranked Great Lakes islands out of 32,000 other islands. We are also noted as one of the top ten most threatened. The BSA designation would enable Beaver Island to attract more tourist dollars to the region by showcasing our unique biologically rich area. Such a designation would foster partnerships between the State held properties and private land owners to assist with conserving and monitoring some of the highest ranked ecologically significant natural areas in the State of Michigan for future generations. I appreciate the opportunity to provide comment into this important process.

Sincerely,
Pam Grassmick

DNRE Living Legacies
Comments
2010 Forest Management Division
P.O. Box 30452
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7952

December 27,

RE: Beaver Island Biodiversity Stewardship Area Designation

Dear Ms. Amy Clark Eagle:

Beaver Island is noted in bi-national reports as one of the highest ranking bio-diverse islands of 32,000 Great Lakes islands and has some of the best examples of natural communities within the State, according to the Michigan Natural Features Inventory. Additionally, the island has also been identified in CELCP's Northern Lake Michigan Terrestrial Biodiversity Investment Area. Beaver Island's shoreline and interior had been nominated by the Core Design Team to receive the Biodiversity Stewardship Area (BSA) designation. A sliver of the shoreline is all that remains from that recommendation. I understand there are approximately 150 BSA nominations, some as

small as 26 acres to Sleeping Bear National Park size. Beaver Island was the only island severely modified from the nomination list. Despite the Island's interior areas being identified as having the highest ranked Dry Mesic Forest, several old growth sites—some containing Maples 450 years old, excellent Boreal Forests as last refuges for species due to climatic changes, and the head waters for Iron Ore Creek which is the longest cold water trout stream on an island in Lake Michigan and according to tribal fisheries surveys, indicate a thriving population of coasters, a brook trout.

For Beaver Island, our natural resources are our bread and butter. What will assist a northern Michigan geographically isolated economy more with paying for fundamental services while attracting families to buy a home here—a Biodiversity Stewardship Area, where you can hunt and the natural resources celebrated, appreciated, and protected or another Game Area? We can be a Game Area; however, the BSA designation offers an attraction for both the hunter and a naturalist seeking a special area.

In the Nature Conservancy's "Island's of Life" report, we were also described as being one of the top 10 most threatened islands. It appears that the public areas will be developed for game species only, and the highest quality conservation areas will not be under best practice management as evidenced by the statement that "*the interior areas were removed due to the incompatible dedication of these areas for game management research.*" These public lands are for all of Michigan residents to enjoy, treasure, and preserve for future generations. They are truly our "Living Legacy" and we are in need of assistance to preserve these areas.

The EPA's 1999 State of the Lakes Conference (SOLEC) identified Key Protection Needs for our archipelago as well:

- "Local communities and individual landowners need to be given information about the ecological importance of the islands and the coastal lands, as well as developing and managing land in a sustainable manner."
- "Research needs to be conducted on the impacts of threats to the ecosystem, such as recreational activities and invasion of non-native species."
- "The islands are known to have significant biodiversity values, but need to be inventoried, then monitored for changes and trends."

- "Monitoring efforts might be focused on bald eagles, piping plovers, other migratory and colonial nesting birds, small mammals, and various types of vegetation sensitive to fragmentation, such as pitchers thistle. Information on changes in communities and habitats such as wetlands would also be valuable."

The Michigan's Wildlife Action Plan (MWAP) describes conservation needs and gaps in the area of scientific knowledge threats. Great Lakes islands have been identified by national and state organizations, NGOs, and tribes as fragile and poorly studied. The BSA will provide the necessary communication and cooperation between conservation partners to combat threats to preservation and conservation of Beaver Island's natural resources.

The BSA designation for the Island will strengthen MWAP and EPA's conservation efforts.

Excerpts from the MWAP: "Many of the ways disturbance regimes and other ecological processes influence ecological communities and species remain inadequately understood (Pess et al. 2003). This lack of understanding makes it difficult to identify management goals and conservation actions. Therefore, understanding a particular system in one part of the State does not necessarily provide complete knowledge of the same type of system in another part of the State. Public attitudes and perception of landscape features, species and certain land-management practices affect the ability to initiate conservation actions (Witter 1990). Information distribution is an important element in obtaining public support for conservation actions (Peyton 1990). Awareness and knowledge are two building blocks in establishing citizens' attitudes, values and patterns of action (Barro & Manfreda 1991)."

While recreational use, hunting, logging, and mining can continue in some areas, the BSA designation will engage private property owners who hold 2/3 of the interior and the shoreline and the other 1/3 which is held by the State of Michigan in coordinated conservation educational efforts. This designation would benefit our region's economy by elevating the Island's status, for hunters or bird watchers, while encouraging academics research. The opportunity of the BSA status to assist with more inventories and monitoring can be a huge benefit to the Island in a way that the Game Area designation cannot. As indicated above, management of state held lands solely for game management has the potential of doing irreparable harm to our Island's precious natural resources.

As a 4th generation islander, Beaver Island continues to identify and struggle with the same issues regarding conservation and preservation of high value areas. By assigning the BSA designation to the entire island, it acknowledges the necessary steps to preserve our marvelous natural resources and assist us in a collaborative effort to address wildlife directives in accordance with the Wildlife Restoration Act (formally Pittman Robertson) and Michigan's Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act.

Thank you for your consideration,

Pam and Brad Grassmick

30170 East Side Drive

Beaver Island, Michigan 49782

e-mail: mcgrass@ameritech.net

An excerpt from the BSA report indicating the high quality natural communities found on our archipelago.

Beaver Island

Archipelago Complex

18,455 Charlevoix

State Wildlife Area

A very high-quality complex of many large and small patch natural communities (particularly Great Lakes shoreline communities) across several Lake Michigan islands. Large documented examples of natural communities include: Boreal Forest (excellent), Coastal Fen (excellent), and Open Dunes (1-good, 1-fair). Small documented examples of natural communities include: Boreal Forest (2-good to fair, 1-fair), Coastal Fen (1-excellent to good, 1-good, 1-good to fair), Dry-Mesic Northern Forest (good), Great Lakes Marsh (2-excellent to good), Hardwood-Conifer Swamp

(excellent), Interdunal Wetland (1-good to fair, 1-fair), Limestone Cobble Shore (fair), Mesic Northern Forest (1-good, 1-fair), Northern Wet Meadow (excellent), Open Dunes (4-fair), Rich Conifer Swamp (good), Sand and Gravel Beach (2-excellent), and Wooded Dune and Swale (fair to poor). There is a high probability of the area representing a greater expanse of high-quality Boreal Forest and Mesic Northern Forest, as well as additionally representing high quality Poor Fen. The natural communities have good natural function due to the remoteness of the islands. This area includes all or significant portions of a large number of previous

designations, including two areas nominated for legal protection under the Wilderness and Natural Areas statute, two areas designated as natural areas through other means, four Critical Dunes areas, three areas designated as critical habitat for the endangered Piping Plover, seven Coastal Environmental Areas, thirteen Ecological Reference Areas, and three Potential Old Growth areas. It also supports a large number of rare plant and animal populations and a Great

Blue Heron rookery.

Beaver Island Arch

Complex

43,629 Charlevoix 7.6 Modified Combined with the High Island Complex BSA. The BSA upon Beaver Island was reduced to focus upon the endemic Great Lakes shoreline

communities. **Interior areas were removed due to the incompatible dedication of these areas for game management research.**

18,455 Beaver Island

Beaver Island Archipelago Complex would be preserving these specific types of Habitats under the BSA (Biodiversity Stewardship Areas) as currently proposed:

(note: I pulled all of these from the MUCH longer "Locations by Ecosystem Type" (attached))

- 1.) *Boreal Forest* – One of highest ranked examples documented in state (Confirmed)
- 2.) *Coastal Fen* – One of the highest ranked examples documented in state (Confirmed)
- 3.) *Dry-mesic Northern Forest* (Confirmed)
- 4.) *Great Lakes Marsh* – Two of highest ranked ex. in region (Confirmed)
- 5.) *Hardwood-Conifer Swamp* – Highest ranked example documented in state (Confirmed)
- 6.) *Interdunal Wetland* (Confirmed)
- 7.) *Limestone Cobble Shore* (Confirmed)
- 8.) *Mesic Northern Forest* (Confirmed)
- 9.) *Northern Wet Meadow* – Highest ranked example documented in state (Confirmed)
- 10.) *Open Dunes* (Confirmed)
- 11.) *Poor Fen* (Probable)
- 12.) *Rich Conifer Swamp* (Confirmed)
- 13.) *Sand and Gravel Beach* – Gr. Lk. Ver.; one of highest ranked ex doc in state (Confirmed)
- 14.) *Wooded Dune and Swale Complex* (Confirmed)

TO: DNRE Living Legacies Comments
FROM: Dr. Beth E. Leuck, Professor of Biology
RE: Status of Beaver Island, MI, as a BSA

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a professor of biology at Centenary College of Louisiana who, for the past 25 years, has taught various ecology course for Central Michigan University at their biological station on Beaver Island, MI. During those years I have participated in research on Beaver Island natural resources and presented numerous talks and nature walks to island residents and visitors. I am also serving on the Board of Directors of the Beaver Island Association, an organization involved with the conservation of natural resources on Beaver Island. My knowledge of the terrestrial natural resources of the island are extensive; I have collected data on changes in the island monarch butterfly population since the late 1980's. I also have data on the composition of beech-maple communities and data on the dry mesic forest of the east side of the island that extend back into the 1990's, as well as data on changes in small mammal populations spanning two decades.

I am establishing my credentials to state that I am very disappointed that the DNRE has chosen not to include most of Beaver Island as a Biodiversity Stewardship Area (BSA), and I am strongly urging the DNRE to reconsider its position on this issue. It is my understanding that Beaver Island was the only island withdrawn from consideration for this designation and that the DNRE based its withdrawal on comments from several "conservation" groups on the island who are primarily concerned with the deer population. This lopsided view of concern for the island's biodiversity is not representative of everyone with a stake in the island, including full-time residents, summer residents (the category into which I fit), and short-term visitors to the island, many whom have visited the island for multiple years in the summer, when natural resources other than deer are of more interest to them.

Removal of Beaver Island from the list of BSA designations is not based on scientific data. No well-designed field study of the deer population on Beaver Island has ever been undertaken; therefore the island should not be designated only a game management research area. On the other hand, there are many studies undertaken by researchers and students associated with the CMU Biological Station that have documented the biodiversity of many areas of the island. Most of these studies, many done by students in graduate-level classes at CMUBS, are filed in the CMUBS library and are available to the public (and the DNRE) for review. Several which I have supervised or with which I am familiar include 1) a hydrological and plant diversity study of all the bogs on the island, 2) a comparison of the microclimate and plant diversity of east side and west side dune systems, 3) an inventory of plants and animals of the Miller's Marsh area, and 4) a study of select bird species of the Little Sand Bay area. All of these studies contain scientific data that support the designation of the island as a BSA.

There are no scientifically sound reasons to designate all of Beaver Island as a game management research area. There are many scientifically supported reasons to designate much of the island as a BSA. There is also no reason that a game management program, such as the QDM program

supported by the two conservation groups on the island, cannot coexist with a BSA designation for the island. However, it appears that game management priorities are dictating the DNRE's dropping Beaver Island from the BSA designation as evidenced by the following quote from the BSA report, "The BSA upon Beaver Island was reduced to focus upon the endemic Great Lakes shoreline communities. Interior areas were removed due to the incompatible dedication of these areas for game management research." If that is indeed the case, then I urge the DNRE to reconsider its position on Beaver Island and support a BSA designation for interior portions of the island as well as for its outstanding coastal regions. Those of us who love and respect the natural resources of Beaver Island will be most appreciative of the DNRE's support for more species than just deer.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,
Beth E. Leuck
Professor of Biology, Centenary College of Louisiana
Adjunct Professor of Biology, Central Michigan University

Amy Clark Eagle, Living Legacies
2010
cc Mindy Koch, Director Natural Resources

December 21,

Dear Amy

I am writing you in support of the MDNRE's innovative "Living Legacies" program, and to urge that you honor the historic consensus reached by the NLP CDT by fully implementing all areas and acreages identified by them as desirable for BSA status. My arguments below are both economic and ecological.

I am in a unique position to comment on this proposal, having both personal and professional familiarity with the issues concerned. I received my M.S. in Environmental Studies from the U of Montana, Missoula in 1986, and am familiar with the principles of ecosystem management. As a college professor I survey my students (approximately 100 each year) on their conservation concerns for the NLP (see a sample of student's letters in the enclosures.) As a property owner and single-proprietor business owner of an ecotourism concern on Beaver Island, I am acutely aware of how the DNRE's management of public lands on Beaver Island affects my clientele. And in my roles with the township mandated Natural Resource and Eco-tourism Commission (NREC) on Beaver Island, as well as a tour guide for the Beaver Island Boat Company, I am intimately involved with the economic and environmental concerns of resident Beaver Islanders and our visiting public (see enclosure: "BEAVER ISLAND: THE INTERESTS & DESIRES OF THE MAJORITY.") I will address each of these perspectives briefly below, citing the enclosures for your reference.

ECOLOGY The original "purple polygon" design and NLP CDT recommended areas promise to give us the beginnings of a viable ecosystem model, with adequate acreages and connectivity in some places (i.e. between the Jordan River Valley and the Chandler Hills) for genetic interchange and diversity. In these times of shifting climate zones and challenged arboreal tolerances, increased disease, and the threats from invasive species, we need the built-in resilience of larger acreages using a full ecosystem model (with core, buffer, and corridors.) The removal of the Chandler Hills, the Mason Tract, the Boardman complex, the interior forests of Beaver Island, and most of the Pigeon River from the current "Living Legacies" proposal and BSA management priorities leaves us landscapes that are fragmented, genetically vulnerable, and welcoming to invasive species.

BEAVER ISLAND EXAMPLE I'll offer just one personal anecdote of the deleterious effects of canopy fragmentation. This occurred in the interior forests on Beaver Island – which were recognized by the NLP CDT as rare and unique treasures by the NLP CDT, but have since been removed from BSA status in your revised proposal. This example clearly illustrates the nexus of economics, tourism, and biology that are best served by honoring the original NLP Core Design Team's recommendations. About 3 years ago the DNRE contracted for its first clear cut on Beaver Island (on Camp #3 Trail.) Besides compromising the aesthetic and natural values enjoyed by our burgeoning ecotourism clientele - and incurring the wrath of many island residents towards the DNRE – this clear cut afforded a perfect entry point for invasives such as the European thistle, which now has a foothold in what was once a closed maple – beech canopy forest. Clear cuts have no place in the management of Beaver Island's sensitive interior forests. This is the sentiment shared by the majority of residents on the Island (Please see evidence in "BEAVER ISLAND" enclosure.) The original NLP CDT recommendations offer Beaver

Islanders and the residents of Northern Michigan a better long-term stewardship design than your revised proposal. On Beaver Island and the mainland, BSA management priorities promise canopy integrity and forests with more resilience built into them – better for maintaining biodiversity, withstanding invasive species, and buffering against the mounting twin shocks of climate change and arboreal diseases.

ECONOMICS The wisdom of the NLP Core Design Team’s original design - with it’s recommended areas and acreages - is what will best serve Michigan’s long-term economics. It will do us the best service in fostering incremental job growth in the service sectors and ecotourism industries, bringing money into our state.

Here’s why: the scaled back acreages in the DNRE’s revised “Living Legacy” proposal favor wetlands over upland hardwoods/mesic northern forests, severely limiting the size and potential distribution of our easily-accessible, old growth-aspiring hardwood treasures. If instead we retain these areas in the BSA network (the Chandler Hills, the Mason Tract, the Boardman complex, the larger portion of the Pigeon River, and the interior forests on Beaver Island), then Michigan will offer a greater variety of accessible destinations or “magnet areas” for today’s informed ecotourists tourists. The old growth values in these areas will win the attention of birders, forest and wild flower enthusiasts, mushroomers, as well as many hunters for whom the pristine “wilderness experience” truly matters (hunters who currently travel out West seeking this experience.) Logged over areas will never have the same draw.

We should not be stingy now about the size and distribution of a “Living Legacies” system that could in the near future be drawing informed nature enthusiasts to Michigan as a destination vacation. Do the economics of conventional logging in these areas really trump these long-term ecotourism potentials? I don’t think so. The real investment potential of our “Pure Michigan” campaign resides in our abilities to invest now, by including these larger areas in our BSA management priorities. What better “seventh generation” stewardship is there than enacting a generous vision for Michigan’s “Living Legacies” System now - one that truly capitalizes on our potentials to become an ecotourism mecca nationally and internationally for generations to come.

Seamus James Norgaard

Enclosures:

- BEAVER ISLAND: THE INTERESTS & DESIRES OF THE MAJORITY
- Sample letters from NLP residents and outdoor enthusiasts attending my college classes

BEAVER ISLAND: THE INTERESTS & DESIRES OF THE MAJORITY

What do the majority of Beaver Islanders, and Beaver Island's eco-tourist related businesses want? They wish to protect and enhance all kinds of environment-based recreational opportunities. This includes hunting - but not with a preferential "Wildlife Research" designation that manipulates forests for game over other biodiversity values. My business "Tara's Meadow" serves nature-informed visitors who come out to the Island for birding, floral ecology, and other natural values that are compromised by conventional logging operations. My customers want large "core wild areas" to explore and wander, where the economic "endeavors of mankind" are not evident. A fast growing Island eco-tourism business operated by Eric Meyers, Phd Forestry, called "Beaver Island Eco-tours," serves a widening clientele similar to my own, and shares similar concerns. The recent DNRE-contracted clear cut (cited in my main letter) represents a big blow to both of our ecotourism businesses.

As a volunteer for the Island's Natural Resource and Ecotourism Commission (NREC), I participated in a public "Forest Symposium" last summer attended by 90 island residents. Forest management concerns were key, and a survey conducted at the Symposium shows the overwhelming majority of attendees strongly value overall biodiversity concerns. They specifically cite birding, floral ecology, and other ecosystem values as well as hunting. The public also clearly endorsed the creation of "Core Wild Areas" within our interior State forest lands where there would no logging whatsoever, surrounded by buffer zones where selection cuts, limited habitat modifications, and moderate forestry are acceptable. I will add that our local DNRE wildlife rep Brian Mastenbrook encouraged the NREC to "lead the way" with our planning efforts, and that both Brian and Tim Reiss attended our Forest Symposium, publicly praising both the process and results. So it came as a surprise and an affront to us all to have it announced later that the DNRE Wildlife Division would be disregarding our local management emphasis on biodiversity, and would be removing Beaver Island's interior public forests from BSA status. The "justification" given us in your documents for removing the interior woodlands of Beaver Island from BSA status seems both arbitrary and non-illuminating: "BSA status would conflict with the Island's Wildlife Research management designation." This late turn around by the DNRE disregards both the recommendations of the NLP CDT, and the biodiversity planning efforts of our township-mandated Natural Resource Ecotourism Commission (NREC.) As you may be aware, the NREC is now in the midst of an adaptive management planning effort for the Island that has the active involvement of the Nature Conservancy, reflects the concerns of a MNFI survey of the Island, and enjoys the support of most engaged Islanders. This adaptive management planning for biodiversity originally had blessing of our local DNRE representatives, and we would like that blessing back. Please restore BSA management priorities back to the full Island!

As primary homeowner on the Islander with an Eco-tourism business, I am concerned that the outlook of your Wildlife Division Chief has been skewed by a small, vociferous, recently formed MUCC-affiliated group of mostly off island hunters (calling themselves the "Beaver Island Conservation Club.") The 3

visible individuals involved in this new club have conducted a relentless high profile campaign, using on Island media to single-mindedly advocate for QDM on State Forest Lands. They have alienated and angered many island residents who describe them as "pushy," and they've made enemies of the long-established Beaver Island Wildlife Club. Members of the on-island Beaver Island Wild Life Club have served the interests of Beaver Island's hunters for many years, and demonstrate a broader perspective that respects both the Island's game and other wildlife and biodiversity values. Still the new Beaver Island Conservation Club (BICC) portrays itself as the one legitimate voice of all hunters. It's leaders claim they have a membership of "40 people" - but they refuse to disclose any membership roles, and we find these claims suspicious. It's almost as if this recently formed group of 3 off-Islanders (who have family ties to the Island, but now reside elsewhere) have organized specifically to fight against biodiversity management and BSA status for the Island. It is a grave error to view the BICC as representative of anything more than a minority viewpoint on Beaver Island. It is unconscionable to use this group as a justification for setting the whole course of Beaver Island's future down the game management path.

In summary, the interests of long term Island biodiversity, and Island social and economic values best converge and are best served by the original BSA management approach for the whole of the Island. Any narrower "Wild Life Research" emphasis would compromise what Islanders and visitors treasure most about this special place.

The Beaver Island Association
Supporting Environmental & Economic Sustainability
P. O. Box 390 – Beaver Island, MI 49782

January 14, 2011

Board of Directors
Robert Anderson
Annette Dashiell
Paul Glendon
Peter Igoe
Bruce Jacobson
Jim Jones
Beth Leuck
Ken McDonald
Craig Schrottenboer

Amy Eagle Clark, Biodiversity Stewardship Coordinator
Michigan Dept. of National Resources & Environment
Forest Management Division
P. O. Box 30452
Lansing, MI 48909-7952

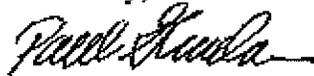
Re: Living Legacies Program – Beaver Island

Dear Ms. Clark:

On behalf of this Association's Board of Directors and 100-plus members, I write to add our voices to the many others who have requested that not only the shoreline but the entirety of Beaver Island receive the Biodiversity Stewardship Area (BSA) designation under the DNRE's Living Legacies Program.

We understand that most of the public lands on Beaver Island are designated as a State Game Area, consistent with their purchase and/or management with hunting license and other sportsmen's fees. We also know that local hunting/conservation groups and trustees of the two townships on Beaver Island agreed to implement a Quality Deer Management program. I was in a group that discussed these matters with Dr. Russ Mason last summer and fully supported the resulting consensus about exciting possibilities for "whole system" management of the Island's forests and wildlife to both improve the deer herd (and hunters' experiences) and respect and preserve the diversity of our forests and other wildlife. I believe the tentative plan was that Beaver Island might be given "Wildlife Certification" to enable the DNRE, local government and wildlife and civic organizations, and private land owners to approach these challenges in a cooperative "laboratory" manner, which might bring potentially great benefit not only to Beaver Island but the whole State. We believe BSA designation for the entire island would be consistent with these plans and objectives and have many other benefits, and *no disadvantage*, to Beaver Island and the State of Michigan as a whole.

Cordially,



President, BIA Board of Directors

Charlevoix



Charlevoix C.D.
303 North Street
Boyne City, MI 49712-1273
(231) 582-6193

Managing Our Natural Resources

Amy Clark Eagle
DNR Biodiversity & Conservation Prg. Leader
M.DNR, Mason Building
5th Floor, P.O. Box 30452
Lansing, MI 48909

December 21, 2010

Dear Amy,

The Charlevoix Conservation District was created over 60 years ago by concerned landowners to serve as stewards of our natural resources and Conservation District's take an ecosystem approach to conservation and the protection of those natural resources.

The Beaver Island Archipelago is part of our Conservation District. We are very fortunate to have many terrific partners in conservation living on Beaver Island. Pamela Grassmick & the Beaver Island Property Owners Association, St. James & Peaine Townships, and proudly the Natural Resources/Ecotourism Commission (NREC) whose 21 members are charged with conserving and protecting the Island.

The NREC is currently working on a plan to protect and manage the Island's resources and recognizes the Island's unique environment (excellent Boreal Forests; excellent Coastal Fens; Open Dunes; Dry-Mesic Northern Forests; Great Lakes Marshes; Interdunal Wetlands ; Limestone Cobble Shore; and Wooded Dunes & Swales). Beaver Island has also been named as the 10th most threatened island out of 33,000 Islands in the Great Lakes. Thus, we must be diligent about long term conservation of those unique natural communities.

The prestigious designation of a Biodiversity Stewardship Area (the Living Legacy Program) would help do that. The entire Island deserves this recognition and the Charlevoix Conservation District hereby **supports the inclusion the Beaver Island's interior as well as the shoreline in the BSA designation.**

We are pleased to support the Beaver Island Natural Resources/Ecotourism Commission's efforts and look forward to assisting them in their efforts as stewards of the Beaver Island Archipelago.

Sincerely,

Kelly Martin

Kelly Martin, District Coordinator
Charlevoix Conservation District
www.charlevoixcd.org

cc: Armina Koch, DNRE (KOCHA@michigan.gov)