

Sharing Solutions between Beaver Island, Michigan and Maine Island Communities – Building Local Capacity through Community Exchanges



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First, an Aside: Island Awareness



Part I. Beaver Island

Beaver Island Background

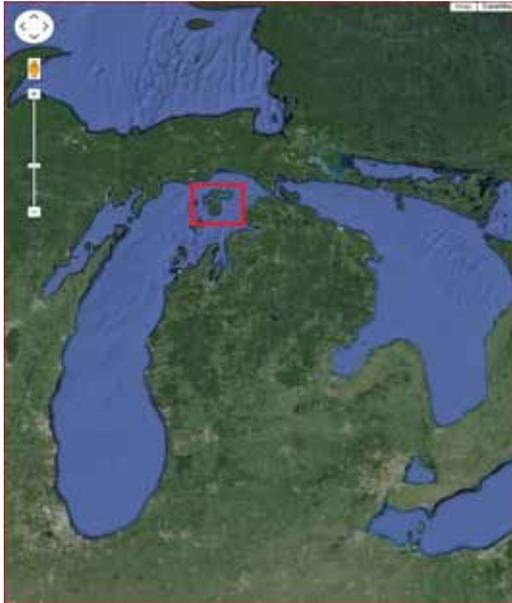


Photo Credit: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Beaver Island Boat Company

Distance to mainland: 32 miles

Transportation: ferry, small aircraft, private watercraft

Year-round population: 657 (2010 Census)

Beaver Island Challenges



Beaver Island Challenges



Part II. Maine

Maine



Photo Credit: The Island Institute

ISLAND INSTITUTE

“The Island Institute works to sustain Maine's island and remote coastal communities, and exchanges ideas and experiences to further the sustainability of communities here and elsewhere.”

Founded: 1983

Staff: nearly 50



Photo Credit: The Island Institute

Annual Operating budget: over \$5.5 million

Six work areas: community development, economic development, education, energy, marine resources.

ISLAND INSTITUTE

Community Development: Island Fellows Program



Economic Development: The Island and Coastal Innovation Fund



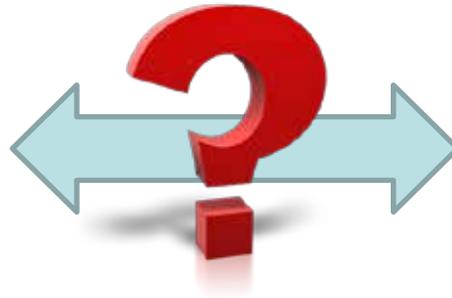
Education: Distance Learning Technology



Energy: Community Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Programs



Great Lakes - Maine



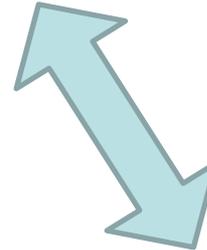
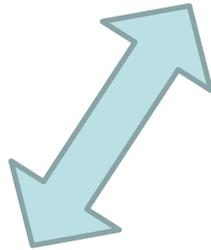
“The Island Institute works to sustain Maine's island and remote coastal communities, and exchanges ideas and experiences to further the sustainability of communities here and elsewhere.”

Part III. The Project

Project Team

The Beaver Island Association

*Supporting Environmental and
Economic Sustainability*

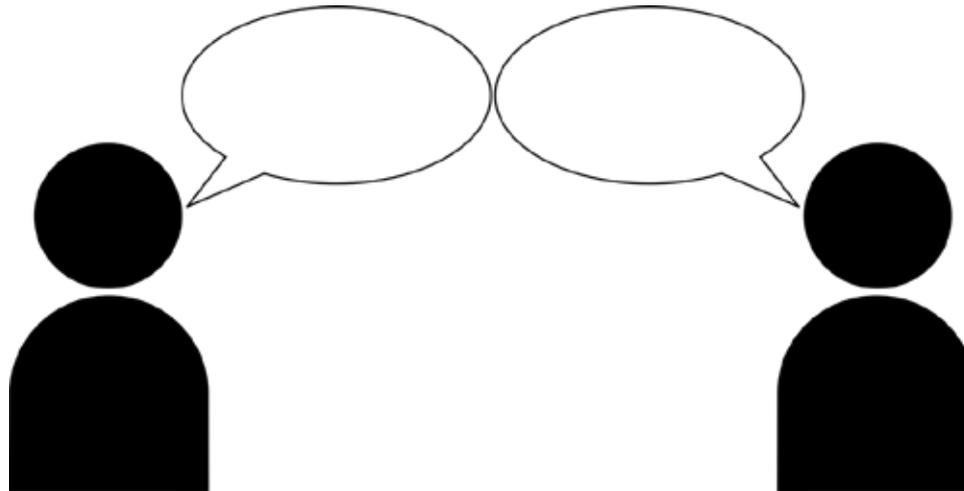


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Project In a Nutshell

To create and foster a novel communications network between distant island communities. While every island has a distinct character, culture, and history, they likely share some common challenges to “sustainable island living.”



Project Task 1

Informational "Open House" on Beaver Island
(September 22, 2015)



Project Task 1

Beaver Island Priority Challenges

K-12 education

Broadband

Workforce housing

Marketing

Beaver Island Successes

Invasive species management

Community infrastructure: library, health center, transfer station

University partnership (Central Michigan University)

Music festival

Stable, reliable power



Project Task 1

Island Tour: "The Beaver Island Experience"



Project Task 2

Knowledge Exchange to Maine (November 9-13, 2015)



Islesboro Island - Quick Facts

Year-round population: 566

Summer population estimate: 1,000

Acres: 9,024

Mainland ferry terminal: Lincolnville

Estimated distance from mainland: 3 miles

School: K-12

Form of town government: Independent town



Vinalhaven Island - Quick Facts

Year-Round Population: 1,165

Summer Population Estimate: 2,200

Acres: 14,392

Mainland ferry terminal: Rockland

Estimated distance from mainland : 15 miles

School: K-12

Form of town government: Independent Town

Project Task 3

Knowledge Exchange Trip to MI (spring to early summer 2016)



Photo Credit: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Project Task 4

Lessons Learned and Path Forward (summer/fall 2016)



Project Goals

- Dialogue between islands
- Increased awareness about island communities
- Shared solutions: “little victories,” for example:
 - Emergency services
 - New businesses assistance
- Interest from other Great Lakes Island Communities?
 - Would other islands see the need and value?
 - Would the Great Lakes region benefit from an Island Institute-type organization?

Q: Great Lake Islands with Year-Round Populations >50?



Q: Great Lake Islands with Year-Round Populations >50?

A: 26 (who knew?!)



Next Steps

Finish the project

- Task 2 (Maine trip, November 2015)
- Task 3 (Beaver Island trip, spring/summer 2016)
- Task 4 (Lessons learned/path forward, summer/fall 2016)

Longer-term thinking...

- Garner interest from other GLs island communities?
Develop a collective vision for long-term, sustained Great Lakes island collaboration
- Other ways to amplify the voices of our island communities?

Thank you!



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