



2022

ANNUAL REPORT



GREAT LAKES
ISLANDS ALLIANCE

www.glialliance.org

In 2022, the Great Lakes Islands Alliance (GLIA) saw a return to “normal” and was again successful in meeting our goals for the year, as described below. After a two-year hiatus, we held our highly anticipated Great Lakes Islands Summit on the Lake Erie Islands, featuring visits to five islands in four days. The return of this event and opportunity to meet in person reminded islanders how much we have in common. This event, together with our monthly meetings and other activities throughout the year, are reinforcing the value of connecting island communities. GLIA’s role is to help create and foster these relationships and those with mainland decision-makers. We look forward to 2023 as we grow our impact.



Participants at our 2022 Islands Summit at South Bass Island, Ohio
Photo courtesy of the Jet Express

Goal 1: Connect Distant Communities

- GLIA Membership – Participation grew by 25% in 2022, up to 175 islanders from 20 different communities, including 13 in the U.S. and 7 in Canada. In addition to these island leaders, 30 mainland individuals and organizations have signed on as Partners or Observers.
- Monthly Connection - GLIA continues to convene islanders each month for a one-hour zoom meeting. In addition to conducting network-wide business, these meetings include report-outs on important community news and allow members to pose questions to their islander counterparts. Being geographically spread out, we must grow our collaborative capacity to use these meetings to learn about trending issues and further fine tune our goals.
- 2022 Great Lakes Islands Summit – GLIA resumed its marquee event in October 2022. A total of 88 participants traveled to Lake Erie for four days of meetings and site visits to four of our member islands (Kelleys, Middle Bass, and South Bass Islands in Ohio and Pelee Island in Ontario) as well as Gibraltar Island, the home of several labs for Ohio State University. Topics included Great Lakes water quality and related conservation programs, tourism and other economic drivers, and infrastructure such as schools, water treatment, and ferries. The annual conference is used to foster relationships between individuals and islands; highlight successes/solutions and lingering challenges faced by the host community; and conduct GLIA business.

Sample Comments from our Participant Survey after the 2022 Islands Summit

“Being our first summit with GLIA we did not know what to expect. All that was organized and done was WAY beyond what we had thought it might be.”

“The summit in its entirety was extremely informative and fun!”

“Networking is always wonderful. The program content was very well thought out.”

“The recent GLIA summit was one of the highlights of my life. I could never thank you enough for the wonderful, all round educationally stimulating experience”.



Amherst Island, Ontario is the newest GLIA member and joined in 2022

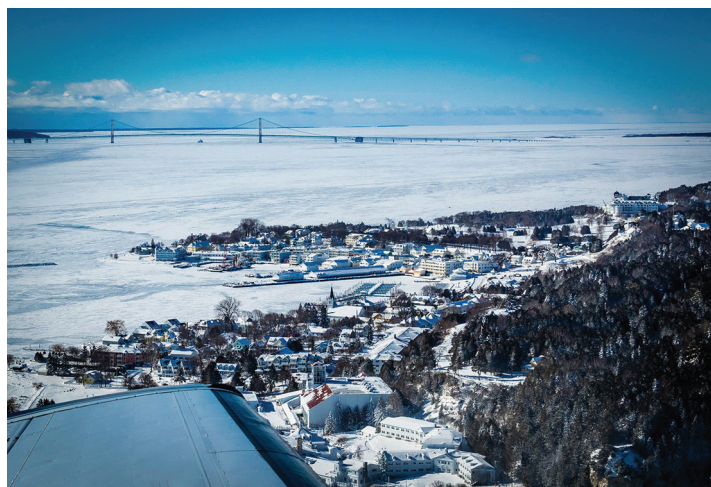
- Fostering GLIA Presence on Islands - our GLIA Project Manager took a whirlwind tour of the region in 2022 and visited 10 islands: Drummond, Harsens, Kelleys, Les Cheneaux, Middle Bass, Manitoulin, Pelee, St. Joseph, Washington, and Wolfe. At each stop, he met with community leaders, toured the island, and discussed how GLIA may support local needs. This in person interaction is critical to keeping our lines of communication open.



Visiting a Monarch Waystation on Gibraltar Island During the Summit

Goal 2: Facilitate information access and sharing, particularly through tools that offer best practices and solutions to island challenges.

- GLIA Expert Webinar Series – GLIA rolled out a new webinar series to connect islanders to leaders in different fields. The three webinars in 2022 covered diverse topics (leadership, bird conservation, and island/mainland interactions). Cumulatively, participation at live events and recorded viewings have reached hundreds of islanders.
- Island Chambers Subcommittee - a cohort of island chambers of commerce, regional visitors bureaus and economic development offices came together in 2022. This group hosted experts to discuss projects related to workforce housing, island hospitality industry, and Great Lakes cruise ships. These zoom calls were targeted to islands with tourism and hospitality industry being a top priority for their island economy.
- Relationship with the Island Institute - the original organizational inspiration for GLIA, the Rockland, Maine-based Institute remains a valued partner. We continue to exchange best practices and ideas with Institute staff. GLIA leadership routinely participate in meetings of the Maine Islands Coalition, and vice versa. We are grateful for their experience and guidance over the years on challenges we have faced.



Winter Aerial View of Mackinac Island, MI

Goal 3: Advance opportunities for multi-island collaboration, where appropriate.

- Project Development - Relationships developed through GLIA have borne fruit. As examples, Madeline Island (WI) has taken experiences from Beaver Island (MI) and Mackinac Island (MI) to inform its ferry and workforce housing discussions. Beaver Island was awarded an exciting energy grant from the U.S. Department of Energy thanks in part to assistance from the Island Institute, Madeline Island, and others. Beaver, Kelleys, Middle Bass, South Bass, Pelee and Manitoulin have been working together to share invasive species and migratory bird data.
- Supporting Schools - GLIA is proud to support the Great Lakes Islands Basketball tournament. Not only an athletic competition, the trip is a unique social experience for the students and brings together four communities for camaraderie each December. This ongoing event has provided the opportunity for these island students to create solid relationships with other students from similar sized islands' schools.

Goal 4: Amplify island voices to mainland audiences.

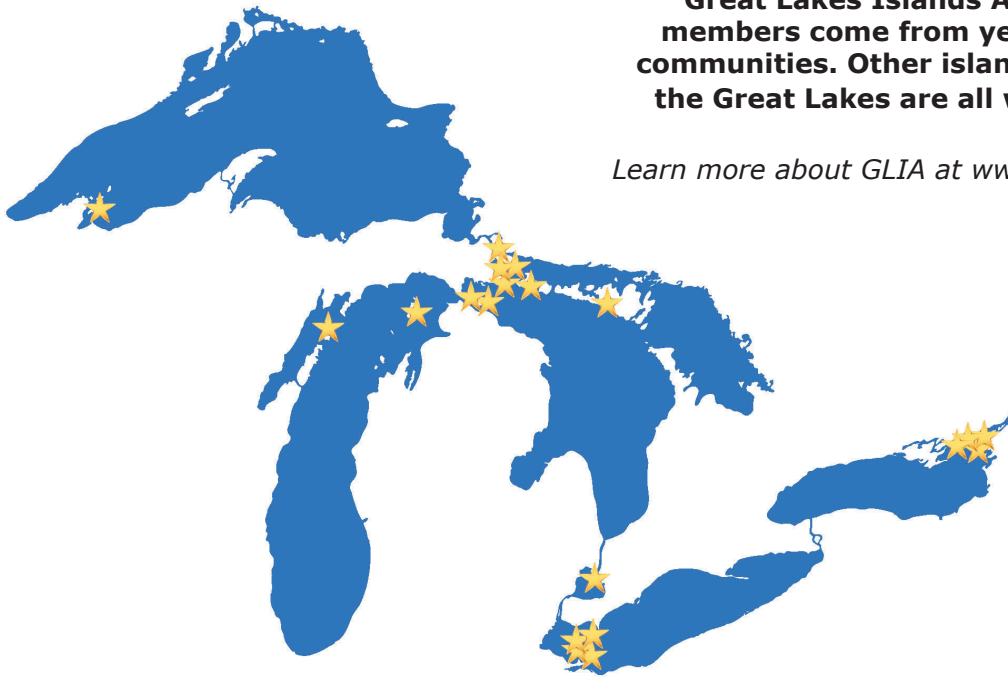
- Social Media Presence – A dedicated YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/@greatlakesislandsalliance) was created to share the growing portfolio of GLIA videos. This channel joins our existing website and Facebook page and discussion group to round out our on-line presence. The number of users has significantly increased over the past year.
- Conferences & Meetings - GLIA staff met with a number of government agencies and organizations across the region and had a presence at major conferences, including the Great Lakes Public Forum. A presentation on islands was delivered at the Great Lakes Coastal Symposium.
- External Partnerships – GLIA explores alignment with other established organizations as a means to further our objectives. In 2022, we began regularly meeting with the Climate Strong Islands Network; authored an article in the International Joint Commission's October, 2022 newsletter; and helped launch the new Great Lakes Islands Conservation Workgroup. We are proud to continue partnering with regional groups like the Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition and The Stewardship Network, as well as other state, provincial and local groups.



2022 GLIA Summit participants on Middle Bass Island

Great Lakes Islands Alliance (GLIA) members come from year-round island communities. Other island communities in the Great Lakes are all welcome to join.

Learn more about GLIA at www.glialliance.org



2022 GLIA MEMBER ISLANDS

Lake Erie

Kelleys Island, *Ohio, USA*
Middle Bass Island, *Ohio, USA*
Pelee Island, *Ontario, Canada*
South Bass Island (Put-in-Bay), *Ohio, USA*

Lake Michigan

Beaver Island, *Michigan, USA*
Washington Island, *Wisconsin, USA*

Lake Ontario

Amherst Island, *Ontario, Canada*
Howe Island, *Ontario, Canada*
Simcoe Island, *Ontario, Canada*
Wolfe Island, *Ontario, Canada*

Lake Huron

Bois Blanc Island, *Michigan, USA*
Drummond Island, *Michigan, USA*
Les Cheneaux Islands, *Michigan, USA*
Mackinac Island, *Michigan, USA*
Manitoulin Island, *Ontario, Canada*
Neebish Island, *Michigan, USA*
St. Joseph Island, *Ontario, Canada*
Sugar Island, *Michigan, USA*

Lake Superior

Madeline Island, *Wisconsin, USA*

Lake St. Clair

Harsens Island, *Michigan, USA*

2022 Partner Organizations



2022 Steering Committee

Bob Anderson – Beaver Island
Michael Gora – Middle Bass Island
Jordan Killam – Kelleys Island
Ned Hancock – Madeline Island
Joe Shorthouse – Manitoulin Island

Backup

Laurie Cook – Manitoulin Island
Brette Crane – Drummond Island
Renee Fultz – South Bass Island
Angel Welke – Beaver Island

Support Staff/Advisors/Partners

Peter Huston – GLIA Project Manager
Matt Preisser – MI Dept. of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy
Kate Tagai – Island Institute
Lisa Brush and Rachel Muelle – The Stewardship Network

For more information about GLIA, including contact information, please visit:
www.glialliance.org