

Great Lakes Islands Alliance

2017-2018
ANNUAL REPORT





First Annual Great Lakes Islands Alliance Summit

Photo courtesy of Mackinac Island Town Crier

About GLIA

The Great Lakes Islands Alliance (GLIA) is a new 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.

This report highlights the major activities and accomplishments occurring in the time period between the 2017 and 2018 Great Lakes Islands Summits. The items are organized under each of the four Goals identified in the Charter of the Great Lakes Islands Alliance.

To learn more about GLIA, visit www.greatlakesislandsalliance.org



Members of GLIA enjoyed networking with other island communities at the 2018 National Working Waterfronts & Waterways Symposium in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Additionally, GLIA was asked to participate in a panel discussion about island living at the symposium.



Jon W. Allan, director of the Michigan Office of the Great Lakes, addressing participants at the first annual Great Lakes Islands Alliance Summit on Beaver Island in 2017.



Cover Image: Provided by the SeaWiFS Project, NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center, and ORBIMAGE

2017-2018 MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Goal 1: Connect remote, distant communities

- Formalized the “[Great Lakes Islands Alliance](#)” (GLIA). Current membership includes approximately 50 people, from 14 islands and four partner organizations
- Successfully held annual member meetings
 - [2017 Islands Summit](#) – 1st annual event held on Beaver Island, Michigan; 75 attendees from 12 islands and multiple partner organizations
 - [2018 Islands Summit](#) – 2nd annual event held on Madeline Island, Wisconsin; approximately 80 individuals registered from 13 islands and multiple partner organizations.
- Convened 1-hour, monthly, year-round [conference calls](#) to conduct GLIA business; typically 15-20 people on each call
- Established a group [Charter](#), which outlines a common mission, goals, organizational structure, etc.
- Engaged [additional island communities and partners](#) across the region about joining GLIA
- Created and fostered connections to island communities outside of the Great Lakes region, specifically those in Maine and Chesapeake Bay regions



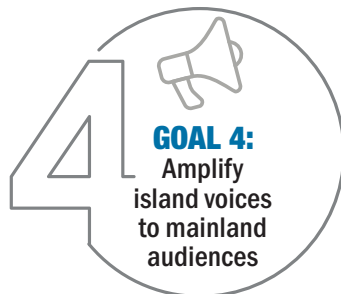
Goal 2: Facilitate information access and sharing, particularly through tools that offer best practices and solutions to island challenges.

- Maintained the [GLIA member roster](#), which provides entry points to each GLIA member island
- Created a [Great Lakes Islands Community Resource Directory](#), a one-stop inventory of island contacts across multiple sectors
- Initiated a GLIA channel on [Slack](#), a cloud-based collaboration service
- Sponsored a kickoff [webinar](#), [Great Lakes Water Levels](#), on August 22, 2018 targeting island audiences; received 102 registrations for the live event and expect hundreds of recording views
- Offered access to the Island Institute’s [What Works Solutions Library](#), an existing tool that offers case studies and practical information about how islands can address specific challenges
- Island-to-island sharing:
 - Solutions to mitigate costs associated with ambulance services and billing
 - Shared experience on communication tower lease arrangements
 - Information pertaining to various environmental threats to the Great Lakes



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

- Created new initiative at Northland College’s Center for Rural Communities to assemble [Great Lakes Islands data/indicators](#) to better understand island community needs and help inform GLIA activities.
- Initiated discussions about possible development of a [Great Lakes Island Fellows](#) program
- Cross-island activities: A high school basketball tournament between multiple islands is planned for fall/winter 2018

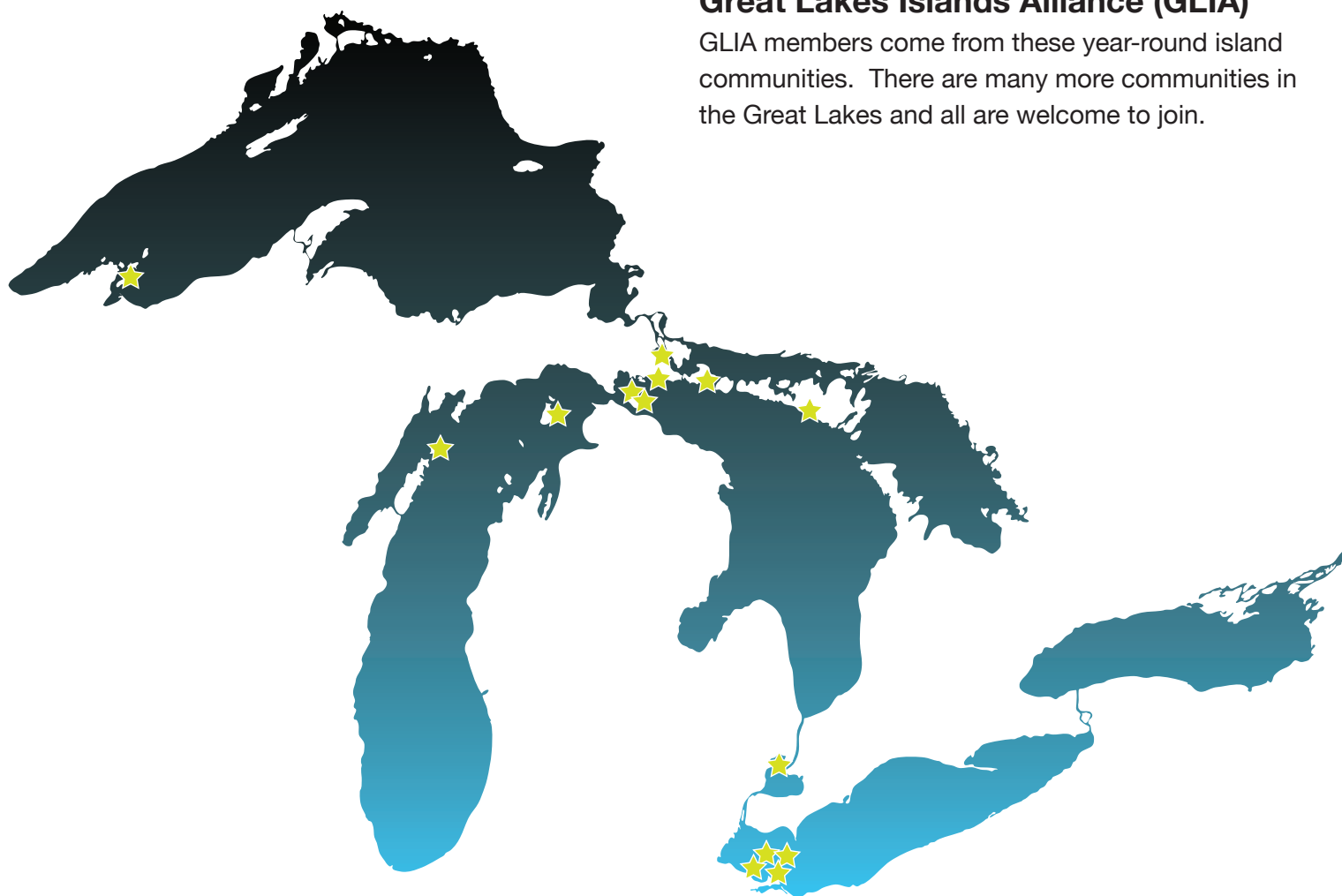


Goal 4: Amplify island voices to mainland audiences

- Created a public-facing [GLIA website](#) - provides general background; started individual Island Showcases; provided access to Island Summit materials, and more
- GLIA Member Outreach:
 - Featured story in the Island Institute’s annual periodical, 2018 Islands Journal, and it’s November 2017 blog post
 - Article in State of Michigan’s “2017 State of the Great Lakes” report
 - Numerous articles in individual island newspapers, websites, newsletters, etc.
 - Individual partner twitter feeds, social media pages, etc.
 - Regional news media
- 2017 Islands Summit yielded at least 23 media articles
- Other Meetings & Conferences:
 - Convened an islands session at 2018 National Working Waterfronts Conference – a panel featured speakers from 3 Great Lakes islands, 2 Maine islands, and 1 Maryland island

Great Lakes Islands Alliance (GLIA)

GLIA members come from these year-round island communities. There are many more communities in the Great Lakes and all are welcome to join.



2017-2018 Member Islands

LAKE SUPERIOR

Madeline Island, *Wisconsin, USA*

Lake Michigan

Beaver Island, *Michigan, USA*

Washington Island, *Wisconsin, USA*

Lake Huron

Bois Blanc Island, *Michigan, USA*

Drummond Island, *Michigan, USA*

Neebish Island, *Michigan, USA*

Les Cheneaux Islands, *Michigan, USA*

Manitoulin Island, *Ontario, Canada*

Mackinac Island, *Michigan, USA*

Lake St. Clair

Harsens Island, *Michigan, USA*

Lake Erie

Pelee Island, *Ontario, Canada*

Middle Bass Island, *Ohio, USA*

South Bass Island (Put-In-Bay), *Ohio, USA*

Kelleys Island, *Ohio, USA*