

Beaver Island TIS Program

Monthly Update

February 2024

TIS Administrator, Shelby Harris

- GLRI Grant Extension – MSU Extension Sub-Award Amendment
 - An amendment to this Sub-Award Agreement is before the St. James Township Board as the GLRI and TIS Program fiduciary to extend this grant award to **March 31, 2024** rather than September 20, 2024.
 - A full draft version of the Beaver Island Landowner’s Guide is planned to be sent to both Township Boards by the end of the week.
- CAKE CISMA Update
 - I met with the CAKE Team January 19th and we discussed:
 - Updates from the Island including the Master Plan, both Townships’ Parks & Rec Plans, Zoning Ordinances, BIATA future work and more to provide starting information to the new CAKE Coordinator Kyle Williams.
 - Updates to the CAKE Website to include the Beaver Island TIS Program.
 - A CAKE Strategic Plan Update meeting on March 8th and a possible collaboration to include a Beaver Island Archipelago Addendum that will list species of concern (invasive, special concern, threatened and endangered) for the islands.
 - The possibility of the TIS Admin. (myself) being reimbursed for time surveying HWA on Beaver Island due to reduced seasonal hours as part of the DNR’s new yearly HWA funding.
 - 4 Islanders have already given consent to CAKE for their private properties to be surveyed but would be cost saving to have the TIS Program conduct these surveys and public areas.
 - Last year’s surveys conducted by TIS and CAKE for the island shown that currently there is no known HWA infestation on Beaver Island but recent surveys from the mainland have our county area listed on high alert as the furthest north infestation was confirmed in Benzie and Manistee Counties.
 - Tentative plans if CAKE is awarded the GLRI Grant in the next couple of months of which \$50,000 will be going specifically to Invasive Species Management within the Beaver Island Archipelago (Invasive Phragmites, Narrowleaf Cattail).

- Future grants to apply to in collaboration including the “Midwest Coastal Program” due in March each year, and the “Save Our Great Lakes” due in February each year and others.
- TIS Vehicle Update
 - With LTC having to take back full use of their island vehicle, a possible solution to the TIS Program’s absence of a vehicle was proposed; the County Sheriff’s Dept. is currently aiding Welke Airport and the Township Airport in addressing their “abandon vehicle” issues. If a vehicle of good working order and availability arises, perhaps the TIS Program would be able to purchase an abandoned vehicle at a low cost?
 - If the Townships are in support of this suggestion, I will reach out to the Island’s Deputies and research this possibility further.
- Beaver Island District Library Seed Library
 - TIS met with members of the District Library Board and the Island Roots Gardening Club to discuss their upcoming project of offering a Seed Library for island residents and visitors.
 - The goal of this Seed Library will be to offer/exchange *only* heirloom seeds, vegetable/garden seeds and native flowers.
 - TIS will be working with these groups and this project to help provide informative lists of what to avoid distributing, further reading materials for the Library and to participate in future events.
- BIATA Trails Goals Updates
 - TIS is meeting with the BIATA to discuss with them, the DNR, the Townships and others, trail concerns such as ORV and hiking designated trails, invasive species spread and educational signage, future trail goals and updated mapping for the island’s trails.
 - An initial meeting was held with the MDNR Wildlife Division’s new faculty; Biologist, Jeremy Wood and Field Operations Manager, Scott Eggeman on February 9th to begin discussions of an action plan to update BI maps, management and regulations of trails on Beaver.
 - Through this meeting it was apparent and agreed further research is needed on how to best proceed forward in updating the DNR’s PA288 Map in regards to ORV use. Follow up meetings are to come.
 - A draft map of legal ORV accessible Charlevoix County trails/roads created by Brian Vaeth was presented to BIATA to be included in the 2024 Beaver Island Visitor’s Page - all funded by Peaine Township.
 - BIATA and TIS will be meeting February 13th to review suggested edits of this ORV map.
- GVSU ORV Campaign Project
 - The TIS Program will be partnering again with the GVSU through a capstone course “Environmental Problem Solving” in further pursuing data and possible solutions to the ORV abuse we are experiencing in the BI Archipelago.
 - Our first meeting will be February 15th.

- BI Island Roots Gardening Club Update
 - Continuing our partnership with the Island Roots Gardening Club from the Pollinator Garden Project, TIS helped create an online survey for the club to aid in gathering community input on the creation of a “community garden”. It can be found posted around the Island, on Facebook “This & That” and in the upcoming March Edition of the Northern Islander Newspaper.
- TIS Phone Out of Commission
 - My TIS Work Phone has officially taken a turn for the worse- not receiving or sending messages, sending calls to Voicemail right away and the camera locking the phone. My next trip to the mainland I will be visiting the Verizon store to research possible solutions and bring back cost estimates.
- TIS Program Budget & Job Evaluation
 - I made a request to the St. James Township Finance and Administration Committee for a job evaluation and budget discussion to be scheduled with Peaine and St. James Townships in the next couple of months.
 - This will be the first since being hired in 2021 and I’d like to discuss/review the TIS Program as a whole, its budget with the fiscal year coming to an end and future budget proposals.

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