

**Maine Islands Coalition**  
**September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019**  
**Island Institute 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room**

**MIC Members**

Mark Greene, Long Island  
Cheryl Crowley, Cliff Island  
Roger Berle, Cliff Island  
Rudi Graf, Isle au Haut  
Andy Dorr, Vinalhaven  
Rachel Bishop, Frenchboro

**Island Institute Staff**

Suzanne MacDonald  
Craig Olsen  
Kate Tagai

**Legislative Representatives**

Dave Miramant, State Senator, District 12  
Chris Rector, Senator King  
Kelly Cotiaux, Senator Collins  
Rhiannon Hampson, Congresswoman Pingree  
Morgan Earhart, Congressman Golden

**Special Guests**

John Burke, Selectman, Long Island  
Troy Moon, Sustainability Coordinator, City of Portland  
Linda Gillis, Pesticide Safety Islesboro  
Lauren Bruce, Pesticide Safety Islesboro  
Jennifer West, Pesticide Safety Islesboro  
Nancy Olmstead, Invasive Plant Biologist, Maine Natural Areas Program  
Mary Anne Mitchell, Peaks Environmental Action Team  
Thea Lloyd  
Bob Harvill, Peaks Island  
John Spencer, Cushing's Island

**MIC Updates**

No Quorum.

Motion to approve minutes approved from May 9<sup>th</sup> Healthcare. Cheryl Moved, Mark Seconded  
Treasurers Report: All assessments paid. Motion to approve Treasurers Report: Mark Moved, Cheryl Seconded.

## **Island Institute Updates**

Suzanne, Craig and Rob traveled to Scotland this summer as keynote speakers for the Highlands and Islands Enterprise conference.

The Waypoints Forum is scheduled for the 1st Friday in February. Like last year, it will be at the Westin in Portland. The after party will feature bands from several different Maine Islands.

Our Sea Level Rise Forum, "Who Pays and How" is September 27<sup>th</sup> at the Union Farmers Market Building in Belfast.

The What Works Solutions Library is about to publish three new stories including:

Ticks- Lyme Disease

Sea Level Rise

Ferries

The Island Institute is starting to have conversations about immigration in Maine and what it means for the coast and islands- Suzanne is passing out a survey and will email a copy around. We would appreciate your feedback and insight, so we can understand how the coast and islands are thinking and talking about new Mainers, as always it will help direct our work in this area.

ILEAD Housing is a two-day conference taking place September 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> at the Island Institute. We will be gathering those working in affordable housing to share solutions and participate in a demonstration community planning session around housing that will be lead by Kristen Grant of Maine Sea Grant.

GLIA- Great Lakes Islands Coalition is having a summit on Mackinac Island, Michigan at the end of October that brings together islanders from the Great Lakes region for a three day summit to network, share solutions, talk about common issues and plan work for the coming year. Roger Berle will be joining Kate Tagai and Tom Groening this year as we look for ways to better connect the Maine Islands Coalition and the Great Lakes Island Coalition.

Donna Update: She traveled west to Oregon and is now in Kansas City. You can follow her journey and the people she is meeting on the road through her website: [tealonwheels.org](http://tealonwheels.org)

## **Legislative Updates:**

Congressman Golden's Office: They are tracking the Right Whale/Lobster vertical line situation with NOAA and the ongoing process. They have been in touch with Maine Department of Marine Resources and the Lobsterman's Association. They are working with partners to keep up to date on the process. They are waiting while the information is summarized from the scoping meetings before taking any specific action.

They are also monitoring the ongoing situation with the ferry service- working with Coast Guard on Federal Policy on engines being allowed to be on during long ferry rides.

Senator King's Office: Senator King's Office is also tracking the issue about engines running- they are working with the Coast Guard to allow for designated vehicles to be on and to create a process for Maine DOT. Wintertime ferry rides with individuals who can't get out of their cars and need to stay warm is an issue.

The entire Maine Delegation is behind quality science assessments of the vertical line issue to really understand which lines are the problem. They are trying to get a Maine exclusive marking on lines to id and track entanglement problems.

There is a task force focused on the Maine economy, using the forest economy strategy and applying it to the marine economy. GEO Labs in Belfast- mill in Madison- has equipment to make forest-based insulation to replace blue board for a high R-value, breathable insulation. It will be fully up and

running by 2021- and uses forest product residuals. They have laid out a process of bringing together groups in the industry who were competitors and not collaborators. They came together around the common challenge of closing mills and a struggling economy to create innovative solutions to revitalize the economy. They are now trying the same process with the marine industry, before it reaches a crisis. There are opportunities available within the large marine economy if different industries can come together to think creatively about current challenges. Currently the mainland salmon farms, while not popular, are following the appropriate process as it has been laid out by the legislator and regulatory bodies.

Senator Collins's Office: We had a tick hearing. The Senator is the chairman of the aging committee trying to do some due diligence around the tick issue. They brought together UMaine, CDC, those who are suffering with Lyme and other Tick-borne illnesses to testify. Dr. Steven Dill's tick lab created tick kits to hand out with id cards, tweezers, and magnifying glass. They would like you to send them your ticks for testing. If you care to listen to the hearing you can find it here:

<https://www.facebook.com/susancollins/videos/2088725657898553/>

Mark: I know some of the testimony was focused on preventative measures. Where are we going with that?

Kelly: We are trying to focus on a wholistic approach that includes diagnostics, research, and awareness. They've done a lot of great work with preventing and treating ticks on dogs and cats, but how to you make the leap from dogs and cats to people? We are trying to get the medical community on board to test earlier and test more often- because the diseases manifest in different ways for people.

Linda: Ticksonislesboro.com there are articles about the latest tick research.

Cheryl: My frustration is the inaccuracy of the testing. There are so many false negatives, it creates a real problem.

Senator Pingree's Office: The Working Waterfronts act went before the Natural Resources Subcommittee for competitive grants, task force, and funding for working waterfronts. HR-3596 is designed to protect the last 20 miles of WW. It will provide dedicated funding for grants, pilot projects, and a task force to work on this issue by creating specific action items to address it.

The Ocean Acidification Bill HR-1716 passed unanimously in the house in the last session which is another way we are trying to protect that marine economy.

Congressmen Golden held a broadband meeting that the delegation participated in to promote connectivity for businesses and healthcare throughout the state.

Lorraine Francis from Penquis received a USDA grant to work on food insecurity specifically on the islands. They will be working specifically with Knox County Gleaners and Good Shepard to reduce food insecurity, and she has been working with North Haven and Vinalhaven already.

Dave Miramant: They are having hearings about growing eels in Maine. The producer testified before the legislator about the importance of maintaining the quality of the catch so that more eels are delivered alive. Currently, elvers are flown to Japan to grow out, so the producers are hoping to keep the grow out in Maine and create a value-added product that will be more valuable. Aquaculture leasing- lobsterman are transitioning or adding aquaculture. There is a bill coming before the legislator with a proposal to change the amount of the leases allowed to maintain fishable bottom. They are currently investigating and discussing points- and they are looking for a cross section of opinions from the island.

## Feature Topic: Invasive Species/Pesticides

**Nancy Olmstead**

(PowerPoints) - Maine Natural Areas Program within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry- tracks information about natural resources. The MNAP has a full-time staff of 6. They maintain a database of high-quality habitats and rare plants, as well as invasive species. Maine Forest Service also maintains a database.

Maine Natural Areas Program -To ensure the maintenance of Maine's natural heritage for the benefit of present and future generations. Help manage infestations within State of Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands. They also manage the IMapInvasives map for Maine. Working with landowners in Knox, Waldo, and Lincoln Counties to survey private land and provide recommendations for dealing with invasive plants in partnership with local conservation organizations. They have a field guide to invasive plants to Maine to identify the 46 plant species. It is laminated and available for sale on their website. They maintain scientific support for the state lists including the Do Not Sell Lists for horticulturists and also an advisory list.

Key steps in addressing invasive plants are a process. I think about it as a cycle of invasive plants- Prevent new introductions, identify, report, assess, then prioritize and set goals, control, and monitor, (repeat).

Set goals to target your response. Do you want to:

- Eradicate
- Contain
- Exclude
- Suppress

Think about time and resources when setting a goal to help right size the goal- i.e. keeping plant in original footprint, keeping the plant from producing seeds may be more attainable than full eradication. For example, the utility companies' goal is to maintain access to their infrastructure. I encourage communities to talk about their goals so they can measure and make progress over time. Adaptive management means that goals will change over time. Having a goal means that you remain focused and progress is measurable. It also means you have a focus for your intervention.

Considerations in invasive plant control:

Where are the plants?

Is the resource protected?

What are the DEP and zoning rules in the area?

Do you need to talk to the Maine Bureau of Pesticide Control because of the specific habitat you are dealing with?

How large is the infestation? (this will impact the allowed approaches and also the scale of what is affordable and practical- it may not be practical to fully eradicate, but may be possible to prevent the spread)

What species are you trying to control? Are the plants too tall or too large for particular methods?

What are the community Values and/or pesticide ordinances?

If you choose to use a pesticide know about the pesticide registry- notify abutters, will a licensed applicator be required? Volunteers are rarely legally able to apply pesticide.

## Integrated Pest Management

Think first... spray last. Board of Pesticides control, State of Maine can help advise.

Chose least aggressive method needed to do the job

Integrated pest management was developed in the agriculture context but can work for invasive species control.

Invasive plant control methods: non-herbicide

- Mechanical

- Manual

- Smothering

- Goats

- Flame weeding

- Classical biocontrols

- Combinations of methods

Invasive plant control methods: herbicide

- Basal bark spray

- Cut-stem treatment

- Foliar spray

## Volunteer Work tips:

Set achievable goals that can be done within the time of the work event so that volunteers can see your progress.

Connect the dots so volunteers can see how their work feeds into the larger goals of the preserve or area.

Pay attention to the volunteer experience- how to sign up, communication, and thank you or any follow-ups.

Camaraderie- volunteer events can be more educational in nature than in achieving a high goal- have to feel out the ability and energy of the group on the day of the event.

## Resources:

State of Maine plant control professionals list

<https://www.maine.gov/dacf/php/gotpests/terrestrial-invasive-companies.html>

Looking to expand the geography that the list covers, so please tell people about it.

Gallery Section: [https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mnap/features/invasive\\_plants/invasives\\_gallery.htm](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mnap/features/invasive_plants/invasives_gallery.htm)

ImapInvasive: <https://www.imapinvasives.org/>

Invasive species are one of a number of issues that go by the wayside because people get overwhelmed and setting a manageable goal is so important. It is challenging in heavily invaded environments to figure out what is the first goal for management.

Question: Given climate change, what is the degree of futility of this exercise?

With climate change we can expect changes in our plant communities. Removing invasive helps natural communities be more resilient. Invasive are a stressor on our communities in the same way that overharvest is a stressor. If we can minimize stressors, it will help systems respond to climate change and be resilient.

Question: When do we know if it is invasive or if it is just climate change?

Timescale and speed. Plant communities change, but the speed and number of species that come in - if they overpower the natural systems ability to evolve and adapt to the new species will indicate if it is invasive.

When invasive plants replace native plants there is a diminished ability for that ecosystem to support insects, which in turn support birds and other creatures. Doug Tallamy- Entomologist at U of Delaware has written about how even in the relatively short period between post glaciation we have these evolved relationships between insects and plants and as the invasive plants displace the native plants there isn't habitat for those insects that are really the base of our food web.

Ticks are living in places where invasive species are supporting their development. Ticks are harbored by barberry. That's the unbalance of where we are at and the ticks show it.

Question: Are there trade offs?

Beekeepers like knotweed flowers for making honey— but the negative effects of invasive plants far outweigh any small benefits. Herbalists are making tinctures from knotweed rhizomes to treat symptoms of lyme- it isn't that these plants can't have any uses or benefits, but how do we keep them from overrunning the natural ecosystem and having negative impacts where we don't want them?

Question: We worry about the damage herbicides can do when they get into the water and that sort of thing. When you hire a licensed professional, are these people trained to be thoughtful about the application, limiting it as much as possible, and to advise the homeowner on the least amount of application to be effective?

Whenever you hire someone, they are working for you, and so you need to set the direction of their approach. They should have a broad range of interventions to use. They are required to follow the rules and regulations about ecosystems and setbacks from water sources and such.

### **Troy Moon**

Sustainability Coordinator for City of Portland. His department has one full time employee and a half time employee.

Some of the initiatives the office is working on include:

Management of the pesticide ordinances

Creating a climate adaptation plan

Changing over street lights to LED

Solar Array - 1 million KW hours produced for customers. Array is located on Ocean Avenue Land.

Portland/South Portland have pesticide ordinances. There are ordinances all around the country and can be of different types:

Pollinator specific

Parks and public spaces

Publicly owned property

Public and private property

Portland City's ordinance is to regulate use on public and private property. Maine is a home rule state, so that means that there are more pesticide ordinances here because municipalities can regulate most things and pesticide use has been a concern of residents for a long time.

Portland's Process:

1. Task force created with citizens, landscapers, and env industry to recommend policy
2. Went to the Sustainability and Transportation Committee to review and reworked the recommendation
3. Went into effect for the whole city.
4. Athletic fields were given time to transition to fully organic management practices by 2021.  
The ordinance went into effect in stages. For city owned property it started July 1<sup>st</sup> 2018, private property by January 1 2019, and athletic fields must comply by January 1, 2021.

Concerns about children, pets, water quality, overspray, Env impacts esp. to Casco Bay. Work with Friends of Casco Bay on water quality testing to detect pesticide levels. These levels have increased over time. Certain pesticides are harmful to lobster and other aquatic life.

There is a pest management advisory committee that oversees the ordinance, reviews waiver applications and recommends changes to the city council. There is a process for submitting a request for a waiver of the ordinance. To date only one waiver has been granted. They have to submit an annual report about the target site, the pesticide name, EPA registration number, undiluted formulation, and total area treated.

Enforcement: any violation comes with penalties. They have a education and awareness system. Education and outreach is their main tool and if the property owner really doesn't want to comply they will fine them.

Most of the garden centers in Portland have changed their stock to carry only compliant herbicides for home use.

Cushing Island applied for the waiver- cut stem application waiver after mechanical cuts. 1890's inventory looking at 300 plants. Now there is only 100. One goal is to increase the diversity of plants in the space again. So, they are using application of herbicides to increase diversity of plants.

## **Island Updates**

**Peaks** The number of day trippers go up every year. The boats have been filled to capacity. Issues with the community center are ongoing including recreation programs, open hours, access to public restrooms, and understanding of community culture. Visitors are staying later into the fall, there are still high levels of visitors through September and October. Portland is advertising the island for tourism purposes. Asking Casco Bay Lines if they can implement priority boarding for islanders. There is a committee on the PIC to work with Portland on the parking issue to come to a resolution. The city is providing a shuttle- stickered parking along Marginal Way or the commuter lot without restrictions for 7 days to help address the parking issue. Golf Cart Ordinance passed after an extensive survey went out to the island and the biggest issue was the golf carts. Have to be electric, registered, and not parked on the street.

**Cliff** Community Center on Cliff had many barriers to access and so after a change in the board, they are trying to increase the accessibility- the doors have been unlocked, the space has been made available to people. Added an addition to the center to house the broadband electronics and the rest of the addition will be used for the medical center. Cliff now has full broadband that they did themselves from fundraising. It took a year from fundraising to implementation. They learned from conferences, other communities, designed a project that worked for their community which includes microwave from the mainland to the tower on the community center down to the electronics center with fiber to the

home. The Ribbon cutting was a month ago to thank the community. It pulled the community together- they funded it and promised to become customers. Needed a minimum of 65 and there are currently 85 customers. It is set up as an LLC run by itself that grew out of the non-profit that launched it. The health center is the next major area of focus. The space has wheelchair accessible shower, bathrooms, telemedicine, place of shelter, full time generator that goes on automatically. Sustainable Cliff Island is also working on three new housing units- affordable housing rehab on property that the city of Portland helped the community acquire because of back taxes. Wharf, house, store, fuel depot. Another house purchase was split into 2 apartments with family living. Housing is such a limiting factor on the island. There are 5 students in the school- one is there through November from the Ukraine. This is the teacher's second year. Casco Bay Lines is working on rehabbing the ferry schedule. Cliff gets 4 boats a day and they are fighting to keep those trips. In the summer they get an extra 2 trips. Annual Cliff island Meeting with two petitions to the city for serious road work to fix drainage issues that contribute to the icy winter roads and one focused on dock access to address limitations.

**Frenchboro** New people in new roles. Rachel is on the school board, and excise tax collector. New select board member, hired someone from off island to be administrator. There is a balance between continuity and institutional knowledge and fresh energy. School population has dropped from a high of 15 students to 2 last year. There are 3 this year with 4 more in the pipeline who will be entering school in the next few years. Trying to balance costs and local control. The local school district doesn't recognize the needs of the island. The board is exploring their own island-based school district rather than staying with the mainland district. Trash is a huge expense. Ferry access- Frenchboro is part of the Maine State Ferry system but share the ferry with Swan's. The rate structure doesn't work for Swan's and Frenchboro, but they are hoping to figure it out.

**Long Island** Wellness Council with Cliff and Great Diamond- Casco Bay Lines agreed to include a wellness space at their mainland terminal. The July meeting demonstrated creative thinking, they found a space that everyone could agree on and that looks like it is going ahead. Concerned to maintain inter-island connections with the reworking of the ferry schedule because of the work opportunities afforded commuting to neighboring islands. Limited to 5 boats including the Peaks Island service so it is a complex task. They are paving roads. The new cemetery location is right next to the town dump and so it is controversial. Town meeting took 2.5 hours. Wellness sponsored a Pickleball Pro to come to the island- redid a tennis court and added a pickleball court so that is the new sport on Long Island. Bi-weekly luncheons have started again and are very popular. Bi-weekly clinics have remained heavily used. Trying to get a physical therapist to come to the island and there is a lot of interest because the 45-minute appointment on the mainland takes up 7 hours with the boat schedule. School has 16 students- 4 from Great Diamond which allows for a broader mix of students.

**Isle au Haut** Food truck on Isle au Haut open in the summer and has terrific lobster rolls. Lineman became general manager of the power company, his wife is a teacher who was hired for the school. She is from Colombia, South America. She has a lot of energy and ideas for the school. There are 6 students in the school. Shortage of workforce housing that is affordable. There is available housing- two long term island residents are leaving the island and their houses are on the market, about 5 houses for sale, but all higher than \$250,000. The young people are living in substandard housing but can't afford what's for sale. ICDC has it as part of its mission to supply affordable housing and it has worked successfully, but those houses are sold back to the people who rented them and now they need more- ICDC doesn't have enough money to buy the houses currently for sale and so are looking for capital. The power

company, light house restoration committee all also need capital. The island is looking to go 100% solar to replace the aging cable which is already 20 years over its expected life span. Broadband hasn't been solved because of the expense. The southern part of the island needs faster service and it is imperative to attract people to the island to live and work and grow the community. The summer minister, Alan Meyer is retiring after 6 years. He participated in Tuesday supper throughout the year and spent the night. So now Isle au Haut is looking for a minister. There is a microloan program being administered on Isle au Haut charging 2% on up to \$25k to help support fishermen and community members to upgrade systems. The town meeting this year was boring. The first selectmen is doing a terrific job in straightening out the records and getting the town where it should be and she has brought on a third selectmen and is grooming her to be 1st assessor. There are young people, the future of the island, who are stepping forward and assuming responsibility for running the town.

**Vinalhaven** Paving happening. School started with a new leadership structure with a superintendent/principal and 2 assistant principals who were promoted from within. Housing committee has been meeting for a little over a year around a housing project. HUD subsidies up for renewal and the owners are thinking about what their options are for the 10 units- the Town is hoping to keep the housing available as affordable housing. Group meeting informally to create a centralized community center to figure out what the community wants and how to go forward. Finishing up a downtown master plan with infrastructure needs and economic development to obtain more working waterfront and public access points downtown. Sea level rise work with a dedicated committee finishing a Flood Resiliency checklist with a list of to -dos. Are starting with collecting data and benchmarking. Working with II and GRMI. Tick working group: completing more regular tick drags to have better data and understand how areas are changing- hot spots on the island and want to let people know where the hot spots are to create a plan.