Recommendations for Drummond Island Comprehensive Resource Management Plan

Report of the Drummond Island Writing Team
to the
Director of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources

April 2012
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Introduction

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is developing a Comprehensive Resource Management Plan (Plan) for Drummond Island in cooperation with island residents and stakeholders. As part of this process, the Drummond Island Writing Team (Writing Team) was formed to provide the DNR with stakeholder recommendations for enhancing the wise use and enjoyment of the wildlife and other natural resources on the island. The Writing Team is comprised of a variety of stakeholders including representatives from organizations, agencies, and the general public with an array of natural resource-related interests on the Island (Appendix A). The Writing Team, with individual members representing their stakeholder group (Appendix B), created recommendations for the Plan that are acceptable within the framework of applicable law and the DNR’s mission, while meeting the overall needs and desires of island residents and other stakeholders. The Plan will focus on strategies for providing quality hunting, fishing, and trapping opportunities, and promote Drummond Island as a special place to attract resource-based tourism.

The DNR hosted a public scoping meeting on June 8, 2011, at the Drummond Island Township Hall to obtain input on the priorities of island stakeholders. Subsequently, the Writing Team met on Drummond Island for a total of 8 days between July and December to discuss topics identified during the scoping meeting and form recommendations on priority issues.

Drummond Island has many characteristics that are attractive to outdoorsmen, naturalists, retirees, environmentalists, researchers and tourists. Basic to all of our recommendations is a deep respect for nature, an appreciation and love for outdoor sports, a desire to make Drummond Island an exciting place for traditional fishing, hunting and trapping, and to improve the overall outdoors experience for all property owners and visitors. The economy and health of the island are strongly tied to the woods and water. People retire, vacation, visit, work, and raise families on Drummond Island because of the outdoor experience. Much of the Island’s economy is based on year-around tourism that relies upon various forms of outdoor recreation including kayaking, boating, fishing, water sports, hunting.
hiking, wildlife viewing, off road vehicle activities, snowmobiling, cross country skiing, mountain biking and the quiet enjoyment of nature.

Drummond Island is a large (about 126 square miles) island with many of the social characteristics of a small town, but more isolated. It attracts people because of its character and the opportunity to experience many forms of outdoor recreation throughout the year. Investments have been made to promote the island and its natural resources. A comprehensive website (http://www.drummondislandchamber.com) has been developed and maintained to promote outdoor experiences on the Island. The Drummond Island Magazine and Recreational Map published by the Drummond Island Tourism Association (DITA) further promotes the environment and nature of Drummond Island (Attachments 1 and 2). Since 2002, the Drummond Island Sportsman’s Club (DISC) has invested over $300,000 in Island projects (Appendix C). A five-year recreation plan concentrates on the natural aspects of the Island (Appendix D). A video introducing Drummond Island is found at http://www.drummondislandchamber.com/movie/DITA_Web_Movie.wmv. The reader is referred to these and other materials in the appendix to gain a background on Drummond Island. The goal is to protect and enhance the natural resources so that Drummond Island becomes the premier destination for experiencing nature and enjoying outdoor sports. All of the recommendations have been developed to support this goal.

We, the Writing Team, present these recommendations to the DNR to help guide future management and resource use-related issues on Drummond Island. We ask the DNR to consider these recommendations in the development of a Plan. We believe these recommendations represent the diverse interests of Michigan society and will best serve the management of Drummond Island for years to come. Each recommendation is preceded by the background or justification for the recommendation.
Recommendations from the Drummond Island Writing Team

Wildlife Management

Quest for Exceptional Deer Hunting Experiences

Deer hunting is part of Drummond Island’s tradition. Islanders desire to improve the deer hunting experience on the Island. A significant portion (57%) of Drummond is state-owned and available to the public for hunting. Drummond Island is an independent deer management unit (DMU 117) with a self-sustaining deer herd. For more than 10 years, DMU 117 has implemented a popular “no-spike rule” that differs from nearby mainland hunting rules. This strategy was implemented to offer young bucks a better chance to advance to an older age class, thereby providing a better opportunity for hunters to see and harvest older bucks with greater antler development. Although sportsmen believe these rules have improved hunting conditions, they desire further improvements in buck age structure and resulting antler development.

Hunting is an important part of the Island’s economy. Deer hunting is a major draw, contributing heavily to outdoor recreational tourism in the fall. Stakeholders believe that management of the deer herd and hunting regulation changes that encourage exceptional hunting and outdoor experiences will strengthen the outdoor recreation for residents and visitors alike.

Many Island sportsmen believe that additional antler and harvest restrictions will improve the deer herd by reducing harvest pressure and focusing buck harvest on bucks with better antler development (i.e. older bucks). Young bucks compose a significant component of the buck harvest. Advancing some young bucks to an older age class would diversify the age class structure and presumably provide some bucks with greater antler development. Through these restrictions, more bucks would remain at the end of the season and provide better hunting opportunities in future seasons.

Recommendations:

- The group recommends Drummond Island hunters would be allowed to take one deer (either antlered or antlerless), except during firearm season when only an antlered deer
could be harvested. If the DNR allows, there could be extra antlerless licenses – a bonus tag would be allowed in all hunting seasons.

- The group recommends that antlered deer must have at least 3 points on one side.

The Writing Team recognizes that hunting technology improvements and regulation have changed through the years. The changes have generally been supported by hunters to increase hunter success. These improvements have allowed hunter efficiency to increase. Examples include, but are not limited to, use of bait, blinds, elevated platforms, trail cameras, improved firearms (particularly muzzle-loading rifles) and scopes, improvements in archery equipment, and improvements in hunting clothing. Use of these items has resulted in deer being more vulnerable to harvest than historically. Analyses presented by DNR staff suggest that UP bucks have become more vulnerable to harvest over the past 25 years than historically, influencing the buck age structure.

Based on the information presented, antler point restrictions and restrictions of one deer per hunter will not address the larger issues of deer vulnerability. In order to meet the well-known desires of sportsmen to have opportunities at more mature bucks and enhance the quality of hunting on the island, the Writing Team believes it is necessary to limit some of the technologies (use of bait and elevated blinds during certain periods of the fall) available to hunters within a designated management area on the island. In addition to reducing buck vulnerability, such an area will likely attract hunters preferring more traditional methods of hunting, which has also been expressed as a desire of many hunters. The management area recommended was selected by trying to maximize the amount of public land, minimize the private land involved, and provide a large enough area to realize a result. Consideration was made for evaluating the results of this recommendation.

Recommendations:
- The group recommends that elevated platforms and deer baiting be allowed from Oct. 1 through Nov. 4 and Dec. 1 through Jan. 1 in the Marble Head Management Area (everything southeast of Sheep Ranch Road) for 3 years. Elevated platforms and deer baiting in this area will be prohibited from Nov. 5 through Nov. 30 (Appendix F).
- Outside of this area, elevated platforms and baiting will be allowed from Oct. 1 through Jan. 1.
- The group recommends that the Drummond Island Writing Team convene in 3 years to evaluate the results/outcome of this recommendation.

Drummond Island’s characteristics provide a unique opportunity to study and manage the deer herd on the Island. In addition to being its own DMU, harvested deer either stay on the island or leave via ferryboat. Given limited resources for implementation, stakeholders are interested in partnering with the DNR to collect data. In an attempt to monitor harvest including the effects of the above recommendations, the following recommendations are made:

Recommendations:
• The group recommends that there be a special free Drummond Island stamp that must be obtained to hunt deer on the Island. Make it mandatory that deer hunters provide the DNR harvest data for all deer seasons. The Drummond Island Sportsman’s Club will assist with collection and cost of deer harvest data.

• Failure to return the data would result in the loss of deer hunting privileges on Drummond Island for the following year.

• The group recommends that Tribal deer harvest data obtained and submitted by the Drummond Island Sportsman’s Club be considered by the DNR.

These recommendations have been made to allow the DNR and the Drummond Island stakeholders to improve the hunting experience on the Island, obtain more accurate deer harvest data, and improve enforcement of regulations on the island.

Ruffed Grouse and Upland Game Bird Habitat Improvements

Upland game bird hunting is popular with Drummond Island residents and visitors, but there is little widespread knowledge of the quality of this hunting experience on Drummond. The opportunity to improve the habitat with help from the DNR and the Ruffed Grouse Society is attractive to the committee. There are approximately 12,600 acres of aspen, a preferred type for ruffed grouse, on state forest land on Drummond. The committee believes that the success of management at the Strickler Grouse Management Area in Mackinac County resulting from partnership between the DNR and the Ruffed Grouse Society provides a model for improving upland game bird hunting and increasing the awareness of these hunting opportunities on Drummond Island. The Writing Team desires to create one or more similar areas on Drummond to create destination sites for upland game bird hunting.

Recommendation:

• The group recommends that the Drummond Island Writing team members work with the DNR and the Ruffed Grouse Society to create areas that are more intensively managed for Ruffed Grouse and upland game birds (e.g., aspen blocks managed on rotation).

Bobcat Population and Trapping

Many Writing Team members are concerned that the bobcat population on the island has declined in recent years. There is concern that the use of cable restraint and body-gripping (conibear) traps are contributing to a population decline on the island. Members also expressed concerns that these traps have killed a number of hunting dogs. It is believed that the elimination of these traps on dry land will greatly reduce the threat to domestic animals, lead to an increase in the bobcat population on the Island, and will affect few trappers. The Writing Team desires to increase the bobcat population on the Island. Drummond Island is an independent bobcat unit with a unique bag limit, which is conducive for implementing regulations unique to the island. The Writing Team believes that the opportunity to trap swimming mammals such as muskrat, otter, mink, and beaver will not be significantly impacted by the recommendation below.
Recommendations:

- **Due to the Drummond Island isolated bobcat population, the group recommends the prohibition of dry land and surface ice body gripping traps and cable restraints on the Island.**

- **If the above recommendation is not approved, the group recommends that the bobcat season be closed on Drummond Island for five years.**

Cormorants

Double-crested cormorant populations in the Great Lakes region have rebounded from near extirpation in the early 1970’s. In 1972, cormorants were added to the list of species protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Populations eventually increased as pollution regulations were instituted and food bases increased. Cormorant numbers are currently at historic highs in the Great Lakes region. Population increases have been accompanied by concern and controversy about the effects the birds may be having on stocks of recreational and commercial fish species, and island nesting habitat.

Drummond Island stakeholders consider healthy fisheries as essential to the economic and environmental well-being of the island. Many believe that increased cormorant control efforts are an effective way to reduce cormorant populations and, in turn, increase Great Lakes fish populations near Drummond Island.

Recommendations:

- **The group recommends that cormorant control continue; with efforts being expanded (e.g., fall harassment, expanded dates, and areas of control and take) and press the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and elected officials to allow further control of the cormorant population in order to significantly reduce negative impacts on the Drummond Island fish populations.**

- **We support the DNR’s efforts to increase cormorant harvest numbers to accomplish the objectives of this plan.**

Feral Swine

Feral Swine pose a significant threat to domestic stock, wildlife, the environment and people. Once established, their populations are very difficult and expensive to control, and damage...
caused by the swine can be costly. In northern portions of their range, active sows are estimated to produce 2 litters per year of 4-8 piglets.

Feral Swine can transmit diseases and parasites to livestock and people. They can be destructive to recently planted field and can damage pastures and infrastructure such as fences. Pig walls can reduce water quality of ponds and wetlands by muddying the water, creating algae blooms, and destroying aquatic vegetation. Digging, rooting and walls along stream banks can lead to erosion and contribute to poor fish production. The trampling and rooting behaviors of feral swine can devastate sensitive native habitats and lead to reduced populations of native plants and animals and rare, threatened or endangered species.

The DNR has declared *Sus scrofa*, one species of swine, an invasive species in Michigan. As such, possession of this species of swine is now prohibited in Michigan. Although feral swine have been found in various parts of Michigan, they are not known exist on Drummond Island. We desire to prevent the introduction of feral swine to Drummond Island in order to avoid the impacts they would likely have on Drummond Island’s people, wildlife, and natural features.

Recommendation:
- *The group supports and encourages the efforts of the DNR to prevent the introduction of feral swine to Drummond Island.*

**Fisheries Management**

Drummond Island and its surrounding waters provide diverse fishing opportunities. Yellow perch, northern pike, walleye, cisco, smallmouth bass, and lake trout are all popular sport fish in the area.

Fisheries resources will be managed in a scientifically sound manner, with regulations based on individual species’ biology and the waters they inhabit. Statewide regulations when appropriate are preferred for simplification purposes. Management will be based on ongoing consultation with users. All Lake Huron fisheries regulations must be reviewed and approved through the appropriate regulation committees.

**Perch Management**

Drummond Island historically had a reputation as a destination for excellent perch fishing. Anglers were common visitors and their business was important to small resorts on the island. Over the past 20 years, this business as decreased and many on the Writing Team believe that fewer and smaller perch are being caught than historically. The Team supports regulations that are believed to improve the perch fishery. It is hoped that an improvement to this resource will also help to restore the island’s reputation as a perch fishing destination.

Recommendation:
- *The group recommends that the DNR manage the Drummond Island perch fisheries to increase the quantity and size of perch in a manner that may include the following:*
habitat management, increasing the minimum take size to 8”, and reducing creel limits to 30.

Pike Management

Northern pike are an important fishing resource for Drummond Island. The Writing Team believes that further restrictions will improve the pike fishery and encourage trophy pike fishing opportunities on the island, which will provide a greater fishing opportunity for residents and visitors. In 2011, winter spearing of pike was extended by two weeks statewide. Although this expands opportunities for fisherman, there is some concern that it will result in a decline in the desired fishery on Drummond Island. The Writing Team supports restoring the pike season dates to the pre-2011 framework on Drummond Island and incorporating protected slots (eg. 25-34 inches) to manage the pike fishery toward trophy pike, with the anticipation that these actions will help to improve the pike fishery on the Island.

Recommendations:

- The group recommends that the DNR reinstate pike season dates such that pike spearing not go beyond the end of February.

- The group recommends that the DNR manage for trophy pike by incorporating protected slots.

Recreational Management

Camping Platforms

The uneven and rocky terrain near the shoreline make establishing a remote temporary camping site for hunting or other recreation difficult in these areas. The placement of a few camping platforms would facilitate camping at these locations by providing an even, level surface on which to set up a tent. Establishment of such platforms would also focus camping, which may reduce impacts to the surrounding area. These platforms may encourage use of the areas by those hunters seeking more traditional remote hunting experiences. Also, kayaking has become increasingly popular on Drummond Island and kayaking the entire shoreline provides both a challenging experience and the opportunity for remote camping in areas difficult to reach by other means. Drummond Island has developed a circumnavigation route around the entire island, and such platforms would be helpful for campers along the route. These uses would be
complementary since most kayaking is done outside of the hunting seasons. Appendix E has more details on this concept.

Recommendation:
- If funding is obtained by the Drummond Island Tourism Association, the group recommends one raised camping platform be installed at each of four sites for remote tent camping by hunters and all sportspersons, known as 1) Mare Island, 2) North end Site (known as Grand Marais), 3) Glen Cove Site and 4) south side site (east of Long Point).

Multi-use Non-Motorized Trail

A multi-use non-motorized trail system is desired to provide non-motorized recreational opportunities for hunters, hikers, and other outdoor recreationalists. A designated non-motorized trail would provide similar designated non-motorized opportunities as those currently available for motorized trails already in place on the Island. Areas currently exist that are not part of the designated DNR trail and route system to create a non-motorized trail (Appendix F).

Recommendation:
- The group recommends: The DNR work with local partners to develop a multi-use (hunting, hiking, mountain bike, x-country ski, camping, equestrian, etc.) non-motorized trail with minimum impact on the natural features.

Walk-in Hunting and Other Recreational Opportunities

Historically, certain areas of Drummond Island were not as accessible by motor vehicle. Limited access resulted in opportunities for remote hunting as well as hiking and some other remote recreation. Today, like many other areas in the state, much more of the Island is accessible via motorized vehicles than historically. Increased access results in reduced opportunity for more traditional, remote hunting and other recreation. It also increases the exposure and stress on wildlife.

Many outdoorsmen seek walk-in hunting and other remote recreational experiences. A walk-in area allows reduced or no interaction with motor vehicles, often less hunting pressure, hunter conflict, and other benefits. The remoteness of a non-motorized area also reduces the stress on wildlife, allowing them to generally be less vulnerable and promotes more natural conditions.

A preferred location to establish a walk-in hunting and recreation area is located north of the Potagannissing River. There are no DNR ORV or ATV trails on state land in that area; only snowmobile trail 493 goes through this area. The Maxton Plains containing alvar and numerous rare plant species is located here. Limiting motorized use of the alvar will help preserve and protect these rare features. Part of the area south of the Maxton Plains has been intensively managed for deer and other game species. These characteristics support establishment of a no-wheeled motorized area.
Recommendation:

• To encourage walk-in hunting and other recreational opportunities, the group recommends that the entire area north of First and Second Lake be designated as a no-wheeled motorized access area (Appendix I).

Niagara Escarpment Hiking Trail

The Drummond Island Tourism Association (DITA) has prepared a detailed proposal for establishment of the Niagara Escarpment Trail (Appendix D) with associated marsh birding trail due to increased requests from tourists for hiking trails in key areas. The trails would facilitate public access via foot trail to unique features on Drummond, providing both a quality hiking experience and low impact access to these unique remote features. The trails would originate in an area accessible via 2-wheel drive vehicle to provide good public access to the trail.

Recommendation

• The group recommends: The DNR review the DITA trail proposal, which creates the Niagara escarpment-hiking trail on the extreme east end of the Drummond Island. This proposed trail would start at Sitgreaves Bay, follow the beach to Pilot Harbor, continue along the beach for about one mile, then rising with the Niagara Escarpment, it would follow a path through the Alvar to Marble Head and then continue on to the south to its end before dropping back down to the Lake Huron Shoreline a short distance to Shale Beach. The escarpment plan will also include a wildlife viewing birding trail that is on the north side of the Pilot Harbor Marsh.
**Niagara Escarpment Trail**

& **Marsh Birding Wildlife Trail**

**Location of trails**

End of ORV trail at Shale Beach

**Red dots indicate photo location:**

1. Marsh Birding Trail
2. Parking and pit toilet area
3. Pilot Harbor
4. Trail south of Pilot Harbor
5. Marble Head
6. Eagle’s Landing
7. Shale Beach

**Blue dots indicate trail locations:**

A. Improved road

B. Deep water harbor with dock

C. Start of path up to escarpment

D. Viewing area on escarpment

E. Trail to Shale Beach

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**Improved Access to Sitgreaves Bay**

As noted in the proposal for the Niagara Escarpment trail, Marble Head is an extraordinary natural feature on Drummond Island that most do not have an opportunity to visit. The committee in conjunction with the above proposal would like to improve access to Sitgreaves Bay and the proposed Niagara Escarpment trailhead (Item A on above trail map). The current road condition does not allow for non-four-wheel drive vehicles to access this area. This action would allow access for all vehicles to the proposed Niagara Escarpment trailhead.

Recommendation:
- *The group recommends The DNR support the improvement of the road from Glen Cove to Sitgreaves Bay to be passable by a two-wheeled drive sedan.*

**Rock Crawl Proposed**

The improvement of the access road from Glen Cove to Sitgreaves Bay will reduce the amount of four wheel only road on the Drummond Island ORV route. Groups comprising the Writing Team proposed having rocks placed to form a rock crawl along the ORV route located on appropriate lands (ie. lands not acquired using restricted funds). The rock crawl would add another recreational experience for the four wheel drive users. There are a large number of rocks adjacent to the ORV route which could be re-arranged to form a rock crawl. The proposed rock crawl could be done in combination with the improvement to the Glen Cove to Sitgreaves Bay road recommendation. The Drummond Island Off Road Club (DIORC) has indicated a willingness to prepare a proposal for the crawl.

Recommendation:
- *The group recommends: The DIORC develop a proposal that would be reviewed by the DNR that would use existing rocks to form a “rock crawl” in an appropriate area (non Pittman-Robertson/Restricted fund purchased land); an area consisting of approximately 16.5 feet wide by 50 feet long adjacent to an existing ORV route.*
South Marble Head Bypass Project

Islanders understand that Marble Head is a highly desirable destination for Islanders and visitors alike. Marble Head is accessed by two roads forming a loop. The northern portion of the loop consists of the Glen Cove Road (sometimes referred to as Sheep Ranch Road) and the road past Sitgreaves Bay, while the southern portion consists of the South Marble Head road and a portion of Clear Lake Road (Appendix H). The northern route to Marble Head is intended for conventional two wheel drive vehicles. The Team prefers that the southern route not be improved beyond that necessary to meet 4-wheel drive standards. Current improvements to the southern portion near intersection 25 have successfully addressed snowmobile trail grooming concerns by creating a bypass (see picture at right). Subsequent planned phases of road improvements to the South Marble Head Loop are deemed unnecessary by the groups who comprise the Writing Team. The Writing Team feels that the roads currently passable by 2-wheel drive vehicle provide sufficient access to the area for hunting and other recreation.

Recommendation:

- The group recommends: The DNR cease remaining phases of the south Marble Head bypass project, and future road maintenance activities not improve the road beyond what is necessary to meet 4-wheel drive standards.

Hunting and ORV Use Overlap

One small area of the island currently affords both highly sought after deer habitat for hunting and two small segments of ORV Trail. The Team believes that the ORV Trail can be rerouted away from the desired habitat area without any significant loss of recreational experience to the ORV community. We anticipate that this cooperation between the hunting and ORV communities will resolve possible future user conflicts while preserving or enhancing quality hunting experiences as well as ORV recreation.

Recommendation:

- The group recommends: DNR work with the DISC and DIORC on a proposed realignment of the existing ATV trails in order to provide for improved deer management and hunter experience. There will be no significant loss or gain of any wheeled motorized recreational experience in mileage, time of use, or quality of experience.
Canoe and Kayak Launch Assist

The Drummond Island has become a destination for the paddling sports. Advancement in equipment have allowed for greater access for people of all physical capabilities to enjoy the paddling sports. A launch assist device has been developed to assist in providing access to all paddlers to launch their canoe or kayak. The Drummond Island Tourism Association may possibly obtain funding to purchase a launch assist device such as the EZ Launch system. The DNR Maxton Bay public launch would be an excellent site for the EZ Launch system because the popularity of paddling in Potogannissing Bay and River. It would provide greater access for all recreational paddlers to enjoy the water and natural resources of Drummond Island.

Recommendation:

- If funding is obtained by the Drummond Island Tourism Association, the group recommends the installation of an ADA compliant paddling launch site at Maxton Bay boating access site.

Additional Boat Launches

There are no public or commercial boat launch sites on the South, Southeast, and East parts of Drummond Island. The nearest commercial launch site is at Fort Drummond Marine (Whitney Bay) and the nearest public sites are at DeTour Village and Potogannissing Bay. Watercraft travel for fishing, waterfowl hunting and pleasure can be difficult and not safe on the south and eastern parts by small boat, canoe or kayak because of the distance from boat launch sites. The road access to the proposed boat launch sites are good gravel roads.

Recommendation:

- The group recommends: The DNR identify and provide additional boat launches (gravel) for outboard and duck hunting boats in remote sections (for example, Warner’s Cove, Bass Cove, and Glen Cove) of the island.
Shipwreck Buoys Proposed

The waters surround Drummond Island have many identified shipwrecks that are of significant interest to recreational divers. The Drummond Island Tourism Association has located on both its website (www.drummondislandchamber.com) and Recreation Map (Attachment 2) many shipwrecks that are of significant interest to recreational divers. These are located on the south side of the island, in the DeTour Passage Underwater Preserve and in Potagannissing Bay. Currently, there are no marking buoys on the wreck sites. Placement of marking buoys at such sites would promote recreational diving and assist divers in the location of the wrecks. The marking buoys could only be placed outside of the shipping channel and where they would not be a navigational obstacle.

Recommendation:
- The group recommends: The DNR support and recommend to the governing state and federal agencies that buoys be allowed on deep shipwrecks in non-shipping lanes within Drummond Island Township in the Great Lakes.

Law Enforcement

Drummond Island Conservation Officer

The remoteness of much of Drummond and the fact that access to the Island is only available by ferry makes conservation law enforcement presence more difficult than most areas of the state. When conservation officers do visit the Island, the news of their presence is informally communicated upon ferry crossing and becomes widespread knowledge on the Island. As a consequence, some have blatant disregard for Michigan law and regulations. It is understood that the DNR cannot currently maintain a significant presence on Drummond and when on the Island, there is opportunity to avoid and hide illegal behavior.

The committee has been advised by the DNR that, in the Newberry and Sault areas, five of twelve conservation officer positions are vacant. The filling of one of these positions with an officer resident on Drummond Island would immediately create a significant impression and image of law enforcement. Even if the significant part of the officer’s time were spent off the island, the fact that they reside on the island would deter many lawbreakers. As part of the Drummond Island community, this officer will be welcomed and supported in their enforcement efforts. The existence of a resident Conservation Officer on Drummond Island would have a significant impact in deterring violations and will obtain the support and cooperation of Island residents.
Recommendation:
- The Writing Team strongly recommends that the DNR employ a Conservation Officer who resides on Drummond Island.

Vacant Conservation Officer Positions

There are a number of vacant conservation officer positions in the Easter Upper Peninsula. This nearly doubles the area that current officers must patrol, resulting in less enforcement of existing regulations on Drummond Island. In many places, the lack of regulations is not an issue. Rather, the challenge of enforcing the regulations due to low staffing levels provides a situation where some deviate from the regulations with little concern for the risk of being caught.

Recommendation:
- The Writing Team recommends that the vacant conservation officer positions in the EUP be filled.

Improve Patrol of ORV and Snowmobile Trails

As noted in prior recommendations, there must be a disincentive for violations. The occurrence of off-road vehicles operating outside of approved trails could be reduced with enforcement of existing regulations. It is the committee’s understanding that the Chippewa County Sheriff has budgeted funds to assist in the patrol of trails. These funds should be allocated to the patrol of Drummond Island trails equitably.

Recommendation:
- The Writing Team recommends that members of the Team (the Township and the Drummond Island ORC) work with the DNR and Chippewa County Sheriff to improve patrol of the Drummond Island ORV and snowmobile trails.

Volunteer Conservation Officer Program

The Drummond Island Sportsman’s Club and other Island groups welcome the enforcement of regulations that protect the hunting, fishing, and outdoor environment and seek any opportunity to cooperate with the DNR in these efforts.

Recommendation:
- The Writing Team recommends that a Volunteer Conservation Officer program or similar volunteer program like community watch be evaluated for establishment on Drummond Island.

Environmental Protection
Protection of Unique Natural Areas

Drummond Island is unique in the amount of rare and threatened ranked natural communities that exist on the Island. The island is composed of many and varied cover and community types. These features make it very important to protect the areas from illegal activities. These unique natural areas are enjoyed by Drummond Islanders and visitors. The Drummond Island Writing Team has identified some areas in which threats are occurring.

The Fossil Ledges, as they are called locally, are located along the northeast shore of Drummond Island. As part of the Niagara Escarpment, the ledges consist of fossil-rich calcareous sedimentary rock known as dolomite. Fossil Ledges have been damaged in the past by fossil collectors using chipping hammers to remove fossils from the rock ledges.

Maxton Plains is a unique area containing the largest remaining high quality Alvar Grassland community in North America. This community can be found in only two other places in the world. It is characterized by thin or non-existent soil cover over dolomite bedrock. The plains provide habitat for 10 Michigan state rare plants, and an unusual mix of arctic and prairie species. Much of the area is uniquely managed by the DNR as a proposed Natural Area and by The Nature Conservancy as a Preserve.

Marble Head is a headland cliff at the Island’s eastern most point and is an excellent example of a Limestone Lakeshore Cliff of vertical or near vertical limestone bedrock. Vegetation is sparse, but abundant cracks and crevices and calcareous conditions result in greater plant diversity compared with most other cliff types. Several state threatened, endangered, and special concern plant and animals are associated with this cliff type. Due to thin soils and unstable cliff environment, the area is sensitive to disturbance.
Glen Cove and the numerous other accessible beaches are sensitive to erosion and harbor many unique plant and animal species.

Each one of these areas has experienced past motorized vehicle misuse that can cause ruts and threaten unique plant and animal species. We desire to see unique natural features protected from prohibited illegal and damaging activities that may compromise the ecological and recreational benefits they provide on Drummond Island. The DNR along with various partners has and continues to work on various projects over the years to curb any illegal activity in the ecological sensitive areas. Signage and barriers have been placed in various locations. The signage has helped with the ability of the Law Enforcement Officers to enforce the existing laws and State Forest Land Use rules. The Drummond Island Writing Team believes that adding a combination of barriers, information signage, and educational resources will further protect these valuable resources.

Recommendations:

The group recommends that the DNR work with Drummond Island partners to:

- Place large boulders in front of the beaches to protect the fossil ledges from motor vehicles.
- Create and install informational signage for the Alvar region, Marble Head, Glen Cove road, fossil ledges, and other fragile nature areas in such a manner to make it extremely difficult to remove.
- Establish a public relations program to educate visitors on the fragile nature of these areas and to discourage illegal use.

Old Growth Forests

Old growth describes an ecological condition where forest vegetation is dominated by trees in the mature stages of their life cycle. A working definition of old growth as defined by MDNR is: Old-Growth forest (also termed primary forest, ancient forest, virgin forest, or primeval forest) is an area of forest that has few or no signs of human disturbance and that exhibits unique ecological features related to age, composition and associated structure. Old growth forests are of natural origin. They may be dominated by late successional forest species (i.e. sugar maple and American beech), or may be a very old example of a stand dominated by long-lived early- or mid-seral species (i.e. oak, or red pine).

Actively or passively managed second growth forest stands (of natural or planted origin) which were effectively clearcut in the late 1800s and early 1900s,
but have subsequently developed late-successional or old growth structure, composition, and function are not considered to be Old Growth.

A common goal is the protection of both the ecological and aesthetic/recreational values that old growth forests provide to Island residents and visitors. The Writing Team would like to preserve sufficient old growth on the island for ecological interest and recreational enjoyment.

Recommendation:

- *The group recommends that the DNR work closely with the Drummond Island Writing team in the identification and designation of old growth areas for their potential recreational uses.*

**Terrestrial Invasive Species**

Exotic terrestrial invasive species are dramatically changing the forests and other natural areas of Michigan, often reducing or stressing native plants and animals. Beech Bark Disease, Emerald Ash Borer, Purple Loosestrife, Spotted Knapweed are just a few of the many exotic pests that are threatening Michigan’s forests, grasslands, and wildlife and economy. Drummond Island has many unique and fragile natural communities which need to be protected from terrestrial invasive species. Mapping has been ongoing to identify areas where natural communities are affected by these invasive species. Eradication efforts have been made in some areas to limit the adverse effects of invasives on the native species and community. The Maxton Plains proposed Natural Area has undergone an extensive survey of native and invasive species and eradication program for the invasive species was completed last fall.

Recommendation:

- *The group supports and encourages the efforts of the DNR to mitigate the spread of beech bark disease and other terrestrial invasive species that affect the island’s flora and fauna.*

**Aquatic Invasive Species**

Drummond Island’s natural resources are both land and water related. We are surrounded by Lake Huron, and while over 50% of our land mass is state property, the concerns of the residents and visitors to Drummond Island are as closely tied to the water as they are to the land. The fisheries resource is very important to residents, visitors and the local economy. Many believe that cormorants, low lake levels, and invasive species, have influenced the perch, salmon, pike and walleye fishery around the island.

A huge threat to the Great Lakes fishery is the introduction of aquatic invasive species (AIS). The disruptive effects of AIS on the Great Lakes ecosystem are well documented and ongoing.
The introduction of aquatic invasives by salt-water ships continues to be a significant problem that has not been remedied by Michigan’s 2005 Invasive Species Law and the 2007 Ballast Water Law. Approximately 30% of new species are unintentionally brought to the Great Lakes in the ballast tanks of ocean going freighters (source: Environmental Protection Agency, Great Lakes National Program Office). Total economic losses in the Great Lakes basin as a result of aquatic invasive species were estimated in 2005 at $5 billion per year (Source: Great Lakes Regional Collaboration).

Recommendation:

• For the betterment of Drummond Island fisheries, wildlife, tourism, and citizens:, The group recommends to the DNR, the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Great Lakes Commission, the International Joint Commission, and the Michigan Congressional Delegation that they take all measures deemed necessary to prevent the introduction of aquatic invasives by closing the Chicago ship canal and possible elimination of salt water shipping from [to] the Great Lakes.

Great Lakes Levels

Lake Huron water levels have been well below average over the last decade. While the fluctuation can be predominately attributed to natural causes, there is concern that dredging of the St. Clair and Detroit Rivers is contributing to the lower lake levels. Dredging in the St. Clair-Detroit system began in the 1930’s and continued through the 1950’s to deepen navigation channels. Dredging has increased the flow capacity of these rivers and is believed to have some impact on Great Lakes water levels. However, the 2009 Draft Report of the International Upper Great Lakes Study for the International Joint Commission recommended not to pursue a water level control structure in the St. Clair

The consequence of the lower lake levels has had a suspected negative impact on the fishery around Drummond Island. It has also prompted costly dredging of harbors, channels, and access to private docks and boat wells. Dredging was recently completed at the DNR launch ramp on Drummond Island and will soon occur at the DeTour Harbor. The cost to private landowners and commercial interests on Drummond Island is unknown, but significant. Many that cannot afford dredging have lost the use of their docks and waterfront property due to lower water levels.

Recommendation

- The group recommends to the DNR, the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Great Lakes Commission, the International Joint Commission, and the Michigan Congressional Delegation that the Lake Huron and Lake Michigan lake levels be restored by reducing outflow (at a given lake level) to that which existed pre-St. Lawrence Seaway dredging of St. Clair and Detroit Rivers.

Education and Outreach

Partner with the DNR Public Outreach and Engagement Unit

The ability to communicate the outdoor opportunities to others can be enhanced with coordinated publicity efforts with the DNR, the Drummond Island Tourism Association and other stakeholders. The state land is a resource to all that may be under-appreciated. The Writing Team believes that the ability to reach other outlets will be enhanced through cooperative efforts with the Wildlife Public Outreach and Engagement Unit Recommendation:

Recommendation:
- The Writing Team recommends that the DNR Wildlife Division Public Outreach and Engagement Unit partner with the Writing Team and additional stakeholders to establish synergy in developing a comprehensive communication strategy to promote tourism on Drummond Island.

Outdoor Recreation Strategy

Virtually all of the team’s recommendations are designed to improve the outdoor experience for landowners and visitors of Drummond Island. It would be appropriate to develop a synergistic strategy that promotes the opportunities to experience the outdoors in the many ways that Drummond offers. The joint promotion working with the DI groups and DNR would be more successful and cost efficient.
Recommendation:

- The group recommends that the DNR Wildlife Division Public Outreach and Engagement Unit work with the Drummond Island Writing Team to establish an outdoor recreation strategy, which includes youth activities and other outreach programs to encourage outdoor-based recreation events.

Public Awareness of Unique Drummond Island Issues

The special nature of Drummond Island, both in the opportunities and the desire to implement Island-specific regulations, can be confusing to tourists and outdoorsmen. The recommendations for walk-in areas, special trails, Drummond-specific deer regulations, new boat launch sites, camping platforms, etc., create a need for extra-ordinary education and promotion. Compliance with regulations would be enhanced with better hunter and outdoorsmen knowledge of Drummond rules and geography.

Recommendation:

- The Writing Team recommends that the DNR partner with local groups to educate the public on unique Drummond Island issues/regulations through public broadcasting programs (e.g., Michigan Out of Doors), local newspapers, social media (e.g., Facebook) and printed brochures and posters.

Preservation of Dark Skies on Drummond Island

Human produced light increases yearly with development. The light can impact our view of the stars, disrupt ecosystems, affect human circadian rhythms, and waste energy. Drummond Island has some of the darkest skies in the United States and as such, we desire to see our dark skies preserved. The International Dark-Sky Association (www.darksky.org) provides significant information on the benefit of dark skies. Through education and promotion, appropriate lighting can be implemented voluntarily, and dark skies maintained. Starlight preserves are special designation that brings attention to the issue of light pollution, while distinguishing Drummond Island as a unique place to live and visit.

Recommendation:

- The Writing Team recommends that the DNR work with the Drummond Island Township, DITA and other stakeholders to promote Drummond Island as a Dark Sky, starlight preserve.
Funding

The writing team notes that many of the recommendations in this report are proposed to be funded locally through the Drummond Island Sportsman’s Club and the Drummond Island Tourism Association. Some projects are proposed to be funded through grants. Notwithstanding the above, additional DNR funding is believed necessary for resource management and law enforcement.

Increase Hunting and Fishing License Fees

Since license fees were last increased in 1997, annual inflation has averaged 2.34%. One dollar in 1997 had the same buying power as $1.38 in 2011. It is unreasonable to expect the DNR to perform at the level citizens expect without an increase in funding.

Hunting license dollars are matched with funding from the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (ie. “Pittman-Robertson” Act). The federal moneys are collected from an excise tax on firearms and ammunition, and distributed to the states based on hunting licenses within that state. For example, every $15 in license fees in Michigan is matched with $45 in federal funding resulting in a total of $60 for wildlife management and enforcement in the state.

For these reasons, the Writing Team supports a license fee increase and makes the recommendation below.

Recommendation:

• The Writing Team recommends that hunting/fishing license fees be increased in order to provide improved DNR law enforcement, compliance, and fish and wildlife management.

Reconvening with DNR

Examining the Plan Progress

Both the DNR and the participants in the development of these recommendations have invested significant time. The DNR and Drummond Island groups are both tasked with recommendations. The Writing Team believes it essential that there be accountability for a review of the progress on these recommendations and a report back to the team and the Drummond Island and DNR stakeholders.

Recommendation:

• The Writing Team recommends that the DNR reconvene a meeting with the DIWT one year after the plan is approved to examine plan progress.
We, the members of the Drummond Island Writing Team, as the designated representatives of our respective agencies and organizations, reached consensus on all of the preceding recommendations and hereby certify we support the information set forth in this report.

_________________________________   Drummond Island Sportsman’s Club  
Bill Heppler

_________________________________   The Nature Conservancy  
Chris Cantway

_________________________________   DNR Wildlife Division  
Dave Jentoft

_________________________________   Member at large  
David Bardsley

_________________________________   Drummond Island Grooming Association  
Denny Bailey

_________________________________   Drummond Island Township Supervisor  
Frank Sasso

_________________________________   DNR Law Enforcement Division  
Gerald Thayer

_________________________________   Drummond Island Tourism Association  
James Kelley

_________________________________   DNR Forest Resources Division  
Karen Rodock

_________________________________   Michigan Snowmobile and Trails Advisory Council  
Pat Brower

_________________________________   Member at large  
Patrick Kelly

_________________________________   Drummond Island Off-road Club  
Steve Walker

_________________________________   Eastern Upper Peninsula Transit Authority  
Chuck Moser
June 23, 2011

Dear Drummond Island Partner:

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is coordinating the development of a Drummond Island Comprehensive Resource Management Plan (Plan). As part of this process, we are creating a Drummond Island Plan Writing Team, which will be comprised of a variety of organizations, agencies, and individuals with an array of interests concerning natural resources and Drummond Island. The purpose of the Writing Team is to create a Comprehensive Resource Management Plan that would provide resource management recommendations and alternatives that are acceptable within the mandates of the DNR's mission, while meeting the overall needs of Islanders, DNR, and resource users. The Plan will also focus on strategies for providing quality hunting, fishing, and trapping opportunities, and promote Drummond Island as a special place to attract resource-based tourism. The DNR hopes to have a plan in draft format by late winter 2012.

A facilitator will work with the Writing Team and assist members in reaching consensus on the topics and decisions within the Plan. The Plan would be presented to the DNR for final approval.

The DNR invites your organization to apply to be part of this team. If interested, please select a primary and an alternate representative and have them complete the attached application and return to the DNR by July 7, 2011. To be eligible to serve, individuals must not have any natural resource violations and will be screened by the DNR Law Enforcement Division before being approved. Preference for membership will be given to individuals that reside on the island. We recommend that you select individuals who:

- Clearly understand the views of your organization and can articulate them within a diverse group.
- Can set aside philosophical differences and focus on the future of Drummond Island.
- Have the ability to work cooperatively and productively with people holding disparate points of view.
- Are willing to offer and accept compromise when appropriate.
- Are recognized by their organization as an appropriate representative.
- Are willing to engage in regular communication with the organization they represent to provide and solicit information.
- Speak directly for the organization they are representing and not their personal views.
- Are aware of and accept commitment to meet and work intensively over two or more months to complete tasks assigned to the Writing Team.
- Are willing to commit resources (time, travel, personnel) to effectively complete the tasks assigned to the Writing Team.
- Have e-mail capabilities and Internet access.

STEVENS T. MASON BUILDING • 830 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30028 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909-7528
www.michigan.gov/dnr • (517) 373-2529

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The alternate should plan on attending all meetings, but in a non-participatory capacity when the primary representative is in attendance so they understand discussions should they need to fill the primary role.

Please let Ms. Autumn Feldpausch know if your organization plans to be involved. She may be reached at 517-373-1263 or feldpauscha2@michigan.gov. The kick-off meeting is scheduled for July 18, 2011 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at location on the island that is yet to be determined. Materials will be provided electronically to the writing team for their review in advance of each scheduled meeting. Thank you for your consideration and for your interest in Drummond Island natural resources.

Sincerely,

Lynne Boyd, Chief
Forest Management Division

Russ Mason, Ph.D., Chief
Wildlife Division
Drummond Island Writing Team Members

**Primary Representatives:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization/Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bill Heppler</td>
<td>Drummond Island Sportsman’s Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Cantway</td>
<td>The Nature Conservancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave Jenoft</td>
<td>DNR Wildlife Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Bardsley</td>
<td>Member at large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denny Bailey</td>
<td>Drummond Island Grooming Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank Sasso</td>
<td>Drummond Island Township Supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerald Thayer</td>
<td>DNR Law Enforcement Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Kelley</td>
<td>Drummond Island Tourism Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen Rodock</td>
<td>DNR Forest Resources Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pat Brower</td>
<td>Michigan Snowmobile and Trails Advisory Council</td>
</tr>
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<td>Patrick Kelly</td>
<td>Member at large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Walker</td>
<td>Drummond Island Off-road Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chuck Moser</td>
<td>Eastern Upper Peninsula Transit Authority</td>
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**Alternate Representatives:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Brad Kuusinen</td>
<td>Eastern Upper Peninsula Transit Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyle Publiski</td>
<td>DNR Law Enforcement Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laneen Hoover</td>
<td>Drummond Island Off-road Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paul Hammers</td>
<td>Drummond Island Grooming Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tina Hall</td>
<td>The Nature Conservancy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Resource Staff:**

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<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jordan Burroughs</td>
<td>Michigan State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn Feldpausch</td>
<td>DNR Wildlife Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill O’Neill</td>
<td>DNR Forest Resources Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jim Radabaugh</td>
<td>DNR Forest Resources Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly Siciliano Carter</td>
<td>DNR Wildlife Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>Penney Melchoir</td>
<td>DNR Wildlife Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steve Milford</td>
<td>DNR Forest Resources Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry Minzey</td>
<td>DNR Wildlife Division</td>
</tr>
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## Drummond Island Sportsmen Club Contributions (partial list)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Walleye rearing pond.</td>
<td>$130,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002 - 2012</td>
<td>Lease of property for pond $10,000/yr</td>
<td>100,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005 - 2012</td>
<td>Cormorant Control $3,000/yr Shells, Gas, etc.</td>
<td>24,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Potagannissing River Dam removal and rebuild</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cut old existing dam out, rebuild and put rock pools below dam so pike could</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rest. Plus on going Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>McCormick Marsh Pike habitat program</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Put new covert under Maxton road so pike can move past the road.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More work to do waiting on permits.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every year</td>
<td>Payment of $10/deer for Johnsons Sport Shop to age; document deer taken on</td>
<td>not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drummond Island.</td>
<td>quantified</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Payments to Ferry Crew to do deer count on ferry</td>
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### Appendix J

#### Photo Credits

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<td>Drummond Island</td>
<td>Gerry Bailey</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Aerial of Potagannissing River</td>
<td>D. Sandell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kayak at the Ledges</td>
<td>Candis Collick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sunset</td>
<td>Drummond Island Tourism Association</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Aerial of the Ledges</td>
<td>D. Sandell</td>
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<td>Alvar Sign</td>
<td>Jim Kelly</td>
</tr>
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<td>Marble Head</td>
<td>J Stressman</td>
</tr>
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<td>Cormorants</td>
<td>Michigan DNR</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Deer</td>
<td>R Dorman</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Pike</td>
<td>Jim Kelley</td>
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<td>Old Growth</td>
<td>Mike Kelly</td>
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<td>EZ launch</td>
<td>EZ Dock Systems</td>
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<td>Diver at ships wheel</td>
<td>Bud Huizing</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Road to Nowhere</td>
<td>Yacht Haven Construction</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Rock Crawl</td>
<td>Steve Walker</td>
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### Appendix K

#### Abbreviations and Acronyms used in this report

- **AIS**: Aquatic Invasive Species
- **ATV**: All-Terrain Vehicle
- **DIORC**: Drummond Island Off Road Club
- **DISC**: Drummond Island Sportsman’s Club
- **DITA**: Drummond Island Tourism Association
- **DIWT**: Drummond Island Writing Team
- **DNR**: Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- **EZ Launch**: A kayak launch device for the physically disabled manufactured by EZ-Dock USA
- **ORV**: Off Road Vehicle
Drummond Island Precreation Map Showing Proposed Location of Camping Platforms