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# KEEPER MANUAL

## ST. HELENA ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE

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### OVERVIEW:

- You will be in the Straits of Mackinac on a beautiful 260 acre island that is an uninhabited nature preserve.
- GLLKA owns approximately 3.5 acres and the Little Traverse Conservancy owns the remaining acres.
- All the buildings are powered by solar electricity. So bring your cellphone charger and C-pap if needed.
- There is no running water, only an outside hand pump - the water is safe and is tested every spring by the St. Ignace Water Department.
- There are 2 hot water heat on-demand private showers.
- Our bathroom facilities are clean latrines/outhouses set back in the woods. Both toilets have benches & toilet seats that are covered with a tent for privacy and to keep rain off.
- There is a bucket toilet in the basement for night trips.
- There is wifi throughout the grounds.
- We do take safety very seriously and have communications with various emergency response units in the event that there is a medical emergency at the light station.
- There is an AED, medical supplies, first aid kits, fire extinguishers, etc on the grounds.



### WORKING COMMUNITY:

The assistant keeper's primary areas of duties are:

- helping in the kitchen with the meals & washing dishes
- pumping water for cooking, drinking, hand washing, dishes, & cleaning
- writing daily in the log book
- cleaning the buildings - dusting, sweeping, organizing, wiping down, and vacuuming.
- maintaining the lighthouse - repairing, painting, weeding, etc.
- preparing fresh bake goods
- there are various up-keep projects that may interest you too



## LIVING QUARTERS:

The Keeper's quarters are comfortably furnished and the kitchen is well equipped with two propane fueled ranges and an electric refrigerator. There are paper products and cleaning supplies to assure that the food preparation is convenient and safe. The main dwelling has a summer kitchen, winter kitchen, dining room, parlor, and office on the main floor. There are four bedrooms upstairs. The basement is used for storage of supplies and equipment.

**BEDROOMS:** (You supply your own sheets and your bedroom will be assigned prior to your stay.)

- Tower View - 1 double bed
- Bridge View - 1 double bed
- Woods View - 2 twin beds & 1 double bed
- Lake View - 2 twin beds & 1 double bed



## MAIN LIVING QUARTERS:



PARLOR



SUMMER KITCHEN

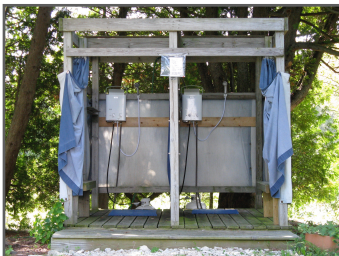


WINTER KITCHEN



DINING ROOM

## OTHER AREAS:



SHOWERS



HAND PUMP



OUTHOUSE



NIGHT TOILET



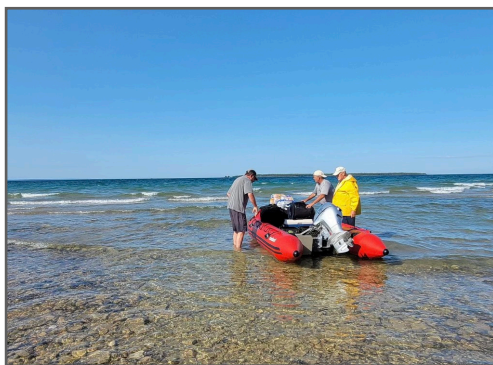
## WILDLIFE:

- The island is home to non-poisonous snakes (mainly garter snakes which are harmless).
- There are also snowshoe hares (rabbits), eagles, amphibians, and other animals.
- There is an abundance of wildflowers, such as: Showy Lady Slippers, Yellow Lady Slippers, Indian Paintbrush, and various other gorgeous plants.
- The island also has a healthy crop of poison ivy and wild parsnip which we keep off our walking paths and trails. We will help you identify these for your awareness.



## GETTING TO AND FROM THE ISLAND:

- The island is 2 miles from the Upper Peninsula mainland in *Gros Cap*, which is about a 15 - 30 minute boat ride - depends on waves/wind and weight in the boat. You will travel in one of GLLKA's 14 foot Zodiac boats which are very sea worthy.
- You will need to wade in the water to get to the boat on the mainland. So water shoes of some sort (old tennis shoes) are needed for the sharp rocks along with shorts. *Shoes don't always dry on the island, so have other shoes too.*
- There is a dock on the island that entails climbing 1 - 3 rungs on a ladder.
- Since the boats do not have coverage from rain or waves, you could get wet. So please make sure your belongings are packed according to the packing list.



LOADING BOAT



GETTING IN



OFF TO ISLAND

## GENERAL CONDUCT OF KEEPERS:

- No alcohol, illegal drugs, or marijuana will be permitted on the boats or the island.
- Flip flop type of shoes for showering only.
- Smoking and vaping is only allowed around the fire pit.
- Your luggage should be duffle bag type, lined with a plastic garbage bag or a waterproof dry-bag for transport to the island as your bags could get wet. (see packing list below) Things do not always dry on the island.
- No pets belonging to keepers are allowed on the island without special approval.
- Please make an effort to shut all windows in all buildings if it should rain.
- Swim or kayak in designated areas with a buddy for safety.
- When on a boat or kayak a PFD/lifejacket must be worn at all times.
- Let a head keeper know if you go off on the trails or kayak. Please be sure you are back before dusk as we have had people get lost after dark. Take a charged cell phone and practice the buddy system.
- No admittance on the balcony of the tower unless given permission by a head keeper.
- Respect nature.

## ACTIVITIES:

- Hike around the island.
- Freighter watch.
- Make a walking stick.
- Reenact being a keeper.
- Kayak.
- Swim.
- Photo shoots.
- Observe nature.
- Help with tours.
- Read a book.
- Take a nap.
- Visit and relax.
- Watch for shooting stars.
- Camp fires with s'mores.



## APPLICATIONS & COSTS:

Applications can be found online on [www.gllka.org](http://www.gllka.org) (you will receive a confirmation email). There is also a printable application on the website allowing you to print it and email or snail mail it to the office.

- You must be a GLLKA member to stay on the island - pricing on website.
- Cost for 2024 summer - cost includes: meals, lodging, snacks, fuels, & consumables.
  - Sunday to Thursday = 4 nights @ \$80.00 per person per night = \$320.00.
  - Thursday to Sunday = 3 nights @ \$80.00 per person per night = \$240.00.
  - Transfers are typically around 8:00 am for the best weather conditions.
- Payments are due by May 31st to hold your reservation. Once you receive your confirmation, you will receive an email with a link from [info@gllka.org](mailto:info@gllka.org) or [katie@gllka.org](mailto:katie@gllka.org) to pay by credit card if you wish to (check your spam for email).
- You are entitled to a 20% discount at the GLLKA gift shop the day before or after your stay on the island.

We are looking forward to spending time with you at St. Helena Island Lighthouse this summer. Please feel free to contact our office @ 231.436.5580 or email us @ [StHelena.van@icloud.com](mailto:StHelena.van@icloud.com) should you have any questions or concerns.



Thank you,

Mark & Michele VanderVelde

St. Helena Island Coordinators  
[StHelena.van@icloud.com](mailto:StHelena.van@icloud.com)

Katie Mistic

Office Manager

Jim Tamlyn

Executive Director

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT OUR 4 LIVE WEBCAMS ON THE ISLAND @ [gllka.org](http://gllka.org).



SPECTACULAR  
PHOTO  
OPPORTUNITIES

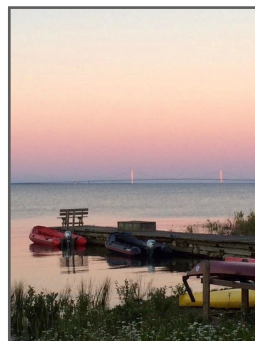
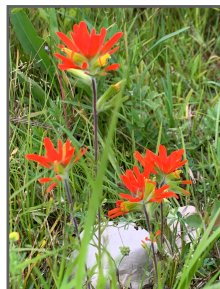
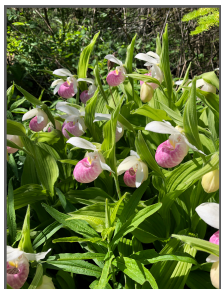


Photo credits to Jane VanderVelde, DanaHall, and Michele VanderVelde.



## PACKING LIST: Geared for 3 - 4 day stay (increase clothing amounts if staying longer)

- bedding - sleeping bag & bottom sheet or sheets (twin / full / queen) & pillowcase.  
Pillows & blankets will be provided. You will be informed on bed size for sheets.
  - warm pajamas
  - undergarments
  - 1 - 2 towels & washcloths
  - 2 long sleeved shirts
  - sweatshirt or sweater
  - 4 - 5 pairs of socks (over the ankle)
  - 2 pair long pants
  - 2 - 3 pairs of shorts
  - raincoat - highly recommended
  - bathing suit & towel
  - hat & sunglasses & sunscreen
  - mosquito repellent
  - shoes or hiking boots - (flip flops allowed for showering)
  - water footwear - old tennis shoes, water shoes, water sandals/shoes - for water use only
  - old shirt & pants/shorts for restoration work or walk around the island.
  - warm jacket, hat, & mittens (check weather in the Straits area as it is usually 10° cooler on the island)
  - work gloves
  - flashlight (with extra batteries)
- Toiletries: (best packed in ziplock bag)
    - comb/brush
    - toothpaste/toothbrush
    - soap/shampoo
    - lip balm/chapstick
    - razor & shaving cream
    - deodorant
    - sanitary products (if necessary)
    - medications - (bring a few days extra in case of departure delays)

### OPTIONAL ITEMS:

- watch
- cellphone & charger
- camera & battery charger
- backpack/bag
- soft drinks (pop) as we serve coffee, tea, & sugar-free lemonade

The list is a general list so some items may not apply to you.

PLEASE PUT ALL OF YOUR BELONGINGS IN BAGS THAT KEEP THINGS DRY FOR TRANSFERS FROM THE NORTH SHORE / 349 GROSS CAP. WATERPROOF DRY BAGS OR DUFFLE BAGS WITH PLASTIC GARBAGE BAG INSERTS WORK TOO. WATER SHOES & SHORTS ARE NEEDED TO WADE TO THE BOAT - YOUR FEET WILL GET WET AND YOU WALK ON POINTED ROCKS.