

We don't think you get it! You are messing with our livelihood on these Lake Michigan Islands and Door County. Our economy thrives because of the tourists and vacationers. They come to fish, swim, snorkel, dive, kayak, boat, paddle board and enjoy the unpolluted waters of Lake Michigan. They come to site-see the beauty of our natural and cultural resources. They come to smell the fresh air, Island hop, beach party, enjoy the fish boils, perch dinners and family time. They come to relax, explore and feel safe in our healthy environment.

They do not come to see thousands of squawking, fish-eating cormorants defecating in Lake Michigan. They do not want to see pollution of the waters, devastation of vegetation, trees, soil, lighthouses, or shipwrecks; nor do they wish to smell putrid air from the guano of overpopulated cormorants (20,430) on Pilot and Spider Islands. Sixty three percent of all cormorants in Wisconsin roost on these two islands. Pilot Island has become a symbol of the wasteful unhealthy cormorant management by US Fish and Wildlife. The total disregard for our economy, ecology, fisheries, health and history is unfathomable.

Michigan has been able to get their cormorant overpopulation under control. Congressman Jack Bergman listened to his constituency in his District 1 of Upper and part of lower Michigan. He got a Bill passed in 2021 to limit the number of cormorants. He said, "The lack of management options for double-crested cormorants has negatively impacted Michigan's First District, where we rely on healthy fisheries and our thriving natural resources. ...our state and local partners stand ready to be the example of 'how to' when it comes to cormorant management." and "We can't protect one species without harming another; but as we've seen over the past three and a half years, doing nothing is not the answer. Without the ability to manage cormorant populations, the livelihood of our recreational and commercial fishing industries has been threatened."

Guess what! District 1 in Michigan is 26 miles from our Lake Michigan Islands. We, so to speak, are in the same boat. Why reinvent the "BILL"? If it can be done for Michigan, it can be done for us in Wisconsin. We are in the same United States, the same Great Lakes, the same Lake Michigan, the same Fish and Wildlife district and the same dilemma.

U S Fish and Wildlife former Director, Dale Hall said, "The strong return of double-crested cormorants is a significant conservation success. But in the absence of natural predators, cormorants are inflicting substantial depredation on both private and public aquatic resources. This effort by Fish and Wildlife is necessary and appropriate."

US Secretary of Interior (2019-2021), David Bernhardt said, "Balancing the protection of native wildlife with economic and human health needs is fundamental to effective management practices."

We are asking for the same management consideration for our fisheries, our livelihood and our Islands.

Sincerely,



Martena & Rip Koken (savepilotisland.com)

Lifetime Members of the Washington Island Sportsman's Club