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MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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July 29, 2008

Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
Director Rebecca Humphries  
Mason Building 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Lansing, MI 48909

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality  
Director Steven Chester  
Constitutional Hall, South Tower, Sixth Floor  
Lansing, MI 48909-7917

Dear Directors Humphries & Chester,

I write to bring attention to a couple issues that were conveyed at a public hearing this week on Beaver Island regarding cormorants. Considering the facts which have been brought to light as a result of an investigation conducted by the House Tourism, Outdoor Recreation and Great Lakes Committee concerning cormorants on Beaver and neighboring islands, I would appreciate your immediate attention and response to my inquiries.

During the course of the formal committee testimony, it was brought to my attention that local Department of Natural Resources (DNR) officials suggested a cormorant kill rate of 90% which has been since rejected in favor of a 10% kill rate.

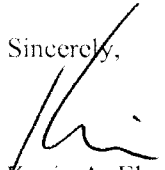
It is my understanding that local DNR staff with your department recommended a 90% kill rate. However, it has been explained to me that James Dexter with your agency instead instituted a mere 10% kill rate. I would like to know if Mr. Dexter has visited the local islands in the district I represent and if he has seen the damage firsthand? I would also like to know why the 90% kill rate which was advocated by your local officers was rejected in favor of a 10% kill rate?

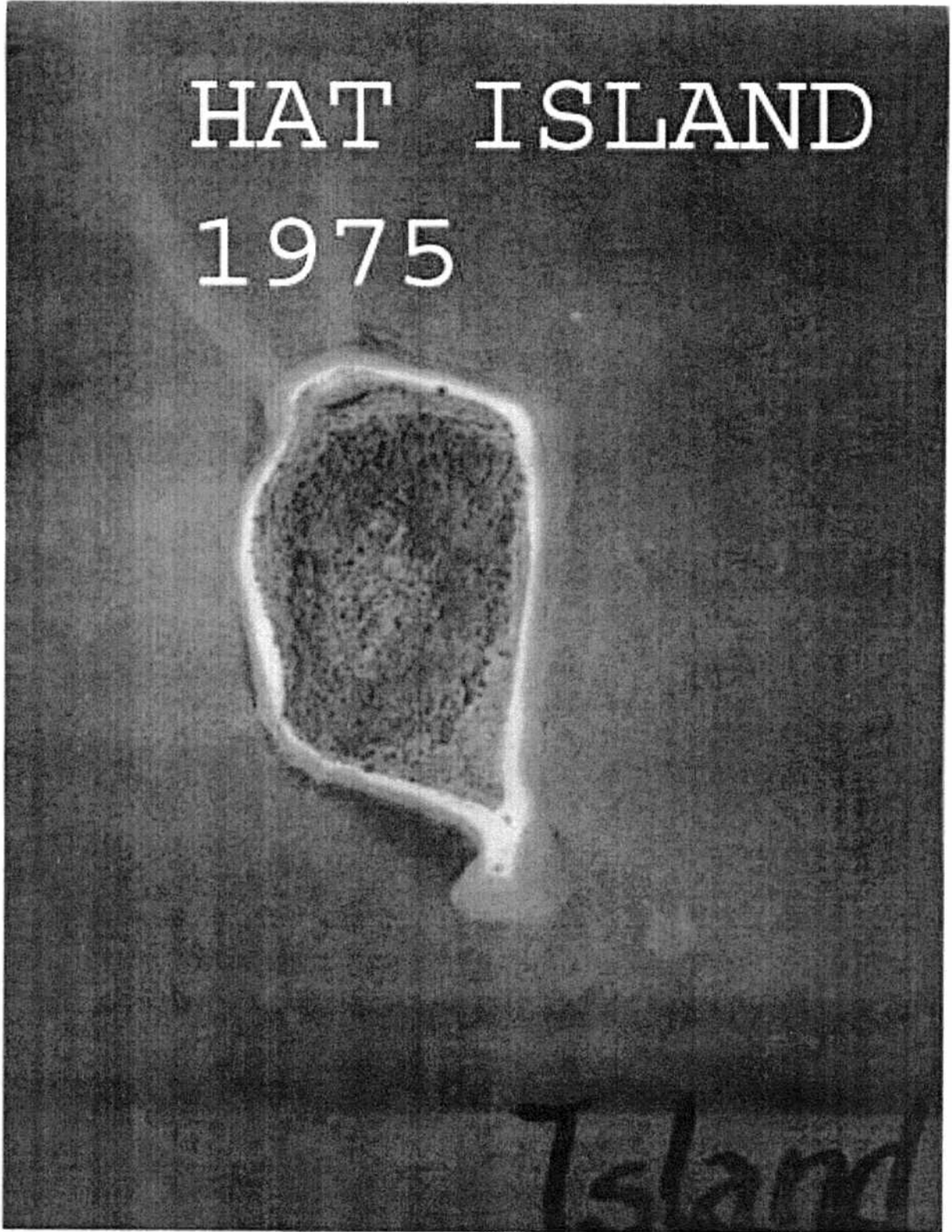
I have enclosed aerial photographs of two islands that been decimated by cormorant fecal matter. Both Hat and Pismire Islands have been overrun by cormorant feces, which I believe now borders on a contaminating toxic level that is endangering our Great Lakes. I would like to simply ask that the contaminants left by cormorants be given the same level of oversight and be subject to the same environmental standards that would be scrutinized by your department had similar discharges been produced by a commercial enterprise.

Knowing that both of your departments have been working on this issue and attempting to assist local communities including Beaver Island with control mechanisms, I wanted to share these sentiments and concerns with both of you in hopes that our state agencies can work together for the best interests of northern Michigan and our entire state. The problems associated with cormorants pose both an environmental and recreational risk to our precious natural resources.

Thank you for your time and attention to these important inquiries. Please feel free to contact me with any further questions or comments.

Sincerely,

  
Kevin A. Elsenheimer  
State Representative  
105th House District



# HAT ISLAND 2005

