



Keweenaw Convention & Visitors Bureau

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To the International Dark Sky Association:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge to become an International Dark-Sky certified park.

Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula is renowned for its incredible outdoor amenities and attracts visitors from across the United States seeking to connect with nature and participate in outdoor recreation. Because of the Keweenaw's northern geography and low levels of ambient light pollution, dark sky viewing (particularly of the Aurora Borealis) is popular activity for those drawn to the region, including photographers, star-chasers, campers, and the lay traveler. Creating a certified Dark-Sky park would build upon and amplify these activities for visitors.

Tourism is a critical component of the Keweenaw economy, and the park's creation will add to the existing visitor economy which supports more than 70% of employment in Keweenaw County. Keweenaw County includes nationally and internationally recognized attractions such as Isle Royale National Park, the Copper Harbor Mountain Bike Trails (IMBA Silver Level Ride Center) and Mount Bohemia Resort. Additionally, the County is home to numerous conversation sites allowing the public and visitors to experience the Great Outdoors year-round. The Keweenaw Mountain Lodge, located in Copper Harbor, is also an historic attraction and its ownership's philosophy of community partnership and public access to outdoor recreation make it a fantastic location for dark sky viewing.

In short, creating a certified Dark-Sky park at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge would build upon the region's outdoor assets *and* help preserve one of the area's most precious characteristics: access to impeccable dark-sky viewing. We strongly encourage the International Dark-Sky Association to support the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge's efforts.

Sincerely,

Brad Barnett

Executive Director, Keweenaw Convention & Visitors Bureau
