



5095 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Eagle River, MI 49950  
(906) 337-2229

**To the International Dark Sky Association:**

Keweenaw County is writing in support of the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge's request for recognition as a Dark Sky Park.

The Mountain Lodge was owned by Keweenaw County from the time of its construction in the 1930(s) until it was sold to Keweenaw Resort, a private company headed by John Mueller, in 2018. The County has been delighted with the progress of the Mountain Lodge under Keweenaw Resort's ownership. Significant rehabilitation and maintenance measures and upgrades have been undertaken at the Mountain Lodge without any adverse impact to the historic nature of the property and its wilderness ambience. Notably, with reference to the Dark Sky application, street lighting and some interior lights were recently modernized to mitigate any upward glare toward the sky.

Under its new ownership, the Mountain Lodge has been transformed from a seasonal to year-round destination to the benefit of the Mountain Lodge and other local businesses. The Mountain Lodge remains welcoming to the public and cooperative with local organizations, such as the Copper Harbor Trails Club, in jointly-promoting adventure and wilderness tourism and related events. New walking, skiing, and snow shoe trails have been established at the Mountain Lodge, and horse trails may be established on nearby property that the Mountain Lodge is seeking to acquire from the County. Additional activities, such as a winter snow park, are expected in the future.

Designation as a Dark Sky Park is wholly consistent with Keweenaw Resort's vision and local residents' aspirations for their community. Star gazers and night photographers are the types of persons that are drawn to the northern portion of Keweenaw County, along with like-minded nature, silent sports, and adventure enthusiasts.

Maintaining a dark sky in northern Keweenaw County at the Mountain Lodge and elsewhere will help keep the County a wonderful and largely unspoiled destination for present and future generations of visitors. The County strongly encourages approval of the Mountain Lodge's application.

Sincerely,

Donald Piche, Chairman  
Keweenaw County Board of Commissioners