

December 3, 2021

International Dark Sky Association

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my understanding that an application is being filed to designate a region in Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula as a "Dark Sky Wilderness." When I first heard about this a few weeks ago, and was asked to write a letter of support, my first thought was "This could be the best spot for a dark sky park east of the Mississippi River!"

The pristine wonders of the Keweenaw are well known to nature loving Michigan residents such as myself, and are also a destination for many from other parts of the U.S. and beyond during all seasons. Could there be a better idea than to add to that list a dark sky park for optimum appreciation of one of the greatest wonders of all, looking into a dark star speckled sky?

As a professional astronomy education specialist for more than half a century, I have looked upward into such a sky many times, but have mostly had to travel great distances to do so. I am well aware that we do have the Headlands Dark Sky Park near Mackinaw City, and as one of many involved in its development, realize it is a great asset visited annually by thousands. There are also dark sky preserves at a number of state parks that are appreciated by those who seek them out.

Still, all are close enough to significant population centers to be affected to some degree by light pollution. With the anticipated cooperation from the Houghton area, and nothing but expansive areas of water on three sides, the Keweenaw Dark Sky Wilderness would seem to me to have the potential to be among the darkest of dark sky parks.

It also would be ideally situated to benefit from the low humidity high pressure systems that sweep down periodically from Canada.

For these reasons, and others, I add my hearty support for this project.

Sincerely,

David L. DeBruyn  
Curator Emeritus  
Roger B. Chaffee Planetarium, Grand Rapids Public Museum

