



To: Charlie Ewart, Weber County Planning Division

From: Janet Muir

Date: December 26, 2016

Re: Dark Sky Momentum and Economic Development

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Momentum.

The issue of dark skies has exploded in the Interior West since the accreditation of North Fork Park (see new poster by astro-physicist/artist Tyler Nordgren in Attachment 1 - to be used in marketing the Park).

This time next year, from Glacier National Park to Grand Canyon National Park and farther south to the Mexican border, there will be **at least 50 International Dark Sky Parks** - the greatest concentration of certified dark skies *in the world*.

North Fork Park is **dead center** among what is now being called *The Great Western Starry Way* (see Attachment 2), a promotion to be discussed with the various state offices of tourism (Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Nevada, Arizona and New Mexico).

Many of these parks were assisted (or are now being assisted) in their accreditation efforts by Ogden Valley Starry Nights (nominator for Grand Staircase-Escalante NM, Cedar Breaks NM, Dinosaur NM, Craters of the Moon NM and most of the state parks) and, as part of the Committee for Dark Sky Studies (CDSS was founded as a direct result of North Fork Park's accreditation and is based at the University of Utah - see Attachment 3), for Grand Teton, Yellowstone, and Zion National Parks.

Other Dark Sky Gateway Communities.

We are also working, directly or indirectly, with a number of the gateway communities that are now adopting or strengthening dark sky ordinances: Springdale, Torrey, Kanab, Moab and Grand County, Bluff, Jackson (WY), Ketchum (ID), Page (AZ), among others.

Park City also has a dark sky ordinance. Municipal Code 15-5-1 provides:

It is also the intent of this section to encourage lighting practices and systems which will minimize light pollution, glare, and light trespass; conserve energy and resources while maintaining night time safety, utility, and security; and curtail the degradation of the night time visual environment. It is recognized that the topography, atmospheric conditions and resort

nature of Park City are unique and valuable to the community. The enjoyment of a starry night is an experience the community desires to preserve. The City of Park City, through the provisions herein contained, promotes the reduction of light pollution that interferes with enjoyment of the night sky.

Competition.

Ogden Valley competes with all of the above communities for tourism and, more specifically, with the gateway ski resort ordinance leaders: Sun Valley City, Ketchum, Aspen, Vail, Telluride, Mammoth etc.

Ogden Valley is no longer in the dark sky forefront (except in dark sky public art where it is setting the pace with the dark sky mural trail) and must up its game to remain competitive.

Economic Development.

Through the Utah Office of Tourism, we have been asked to support Brian Head Resort and Stein Ericksen Lodge (Deer Valley) in their dark sky promotions.

Additionally, Headlands, the only other dark sky county park (Northern Michigan) has experienced such an "economic boom" that the state added another 50 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline as a Dark Sky Coast [<http://www.midarkskypark.org/dark-sky-coast/>]

"As a part of the economic boom that the Dark Sky Park is creating, we can create an entire dark sky coast and have a number of viewing opportunities," said Tom Bailey, Little Traverse Conservancy director, last week during a meeting with county officials. "There are great opportunities to interpret native mythology and star lore here ... I can tell you as having been involved with the park service nationally and at the state level, there is a tremendous opportunity for interpretation here, there is a tremendous opportunity for visitation and tourism, and we are already seeing it." [http://articles.petoskeynews.com/2012-01-27/international-dark-sky-park_30672357] (see Attachment 4)

A report commissioned by the NPS's Colorado Plateau Dark Sky Cooperative that was researched by Missouri State University economists found the the dark skies there would generate, over a ten year period, approximately \$2.5 billion in incremental revenue and over 50,000 incremental jobs. [see Attachment 5 for summary].

A major factor for the dollar impact of dark sky tourism is that, in most case, *an overnight stay and at least one meal* are required; simple "drive-through" tourism is generally not possible.

**Estimating the Potential Economic Value
of the
Night Skies
Above the Colorado Plateau**

by

Dr. David Mitchell and Dr. Terrel Gallaway

Department of Economics
Missouri State University
Springfield, MO

Anecdotal Evidence of Dark Sky Tourism and North Fork Park.

Two of several recent emails received (another concerned a family reunion in North Fork Park with folks coming from Kentucky and several other states):

1. I am Miho Komura with JAMCA GLOBAL SERVICE, INC., the travel agency in Los Angeles. I found your contact through Dark Sky website.

My group would like to do astronomical observation at Weber County North Park and I have some questions.

Weber County North Park

Date: August 22, 2017

Time: at night / 1~2-hours

Count: 40-people

They will come to this place by large coach, after the bus arrived at parking space, how long should they walk to the observation point?

Is there enough space for 40 people?

Do you know if there is any event or any big group coming on Aug.22?

Are you able to be onsite and help them?

If there is any coordination fee, please let me know.

Thank you very much!

Miho Komura

2. Received by Jennifer Graham from Sydnie Furton Visit Ogden

I hope that this week is treating you well! I am working on a FAM with the Utah Office of Tourism showcasing night life in Utah. This "night owls" FAM trip will be visiting Ogden February 23-24. The UOT's big pitch was that Utah has the most IDSA-certified dark sky park's in the nation, and the only dark sky designation they are planning to visit on this trip will be North Fork Park.

Could you help me arrange a night time snowshoe tour for the group of journalists that are visiting for the night of February 23rd? Or do you know who the best person is for me to contact regarding this FAM? The group would be 9 individuals (5 national media, 1 local media, rep from UOT, rep from Turner PR and myself) I would like to ask that the snowshoe rentals would be comped for the group. Also, would there be an option to have a fire and smores after the tour, or in the middle of the tour?

This is the itinerary that we have in mind for this group while they are in Ogden.

Feb. 23: Arrivals

Afternoon: head to Ogden

Check in at Hotel

2 p.m. Fat Bike lessons at Powder Mountain

Stroll Historic 25th Street

6 p.m. Dinner at Tona sushi

8 p.m. Snowshoe to North Fork Dark Sky Park - bring Dark Sky Ranger

Overnight in Ogden

Feb. 24:

10 a.m. Breakfast in Ogden

11 a.m. Head to Ski City (1 hour)

Here are the journalists who have expressed interest:

Confirmed Interest & Availability

Danielle Page (Glamour, AskMen, Women's Health, Bustle, Greatist, Paste Magazine, Everup) awaiting media form

Ali Finney (Women's Health)

Macaela McKenzie (Condé Nast, Shape Magazine, Greatist) have media form

Janice O'Leary (Robb Report) awaiting media form

Other Target Media

Katherine LaGrave (CNT, Outside, Nat Geo, Vanity Fair, New York Times)

Stacie Stukin (New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Yoga Journal, Time, Elle Decor, Glamour, Self, Marie Claire)

Keith Flanagan (Condé Nast Traveler, USA Today, AFAR, Food Republic, Robb Report, Paste Magazine, Departures Magazine, amNewYork, Kinfolk, Town & Country)

Thank you for your help!

Best,

Sydney Furton

Marketing & Public Relations Manager

VisitOgden.com

Attachment 1



Tyler Nordgren Artwork for North Fork Park (Dec 2016)



Attachment 2



Great Western Starry Way

GREAT WESTERN STARRY WAY ★ INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY PLACES

Montana
Glacier National Park*

Wyoming
Yellowstone National Park*
Grand Teton National Park*
Devils Tower National Monument*

Colorado
Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park
Canyon of the Ancients National Monument*
Salinas Pueblo Mission National Monument

Idaho
Craters of the Moon National Monument*
City of Ketchum Dark Sky Community*

Nevada
Great Basin National Park

Utah
Capitol Reef National Park
Canyonlands National Park
Zion National Park*
Cedar Breaks National Monument*
Dinosaur National Monument*
Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument*
Hovenweep National Monument
Natural Bridges National Monument
Timpanogos Cave National Monument*
Glen Canyon National Recreation Area*
State Parks
Antelope Island State Park*
Coral Pink Sand Dunes State Park*
Dead Horse Point State Park

Utah (continued)
Deer Creek State Park*
East Canyon State Park*
Fremont Indian State Park*
Goblin Valley State Park
Gooseheads State Park*
Gunlock State Park*
Jordanelle State Park*
Red Fleet State Park*
Rockport State Park*
Steinaker State Park*
Quail Creek State Park*
County Park
North Fork Park (Weber County)

Arizona
Grand Canyon National Park (provisional)
Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument
Kaibab Paiute Dark Sky Nation
Pipe Organ Cactus National Monument
Flagstaff Area National Monument
Kartchner Caverns State Park
Oracle State Park
Red Rock State Park
Big Park/Oak Creek Dark Sky Community
Flagstaff Dark Sky Community
Fountain Hills Dark Sky Community
Sedona Dark Sky Community

New Mexico
Capulin Volcano National Monument
Chaco Canyon National Historical Park
Cosmic Campground

* in accreditation process International Dark-Sky Association





GLACIER-TO-GRAND CANYON AND BEYOND
International Dark Sky Places and Communities [draft]



Attachment 3



The Committee for Dark Sky Studies

In process to become formal academic center at the University of Utah
and formed as a direct result of the accreditation of North Fork Park



Mission

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The Committee for Dark Sky Studies (CDSS) is dedicated to the discovery, development, communication, and application of knowledge across a wide range of disciplines and professional fields pertaining to the quality of night skies, growing light pollution and the varied human, animal, and environmental responses to the "disappearing dark."
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Location

The largest region of high quality dark skies in the developed world is that of the Interior West (Mountain States).¹ With vast tracts of public land and an unparalleled concentration of national parks and monuments, the area provides substantial night sky and environmental research opportunities, while providing significant astro-tourism dollars to its gateway communities and constituent states: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming.

Institutional Members

University of Utah (administrative base)
Brigham Young University
Dixie State University
Salt Lake Community College
Southern Utah University
Utah State University
Utah Valley University
Weber State University
Westminster College

Affiliate Members

Boise State University [Monica Hubbard, Assistant Professor; Department of Public Policy and Administration]
Colorado Mesa University (Center for Natural Resources) [Tim Casey, Director]
Northern Arizona University [Nadine Barlow, Professor; Department of Physics and Astronomy]
Ohio Northern University [Bryan Boulanger, Chair and Associate Professor; Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering]
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (Lighting Research Center) [Mark Rea, Director]
University of Wyoming (Berry Biodiversity Conservation Center) [Carlos Martinez del Rio, Director]

¹ One of nine geographic divisions officially recognized by the U.S. Census Bureau

Attachment 4



The Headlands (the only other county park with International Dark Sky Park accreditation) has been so successful in generating visitor dollars, the State of Michigan designated 50 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline as a "Dark Sky Coast"



Attachment 5



Missouri State University: *Economic Impact of the Night Skies Above the Colorado Plateau*
(Mitchell and Gallaway, 2016)
Selected Sections Summary

- In the late 2000s, 65% of visitors to Colorado Plateau parks believed that dark skies were “important” or “very important” to their visit. (page 21)
- “The effect of dark skies on the state economies [in the Colorado Plateau] is quite large. Over the next 10 years, visitors will spend nearly \$2.5 Billion visiting NPS parks in the Dark Sky Cooperative trying to see a dark sky at night... This additional \$2.45 billion in spending creates \$1.68 billion in additional value added for the local state economies. The total effect of all of this additional spending is to create an additional 52,257 jobs that increase wages in the states by over \$1,094 million dollars.” (page 22)
- “The dark skies of the Colorado Plateau can be used, and promoted, as a magnet for tourism. Crucially, from an economic standpoint, the single most important thing about dark-sky tourism is that it necessitates one or more overnight stays. The NPS estimates that the average spending per party per day is about \$90 for non-local day trips. For parties staying overnight at an NPS lodge, this spending rises to over \$390, for those staying in motels outside the park, the amount is a little over \$270. In other words, inducing visitors to stay overnight can increase spending several fold.” (page 27)
- We would expect the economic impact of those who rate the night sky as important or very important but who stay overnight outside the park to dwarf the \$2.45 billion figure above and increase the total manifold. Importantly, these figures also do not include the impact of visitors to Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management lands.” (page 35)
- “The reported figures assume simply the continuation of existing trends, with no increase in efforts to promote night sky tourism... This presents the local communities and the parks in the Colorado Plateau with a unique opportunity for partnership.” (page 35)