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Acadia Night Sky Festival to Celebrate the Starlit Skies of Downeast Maine

The Acadia Night Sky Festival will take place this September beginning on the evening of Thursday the 17th, with events continuing through sunrise on Monday the 21st. Centered on Mount Desert Island, home to Acadia National Park, the Festival celebrates the protection and enjoyment of Downeast/Acadia's stellar night sky through education, science, and the arts. "Support for the Festival is amazing, folks in Maine are serious about protecting their night time environment" states Mr Lord.

From stargazing in Acadia National Park to a special performance by the Bangor Symphony Orchestra of night sky themed works, the public is invited to share the inspiration of Maine's spectacular night sky. The festival features day and night activities including music, science, poetry, art, plus family fun and hands on learning for all ages. Visit www.nightskyfestival.org for a full calendar of events.

Across the eastern half of the United States, the once open spaces between city centers are now filled by homes and businesses. The result is a continuous sky glow that has all but erased the star filled sky from points west and south of Downeast Acadia. Today many children have never seen the Milky Way.

Maine retains more naturally dark sky than any state east of the Mississippi. Community surveys of night sky quality performed by the Island Astronomy Institute with the assistance of the National Park Service, provide a visible measure of Maine's unique "quality of place," one that entire communities are acting to protect.

The National Park Service's (NPS) standardized measurement of light pollution documents how much artificial sky glow the human eye perceives at night. According to Mr Lord "This unique NPS standard promises to improve protection of the night sky in important ways. Some forms of "night sky friendly" lighting are much less effective at preventing measurable sky glow than others."

The Festival is presented by the Island Astronomy Institute in collaboration with Acadia National Park, Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce, Friends of Acadia. and a unique partnership of community and government organizations. It is made possible in part by the Maine Office of Tourism, the Maine Technology Institute, and the Acadia All American Roadway.

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