

Media Release: Dark Sky Group Lauds Memorial Bridge Lighting Project

26 November 2012 – *For Immediate Release*

Portsmouth – The International Dark Sky Association has praised the civic committee in Portsmouth and Kittery that is raising funds to illuminate the new Memorial Bridge for a lighting design that “fully respects” the natural resource of dark, starry skies.

“Your project promises to exemplify the ways in which carefully designed lighting can enhance civic beauty without contributing to light-pollution,” the dark-sky association says in a Nov. 21 letter to the committee.

The Illumination Sub-Committee of the Memorial Bridge Project aims to raise \$60,000 and \$80,000 in donations for a trust fund to be shared by the city administrations of Portsmouth and Kittery to install and operate lighting of the iconic new bridge linking the two communities. The design calls for energy-efficient LED lights aimed downward from the tops of the bridge towers and piers, to avoid adding to the area’s already considerable light-pollution.

A public presentation on the project will be held at Portsmouth Public Library on November 29 at 7 p.m.

In its letter, the IDA also praised the New Hampshire Department of Transportation for agreeing to the down-lighting design. And it expressed hope that the Memorial Bridge lighting project “will help promote public awareness of the value of dark skies and encourage the city of Portsmouth and neighboring towns to consider simple, energy-conserving ways of reducing light-pollution and protecting our natural nightscape.”

Based in Tucson and Washington, D.C., with 58 chapters in 16 countries, IDA works with communities, state and federal government and the lighting industry to save energy and preserve views of the night sky, as “one-half of the entire planet’s natural environment.”

The IDA’s website at www.darksky.org notes that “the star-filled nights of just a few years ago are vanishing in a yellow haze. Human-produced light pollution not only mars our view of the stars; poor lighting threatens astronomy, disrupts ecosystems, affects human circadian rhythms, and wastes energy to the tune of \$2.2 billion per year in the U.S. alone.”

[End]