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## **The Utah Office of Tourism Celebrates Governor Cox's Fourth Annual Declaration of Dark Sky Month**

**SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH** — The Utah Office of Tourism celebrates Governor Spencer Cox's fourth annual declaration of April as Dark Sky Month. Astrotourism and dark sky messaging complement the Red Emerald Strategic Plan, which aims to elevate life in Utah through responsible tourism stewardship. April in Utah has been celebrated as Dark Sky Month since 2021.

Utah is home to some of the darkest skies on earth and currently leads the world in dark sky preservation with 25 accredited DarkSky International places.

"Dark sky preservation encourages overnight stays, diversifies the Utah product and expands the visitor experience," Natalie Randall, managing director of the Utah Office of Tourism. "Utah State Parks, our national parks and community partners have shown tremendous leadership and vision in preserving the night sky throughout the state."

A unique natural resource, Utah's dark skies have proven to be a reliable revenue generator for the state, which in turn improves the quality of life for residents. The trend is expected to grow; astrotourism could lead to an estimated [\\$5.8 billion in spending in the Colorado Plateau](#) and support over 113,000 new jobs in the next 10 years.

"Utah is home to some of the most breathtaking areas in the world, but many people only visit them during the daytime." Utah State Parks Director, Scott Strong said. "At our state parks, we offer dark sky programs and tours that help visitors see these areas in a unique way. This not only improves our visitors' experience but also helps open their minds to a new and exciting activity to participate in moving forward. Seeing an area like Goblin Valley State Park during the day is a beautiful sight to behold, but experiencing it at night takes it to a whole other level."

Further, the Red Emerald Strategic Plan focuses on the quality of visits and manages visitation consistent with local community priorities. Utah's 25 accredited DarkSky International places

include Natural Bridges National Monument, the first ever dark sky designated park in the world, all five of Utah's Mighty 5® national parks, 10 state parks, two towns and more.

Visitors and residents can go to [visitutah.com/stars](https://visitutah.com/stars) for a suite of resources to learn how to experience, enjoy and protect the state's vast night skies.

*Dark Sky Images - [here](#)*

*Utah State Parks Dark Sky Events & Program - [here](#)*

*Beginner's Guide to Dark Skies Exploration - [here](#)*

*Gov. Spencer J. Cox's 2024 Utah Dark Sky Month Declaration - [here](#)*

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### **About the Utah Office of Tourism**

The Utah Office of Tourism (UOT) fulfills its mission to improve the quality of life for Utah residents through revenue and tax relief by attracting quality, well-prepared domestic and international visitation and motivating tourism spending within a sustainable tourism economy. The UOT partners with communities to develop tourism economies and storytelling consistent with their local vision and encourages stewardship and industry support through local engagement and ambassadorship. To advance these goals, the UOT manages year-round strategic marketing, industry research, media relations, cooperative marketing, in-state public relations, website and visitor experience enhancements, and destination management and development programs. Learn more at [travel.utah.gov](https://travel.utah.gov) and [visitutah.com](https://visitutah.com).