

## **... The Eagle Hill Institute Astronomy Center ... The Executive Summary ...**

### **Project and location**

- The Eagle Hill Institute ... [www.eaglehill.us](http://www.eaglehill.us) ... is working on plans for the construction of a multi-level astronomy center on the 235-foot summit of Eagle Hill on Dyer Neck, the only inhabited peninsula summit on the eastern Maine coast. Its upper level will have a flat roof that will not be visible above the tree-line. One will be able to discreetly look down over the tallest trees of the heavily forested peninsula, up to have a 360° unobstructed awe-inspiring full horizon dark sky view of our Milky Way Galaxy, and south over the Gulf of Maine. It will be located 64 miles from the Canadian border, within 1,500 feet of the shore of Dyer Bay, and within a 150-acre nature reserve with a quarter mile of deep-water ocean frontage. Petit Manan National Wildlife Refuge is to the immediate east and the Schoodic Point of Acadia National Park is to the immediate west.

### **Fiscal responsibility ... Globally networked with professionals ... Locally engaged with the public**

- The institute is a 501(c)(3) Maine nonprofit tax-exempt organization that was founded in 1981. It is unusual among non-profit organizations, since it has been well over 95% self-supporting each year for decades through revenues from services offered for professionals, university students, and amateurs in the natural history sciences. These involve offering training seminars, publishing scientific journals, and hosting a large annual offsite conference. The institute is locally, regionally, nationally, and globally well networked and engaged with helping people pursue their interests.
- The institute offers one of the finest small special events venues on the coast of Maine. It is much cherished by year-round and seasonal residents of the coast of Maine and by transient visitors.

### **Our overall goal for the Institute for the near future ... A paradigm shift**

- We seek to transition the Institute from a mostly seasonal campus that has been offering summer natural history science seminars, into a year-round campus with a broader mission. We will do so by expanding our commitments in the fields of music, fine art, the humanities, and astronomy. This summary focuses on how we will do so in the field of astronomy. How we will otherwise do so is the subject of a separate summary for a multi-level building called the Athenaeum on the precipitous edge of the western slope of Eagle Hill, from which one will have an awe-inspiring view at sunset looking down an 80' drop in elevation, out over western Dyer Neck and Gouldsboro Bay, and towards Schoodic Head and Cadillac Mountain of Acadia National Park. The two buildings will be structurally and programmatically integrated in a seamless way.

### **Our overall goal for the astronomy center ... Is it needed? ... Can it become self-supporting?**

- There is a region-wide consensus that eastern Maine will benefit from more educational and practical training opportunities in the sciences. Our region's dark sky is a rare resource which we can use to promote a greater interest in science, astronomy, and the importance of dark skies.
- The astronomy center will be universally fascinating to everyone who visits it, from school-age children through adults, because of the 360° view of the horizon one will have from its observation level, regardless of whether they have an interest in astronomy or not. Interests in astronomy among all visitors will thus surely naturally grow over time with repeat visits.
- The astronomy center is expected to be self-supporting, as all of the institute's efforts are. Can this be done by way of program fees alone? ... **No** ... However, it can be done by factoring in the following traditional revenue sources for nonprofit organizations, such as museums.

- 46 • Dark sky and Moon-lit evenings on the observation level and evenings around sunset on the  
47 upper level of the Athenaeum will surely serve as elegant venues for hosting banquets for private  
48 social events and events for organizations, corporations, and agencies. The institute has for  
49 decades hosted on-campus and off-campus multi-day events for 50 to 600 guests, respectively.  
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#### 51 **Astronomy programs that can be offered**

- 52 • The key starting focus of teaching programs on the observation level will be dramatic dark sky  
53 views of the Milky Way galaxy and how constellations change over the year. A high-powered laser  
54 pointer can outline them and point out stars, planets, galaxies, and features of the Moon, etc.  
55 • Lower levels can offer seminars and lectures, serve as a place where astronomy club members  
56 can meet, host astronomers in our scholars-in residence program, and offer mentoring  
57 opportunities involving access to remote telescopes and the institute’s programmable telescope.  
58 • A planetarium will be a weather-independent teaching tool for seminars and lectures, offer  
59 recorded astronomy shows, and serve as yet another elegant venue for hosting banquet events.  
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#### 61 **Views of the Milky Way Galaxy as a “stage” for deeply-contemplative discussion forums**

- 62 • Experiencing eastern Maine’s dark sky view of our Milky Way Galaxy from the observation level  
63 will be naturally conducive to deeply introspective thoughts that bring one’s own place in the  
64 universe into a higher-order perspective. This experience sets the stage in the level below the  
65 observation level for the institute’s deeply contemplative discussions forums about global affairs,  
66 diplomacy, other aspects of human nature, astronomy, and Space exploration.  
67

#### 68 **Accommodations and meals**

- 69 • One of the more challenging aspects of building an interest in an astronomy center is the fact that  
70 outdoor viewing programs are always scheduled at night. The institute routinely offers meals and  
71 accommodations in support of its program. It is thus well positioned to offer highly synergized  
72 extended astronomy evenings and weekends, while offering guests an option to stay overnight.  
73

#### 74 **Fundraising ... A balance between self-reliance, stepped fundraising, major donations, and grants**

- 75 • This summary is written with the assumption that we can complete the construction of the  
76 astronomy center if we stay within our “means”, i.e., by using existing funds ... and ... by using a  
77 stepped fundraising approach, which means pairing our efforts with a stepped construction and  
78 stepped program development approach. We need to minimize our construction costs, not over-  
79 estimate our fundraising abilities, not over-estimate our program and event revenues, not take on  
80 a construction loan, and postpone or avoid applying for foundation, state, and federal grants.  
81 • In effect, we are trusting in our usual mellow “everyone in their own good time ... and ... everyone  
82 in their own good way” approach, avoiding directly asking for donations. We will instead raise  
83 funds in a way that is socially comfortable, by hosting ticketed events and sharing a prospectus.  
84 Major donors and grantors will of course be most welcome, should they choose to expand our  
85 “means” by making a legacy decision to accelerate the construction of the astronomy center.  
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#### 87 **The role of Eagle Hill in the future of Maine ... The ennobling function of architecture**

- 88 • A well-designed building has an ennobling function, in the sense that it can “spark” subliminal  
89 human potentials. There will be no finer diplomatically-neutral venue on the Maine coast than the  
90 astronomy center and Athenaeum for hosting elegant events that envisage a collaborative future.

