

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2201

June 1, 2020

Mark Romanski
Acting Superintendent
Isle Royale National Park
800 East Lakeshore Drive
Houghton, Michigan 49931

Dear Mr. Romanski:

I write with regards to the operational status of Isle Royale National Park in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. I understand the unforeseen challenges the Park faces at this time, and I appreciate its efforts to manage this public health emergency and keep our communities safe. As Isle Royale considers options for the future of the Park, I urge the National Park Service to take steps to ensure access to public lands and outdoor recreation.

Our offices have received significant feedback from constituents, stakeholders, and community leaders regarding the operational status of Isle Royale. Given the National Park Service's continued commitment to the health and safety of its visitors, opening can be conducted in a safe and effective manner as the State of Michigan begins to reopen parts of Northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula. For example, we have seen Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore begin access to park facilities while following guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and state and local public health authorities. Given the short summers experienced in the Upper Peninsula, further closure of Isle Royale and its facilities past June 15, 2020 will also be detrimental to our local economies and our communities. Outdoor recreation and access to public lands can be accomplished in accordance with state and federal safety guidelines.

It is my hope that Isle Royale, in conjunction with the Regional and National Park Service management, can open the Park to visitors this summer. In conjunction, while such determinations are being made, I urge the Park to consider allowing the maximum access available to Isle Royale facilities, including, but not limited to:

1. Ability to dock personal watercraft overnight
2. Access to shelters
3. Access to bathrooms
4. Access to fuel at Mott Island



While the Park remains closed until June 15, it is my understanding that Park leadership will continue to consider the operating status throughout the remainder of the season. I appreciate all the work you have done to this point and ask that you respectfully consider the above suggestions for park operations. Isle Royale is a national treasure, and I am hopeful that Michiganders can once again enjoy this beautiful place we call home.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jack Bergman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Jack Bergman
Member of Congress