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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**ECO-FRIENDLY PRACTICES AT THE OSTHOFF RESORT IN ELKHART LAKE EARN IT
TRAVEL GREEN WISCONSIN CERTIFICATION**

ELKHART LAKE, Wis. (May 1, 2009) -- Travel Green Wisconsin, a voluntary certification program that recognizes tourism businesses for reducing their environmental footprint through eco-friendly practices, has just announced The Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake has earned certification. The Osthoff is a AAA Four Diamond resort featuring all-suite accommodations, a lakefront setting, two restaurants, a destination spa, cooking school, year-round recreation, and conference rooms and meeting spaces. The resort's Web site is www.osthoff.com.

The Osthoff Resort has been a favorite of families for many years, with visitors from Wisconsin and Chicago fondly referring to it as "their place on the lake." While the resort occupies significant real estate on the shores of Elkhart Lake, its Travel Green Wisconsin accomplishment is proof that square footage need not stand in the way of a property being entirely eco-conscious in its operational practices. Recycling and reuse programs exist for both employees and guests. The property has its own organic garden, which supplies vegetables and herbs to its restaurants and its on-site cooking school, with local farms making up the rest. The spa, Aspira, has its own eco-friendly vibe too, with services featuring organic products and the treatment rooms using only organic linens and towels. Guests may participate in silent water sports like kayaking and canoeing. There's also the added bonus that many of the area's attractions, including a farmers' market and the lakeshore itself, are walkable from The Osthoff.

In releasing the news, Tourism Secretary Kelli A. Trumble shared her belief that green travel will be one of the most important travel trends of our lifetime, and that serving the needs of eco-aware travelers is not only the right thing to do, it's good for business. "The Osthoff Resort is poised to serve this burgeoning consumer demand for green travel, all the while continuing to grow tourism revenue for the community and the state," said Secretary Trumble. She went on to say that, "With our state's history of land stewardship, it's most fitting that Wisconsin and properties like The Osthoff lead the nation in this."

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The person credited with championing the Travel Green Wisconsin certification for The Osthoff is general manager, Lola Roeh. Her appreciation of the state's natural resources is genuine, having grown up on a working dairy farm not far from the resort and still maintaining the original farmhouse as her family residence today. "The area's farming heritage and the waters of Elkhart Lake which were considered sacred by the first stewards of the land, the Native American tribes that once inhabited the shores, provided ample inspiration to weave sustainability into as many facets of our business as possible," said Roeh. "It's a wonderful honor for the resort and the community."

To achieve certification, applicants must earn a minimum of 30 points from a checklist of basic requirements covering a wide range of "green" practices, including: waste reduction, reuse and recycling; energy efficiency, water conservation and wastewater management; air quality; wildlife and landscape; transportation; purchasing; and local community benefits. The Wisconsin Environmental Initiative, an independent third party, then certifies Travel Green Wisconsin applicants.

Since it was launched statewide in 2007, Travel Green Wisconsin has garnered its share of national media coverage, with stories appearing in *USA Today*, the *Chicago Tribune* and *New York Times*, and on *CNN*. The program has certified more than 200 tourism businesses to date, including hotels, resorts, B&Bs, restaurants, retail stores, tour operators, nature centers, state parks, convention centers, golf courses, and a range of indoor and outdoor attractions.

For more information about Travel Green Wisconsin, visit www.travelgreenwisconsin.com.

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