

# News Release

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department  
International Dark-Sky Association, Oregon Chapter  
May 7, 2021

## Prineville Reservoir State Park certified as an International Dark Sky Park

PRINEVILLE, Oregon - Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) and the Oregon Chapter of the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) are pleased to announce that Prineville Reservoir State Park is a certified International Dark Sky Park, making it the newest addition to the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) Dark Sky Places Program. Prineville Reservoir is the first Oregon park and the second place in Oregon to be honored with the designation.

The certification recognizes the exceptional quality of the park's night skies as well as the park's efforts to install responsible lighting and educate the public about light pollution. Prineville Reservoir joins only 174 locations worldwide that have followed a rigorous application process for dark sky certification.

"We are proud to help protect the night skies above Prineville Reservoir from light pollution and share Oregon's incredible dark sky with visitors who may not be able to see the Milky Way from home," said OPRD Director Lisa Sumption. "This designation is the result of the hard work of the staff at Prineville Reservoir and builds on their longtime dedication to astronomy education."



Photo by Dawn Davis

"This designation makes Prineville Reservoir a premier destination for stargazing, driving overnight visitation and drawing tourism dollars to the region while enhancing quality of life for residents," said Bob Hackett, Associate Director of Travel Southern Oregon.

[Prineville Reservoir State Park](#) was selected for its expansive dark skies that connect the growing central Oregon city of Bend and population centers west of the Cascade Mountains to the vast starry skies that envelope southeastern Oregon.

As part of the application process, park staff replaced harsh outdoor lights with softer yellow and red lighting that reduces skyglow.

"The park offers a genuine night-sky experience for those coming from light polluted cities," said Bill Kowalik, chair of the [Oregon Chapter of the International Dark-Sky Association](#). "Formal recognition of this International Dark Sky Park, located in rapidly growing central Oregon, will help to educate the public and decision makers about light pollution and the value of the night sky to people and to our greater wild ecosystem."

The [International Dark-Sky Association](#) aims to preserve and protect the nighttime environment and our heritage of dark skies through environmentally responsible outdoor lighting. The [International Dark Sky Places Program](#) was founded in 2001 as a non-regulatory and voluntary program to encourage communities, parks and protected areas around the world to preserve and protect dark sites through responsible lighting polices and public education.

## **Media Contact**

### **Oregon Parks and Recreation Department**

Nate Robedeau

Park Ranger, Prineville Reservoir State Park

[nate.robedeau@oregon.gov](mailto:nate.robedeau@oregon.gov)

### **International Dark-Sky Association, Oregon Chapter**

Bill Kowalik

Oregon Chapter Chair

[bill.kowalik@darksky.org](mailto:bill.kowalik@darksky.org)