



Welcome!

Hello Dark Sky Supporters! Welcome to the first edition of IDA Oregon's newsletter -- *Oregon Dark Sky Times*. We aim to produce a quarterly newsletter to update you on chapter activities, opportunities, plans, and accomplishments.

Much has happened since a start-up committee announced a plan in April to form a statewide chapter of the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) and requested help in its establishment. A Board of Directors was established and has been busy forming a 501(c)(3) non-profit LLC, creating and hosting a website, Facebook, and other social media sites, arranging and hosting screenings of the documentary film *Saving the Dark*, making presentations and tabling at outreach events, conducting light pollution monitoring, establishing plans, and more.

Now that the chapter is up and running, more volunteers are needed to implement an ambitious strategic plan. Follow IDA Oregon on social media and read on to learn how you can be part of the solution to light pollution in Oregon.

IDA Oregon Online:

Website <https://www.darkskyoregon.org/>

Email idaoregon@darksky.org

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/IDAOregon/>

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/darkskyoregon/>

Twitter <https://twitter.com/DarkSkyOregon>

IDA Oregon Seeks Broad Engagement

While people in the cities and suburbs struggle with glare, and work to overcome the concept that more and brighter light is safer, folks in rural areas want to protect their natural night from encroaching distant light pollution and from unshielded lights where they live.

Given the diverse character of Oregon and varying issues, the Chapter has adopted an organization that aligns with the same seven regions recognized by Travel Oregon (see map below): Oregon Coast, Mt. Hood & Columbia Gorge, Willamette Valley, Portland Metro Area, Central Oregon, Eastern Oregon, and Southern Oregon.

To sustain the work of the Chapter over the years, we are looking for a coordinator from each region and volunteers who will act locally. Every person can make a difference! Please consider helping. Contact us at idaoregon@darksky.org.



What's Happening in Oregon?

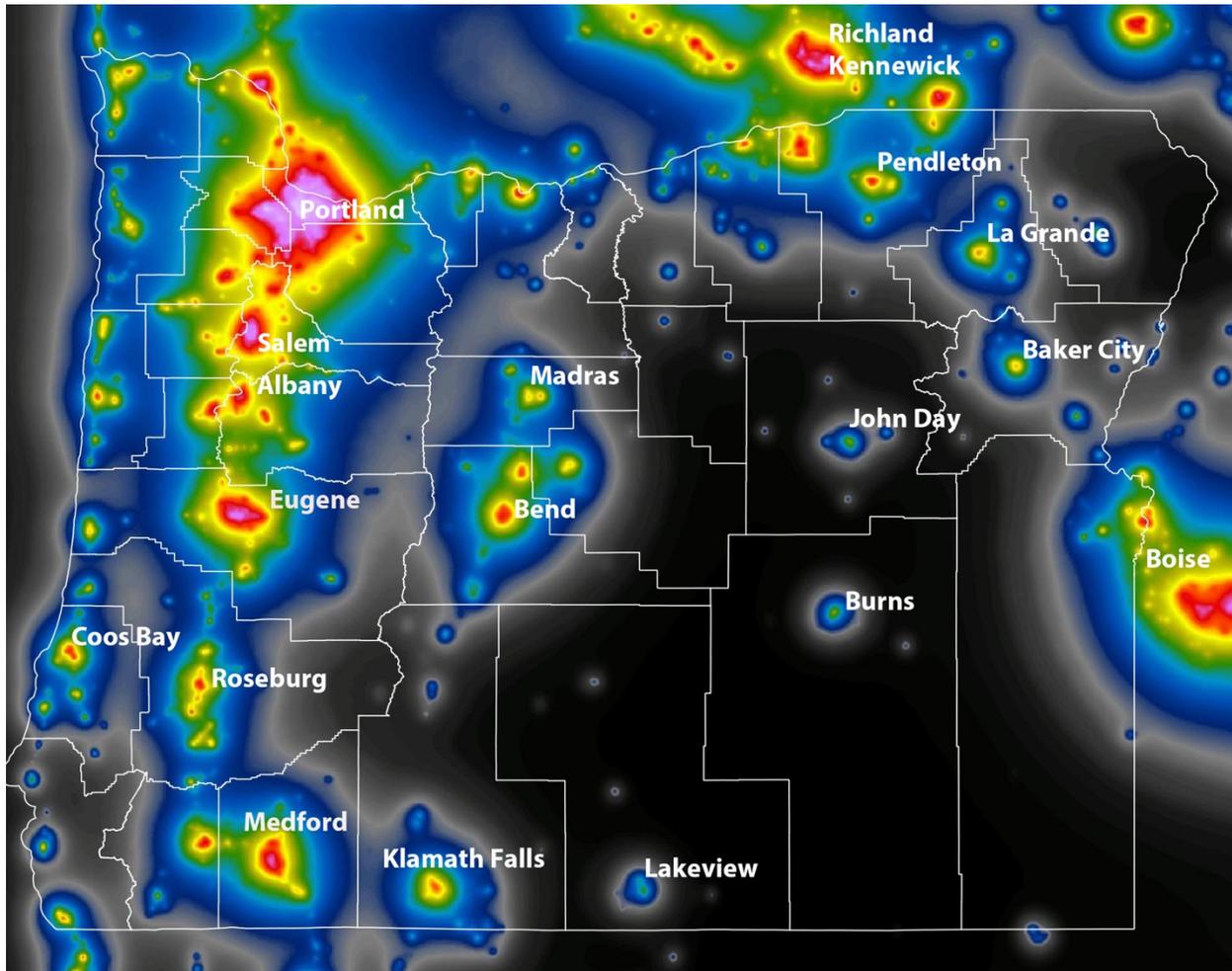
International Dark Sky Places

IDA International has an International Dark Sky Places program, which encourages communities, parks and protected areas around the world to preserve and protect dark sites through responsible lighting policies and public education. Worldwide there are 120+ certified international dark sky places (IDSPs). Across the US, there are 81 certified dark sky places - 17 in the Eastern US, 14 in Texas alone, and 15 in Utah.

Currently, no international dark sky places are recognized in Oregon. One of the goals of IDA Oregon is to help identify and nominate Oregon's first IDSP. (But, we don't plan to stop at one). Currently five sites are preparing an application. They include: Prineville Reservoir State Park, the communities of Tetherow and Black Butte Ranch in Central Oregon, Oregon Caves National Monument, and the city of Mosier in the Columbia River Gorge.

In five other locations efforts are underway to forge partnerships and begin the process. Most notably, Southeastern Oregon is within the largest contiguous zone of pristine dark skies within the continental United States. The Oregon area of this zone is known as Oregon's Outback. A voluntary grass-roots initiative named the [Oregon Outback Dark Sky Network](#) was established in October to *"build an alliance of communities, businesses, local governments, ranchers, state and federal agencies, tribes, and Oregon Outback night sky enthusiasts to support a set of shared principles resulting in mutual community benefits and the long-term conservation of our starry night heritage."*

Here's a map of light pollution in Oregon based on a global satellite survey in 2015. Bright-colored areas need help to reduce light pollution, and dark-colored areas have pristine night skies in need of local help for recognition as dark sky places. Contact idaoregon@darksky.org



Measuring Light Pollution

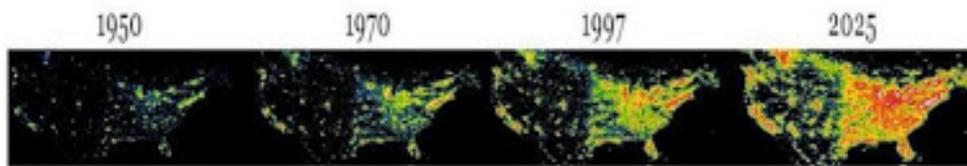
IDA Oregon has initiated an ambitious project to measure light pollution in Oregon. There are currently seven locations in Central Oregon being continuously monitored as part of [The Central Oregon Skyglow Monitoring Network](#) project. This project has been operating since July and there are plans to expand the project to other areas of Oregon. This is the beginning of a multiple, years-long project to measure the current (baseline) levels of light pollution and to track changes over time. More volunteers are needed for this effort. It's a great STEM project, so be sure to share this news with the teachers and students in your life. Contact idaoregon@darksky.org

LED Streetlight Retrofits

Various communities around Oregon are replacing the older yellow-colored sodium streetlights with new, energy efficient LED lights. While these new lights are highly energy efficient, last longer, and are easy to maintain, scientists have been revealing that the extent of blue light (unnatural to a night environment) emitted from these popular LED lights creates the adverse effect of greater glare and skyglow.

In the City of Bend, for example, new 3000K LED streetlights are estimated to reduce the total lumen output by 50%, while unfortunately introducing more damaging blue light than the former lights. The new LED streetlights have increased the problem of light trespass - namely light falling into homes nearby. The City of Bend will install light shields to the new LED streetlights on a case-by-case complaint basis. The shields only block light to the front and rear, not to the left or right.

The Central Oregon Region of IDA Oregon is organizing (with two monthly meetings so far) to discuss local issues and help coordinate feedback to/from the City of Bend on its new LED streetlights. If your community is looking to retrofit its streetlights to LEDs, become informed so you can ensure the best outcome possible. Suitable LED streetlights should be fully shielded, and have a warmer color temperature, 2700 Kelvin or less (yellowish, no bluish).



Light Pollution Solutions



What's ahead in 2020?

As 2019 comes to a close, the Board of Directors is updating the Chapter's Strategic Plan for 2020. Here are a few topics under discussion. If you have an idea to add or want to work on one or more of these programs, please connect with your Board.

- Oregon's Good Light Neighbor program – this is a program to encourage good environmental lighting practices and to recognize businesses, organizations, and residents for their dark sky stewardship. It's modeled after [successful programs in Borrego Springs, CA](#) and Texas.
- Screening the documentary movie "[Saving the Dark](#)" in various population centers around the state
- Dark Sky Parties/Festivals to help people develop an appreciation for a natural night sky
- Expand the [Central Oregon Skyglow Monitoring Network](#) to other parts of Oregon
- Facilitate the establishment of [improved lighting ordinances](#) in cities and counties around the state
- Continue to create awareness through social media, tabling at events, and speaking engagements.

How to get Involved

IDA Oregon is growing and needs your help!

- [Join IDA or update your \\$35 annual dues](#) – that's how you become a member of IDA Oregon.
- Volunteer to help organize your IDA area of Oregon – all regions need help!
- Tell us what's happening in your region!
- Arrange to screen the movie "[Saving the Dark](#)" in your neighborhood/region/organization.
- Learn about your local City or County [lighting ordinances](#) – likely they can be improved by the encouragement of residents.
- Spread the word to your social media contacts about the benefits of dark skies
- Write a letter to the editor of your local paper.
- [Talk to your neighbor](#) about their bright lights.
- Financially support IDA Oregon – You can donate through PayPal at <https://www.darkskyoregon.org/>. All donations are tax deductible. IDA Oregon operates on volunteer funding for printing posters and banners, purchasing outreach materials, light pollution monitoring equipment, renting meeting space, website maintenance, online meeting fees, and more. The total expense is several thousand dollars per year.



Pacific City, Oregon Night Sky Photo by Grant Tandy, IDA Advocate, Bend, OR

A Call for Oregon Nightscape Images

IDA Oregon is putting together a 3 to 4-minute inspirational video focusing on starry imagery of Oregon and could use your help. If you have nightscape shots (like the one above) of iconic places in Oregon or just fun time images under the stars with friends and family, please submit them at idaoregon@darksky.org. Time-lapse photos are even more desirable.

The images will be put to music. No decisions have been made yet, but Naomi LaViolette, a local Oregon musician, singer, and song-writer has given her permission to use her song [Pictures in the Sky](#) on the video. Do you have a song to offer for consideration? Check out Naomi's song and have a wonderful winter solstice! (Pictures in the Sky chorus: "The stars are making pictures in the sky...find a nice spot on the ground to look up high...don't think about tomorrow; set yesterday aside...cause the stars are making pictures in the sky.")

*******HAPPY WINTER SOLSTICE*******
*******HAPPY HOLIDAYS!*******