

NOMINATION APPLICATION
DarkSky International
Dark Sky Community Designation
Old Snowmass, Colorado
January 2026



Photo of Capitol Peak and Mt Daly Photo by Pete McBride

Table of Contents

Letters of Recommendation & Nomination	3
Introduction and History of Old Snowmass, Colorado	7
DarkSky Initiative Background	20
View of the Roaring Fork Valley Lighting Impacts	37
Lighting Inventory for Colorado Highway 82 & Snowmass Creek Rd	48
Identification of All Business Lighting in Old Snowmass	50
Business Light Measurements	51
Lighting Updates with Before & After Photos	53
Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus Commitment	61
Outreach 2023 - 2024: List of Activities and Presentations by WildSky Snowmass	68
Outreach 2025: List of Activities and Presentations by WildSky Old Snowmass	82
Outreach: News and Public Radio Support	95
Letters of Community Support	102

Letters of Recommendation & Nomination

Aaron Watson/DarkSky Colorado



Aaron Watson
DarkSky Colorado
Dark Sky Certification Specialist

November 16, 2024

Dear International Dark Sky Places Review Committee,

It is with great appreciation to the WildSky Dark Sky Initiative, the Pitkin County government, and the community of Old Snowmass, that I nominate Old Snowmass, Colorado, to be granted the distinction of being honored as an International Dark Sky Community.

The village of Old Snowmass sits in the Roaring Fork Valley at the footstep of the Maroon-Bells Snowmass Wilderness, home to many rugged and remote mountains and valleys. Sandwiched between the popular mountain resort town of Aspen to the south and the larger towns of Basalt and Carbondale to the northwest, Old Snowmass provides a refreshing dark sky oasis from the din of city noise and light. The nights skies above Old Snowmass are still mostly pristine, and it is encouraging that the community is taking measures to protect their night skies in this naturally dark part of Colorado.

With the commitment shown by the community, the county government, and the Wild Sky Dark Sky Initiative, and because of the critical need to protect the remaining natural night in Western Colorado, please accept this letter as my wholehearted endorsement of Old Snowmass becoming certified as an International Dark Sky Community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aaron Watson".

Aaron Watson
Dark Sky Certification Specialist, DarkSky Colorado

Edmund Andrews, President
Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus



Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus
PO Box 507
Snowmass, Colorado 81654

DarkSky International
5049 East Broadway Blvd, #105
Tucson, AZ 85711

To: DarkSky International Review Committee

On behalf of the Snowmass-Capitol Creek Caucus, I wish to express our full and enthusiastic support for the accompanying application to become a DarkSky Community. The Caucus is a citizens advisory committee created by the Pitkin County Board of Commissioners to develop a Master Plan for our part of Pitkin County and to provide review and comments on land-use applications submitted for County development permits. A little over one year ago, one of our Board members, Martha Ferguson, proposed that we should seek to become a DarkSky Community. Our Master Plan, as approved by Pitkin County, prioritizes the preservation and maintenance of the rural character of the Snowmass-Capitol Creek Caucus area. Over the past year, as described in our application, we have undertaken a number of initiatives and activities to increase awareness of a dark night sky and to reduce unnecessary lighting.

We began with, admittedly, a pretty favorable rural setting. Public events, articles in our local newspaper, and neighborhood newsletters have been highly effective at raising awareness of the value of our dark sky opportunities. We hosted a very well received public presentation by Dr. Jeff Hall, who was introduced by National Geographics photographer, Pete McBride. We have received strong and enthusiastic public support in our area. There has been a noticeable reduction in unnecessary and stray lighting just from these initial efforts. The interest and support extend countywide, and the Pitkin County Commissioners are now considering a revised lighting ordinance, guided by DarkSky objectives and principles.

We hope that you will approve our application to become a DarkSky Community. I am quite sure that your endorsement will greatly benefit our efforts to achieve a darker night sky in our community and across Pitkin County, and to provide a model for other communities. We appreciate your support and guidance.

Respectfully,



Edmund Andrews
Chair, Snowmass-Capitol Creek Caucus

Pitkin County Board of County Commissioners
Francie Jacober, 2023 Chair



August 22, 2023

Attn: International Dark Sky Association

RE: Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus International Dark Sky Community Application

This letter is to express support from the Pitkin County Board of County Commissioners for the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus's bid to designate their region as an International Dark Sky Community through the International Dark Sky Association. The area of interest, comprising 17,061 acres of rural and open space lands in the Capitol Creek Drainage of Old Snowmass, imbues the quintessential natural heritage of Colorado – containing vast ecological, cultural, open space and viewshed conservation values, in which the preservation of dark skies will invariably protect.

Pitkin County has long recognized the unique geographic and rural areas of the county and established the caucus system as part of its Home Rule Charter. The primary functions of Pitkin County caucuses are to make recommendations to the county on matters affecting the caucus area including the development of county laws, land-use approvals, rules and regulations and work-program matters. Recognized caucus areas reflect geographically contiguous areas with social, economic, cultural and environmental communities of interest. The Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus was officially recognized in November 1974, and while it is near the resort towns of Aspen and Snowmass Village, it is still predominantly rural/agricultural and remains substantially unchanged.

Pitkin County Board of County Commissioners supports the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus's effort to become the first designated Dark Sky Community in Pitkin County and dedication to protecting the night sky. We urge you to give the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus's application your highest consideration for their designation as a Dark Sky Community to ensure the quality of life and preservation of associated values for the surrounding community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Francie Jacober".

Francie Jacober, Chair
Pitkin County Commissioners

Introduction and History of Old Snowmass, Colorado



Snowmass Capitol Creek Valleys



Views Around Old Snowmass and the Snowmass Capitol Creek Valley







Perhaps the oldest known history of the area now known as Old Snowmass, Colorado was documented in an Aspen Times article that highlighted the discovery of a 150 million year old haplocanthosaurus dinosaur fossil on a local ranch, an enigmatic plant-eating sauropod from the Upper Jurassic Morrison Formation of the American West. A number of other fossils and bones have been found in neighboring Snowmass Village, located about 10 miles southeast as the crow flies from Old Snowmass. These bones and other prehistoric objects found in this area can be seen at the recently created Snowmass Ice Age Discovery Center. <https://snowmassiceage.com/>

“Dinosaur fossil discovered in rural Old Snowmass turned out to be a very rare beast indeed according to the paleontologist leading the excavation.”
Aspen Times January 6, 2014



Rendering of a Haplocanthosaurus

The Ute Indians, for 800 years prior to 1879, summered in the Roaring Fork Valley of western Colorado ~ a favorite spot at camps in the Snowmass and Capitol Creek Valleys where the weather was agreeable and wildlife was plentiful for hunting and fishing. It is known that the Utes' respect for the land, water and sky was a central tenet of their lives and beliefs. But as history tells us, by 1861 the Ute people were being moved to a larger reservation on the western side of the Continental Divide and their territory continued to dwindle as settlers relentlessly pushed west.



As such, especially when gold and silver were discovered in western states such as Colorado, the place known as Ute City (renamed Aspen in 1880 for the abundance of aspen trees in the area) became a hub for silver mining... and the silver rush was on! Within a few years Aspen had grown to a bustling town of anywhere from 10,000 - 16,000 (as opposed to today's count of 6,742) with miners seeking their fortune and amenities like banks, theaters, an opera house, a red light district along with a hospital, schools and sheriff department. With this rapid growth that included massive needs for mules and horses (the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad did not reach Aspen until 1887), early Aspen had enormous demands for grass and hay to feed their animals and livestock. The close proximity of the Old Snowmass area provided huge acreage with plenty of natural water to grow this much needed commodity that was lacking in Aspen proper, most especially slough grass that grew abundantly in meadows predominantly in the Capitol Creek valley, luring the first homesteaders to Old Snowmass with a solid prospect for a way to make a living.

Slough grass that grew abundantly in local meadows and predominantly around East Sopris and Lime Creeks (which overflowed in springtime), was harvested and baled and initially transported on the backs of burros, or 'jacks' as they were called, to Aspen and mining camps to feed the numerous animals. This grass is still abundant all around our two valleys.



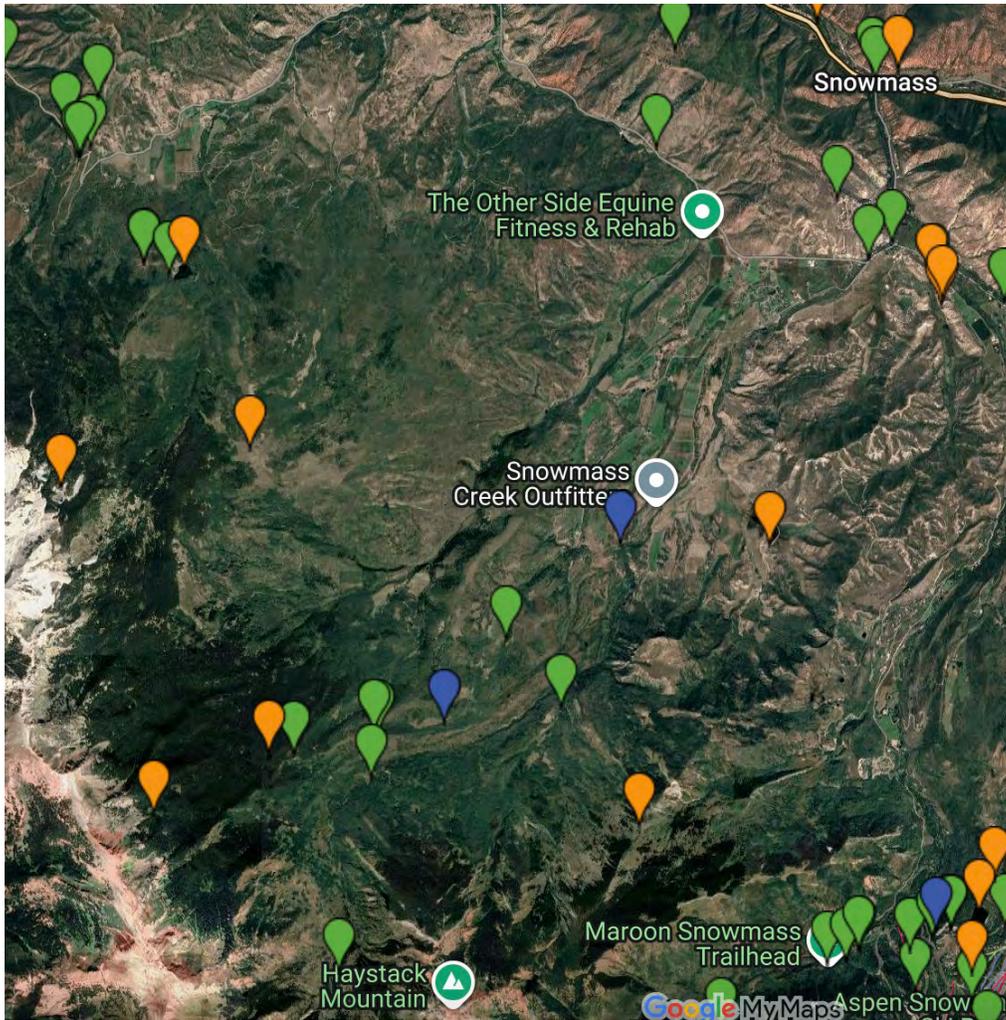
Present Day Particulars in Old Snowmass

Old Snowmass is an unincorporated community and is located in Pitkin County, within the Roaring Fork Valley approximately 15 miles southwest (downvalley) of Aspen, Colorado, about a 25 minute drive. The community is located very close to the ski area of Snowmass Village which was incorporated as a town in 1967; many confuse Old Snowmass with Snowmass Village. Pitkin County currently reports just over 17,000 residents in 2024 with close to 1,500 residing in the Old Snowmass area.

Pitkin County's land area is 975 square miles and Old Snowmass is nestled into that with roughly 103 square miles. At an elevation of 6,847 feet the area still sees healthy snowfall in winter with cross country skiing available, while opening up to green meadows, hiking/biking trails, camping/horseback riding come spring and summer. Public access in Old Snowmass for cross country skiing and hiking/camping commences past the top of the Capitol Creek Road that is part of the White River National Forest, managed and maintained the the US Forest Service.

Astrotourism and ecotourism are an encouraged healthy balance to the many who arrive in our valleys seeking outdoor recreation, thus a welcomed maturation of Pitkin County already attuned to tourism. Old Snowmass welcomes those visitors who come to recreate and take advantage of the dark of night that currently exists and which we are protecting to a greater degree now. There are multiple publicly accessed trailheads located in Old Snowmass beyond the top of the Capitol Creek Valley directly adjacent the White River National Forest serving as a gateway to the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness Area. Here one can hike, camp, fish, hunt and ski when the season permits. One of the most popular hikes and climbs in Pitkin County is Capitol Lake/Peak, which is typically accessed from a parking lot a few miles past the end of Capitol Creek Road. Visitors can gain information along with maps, permits and publications on accessing this and other various trails in this area through the local Forest Service Office located in Aspen, Colorado.

Trail Map for the Old Snowmass Area

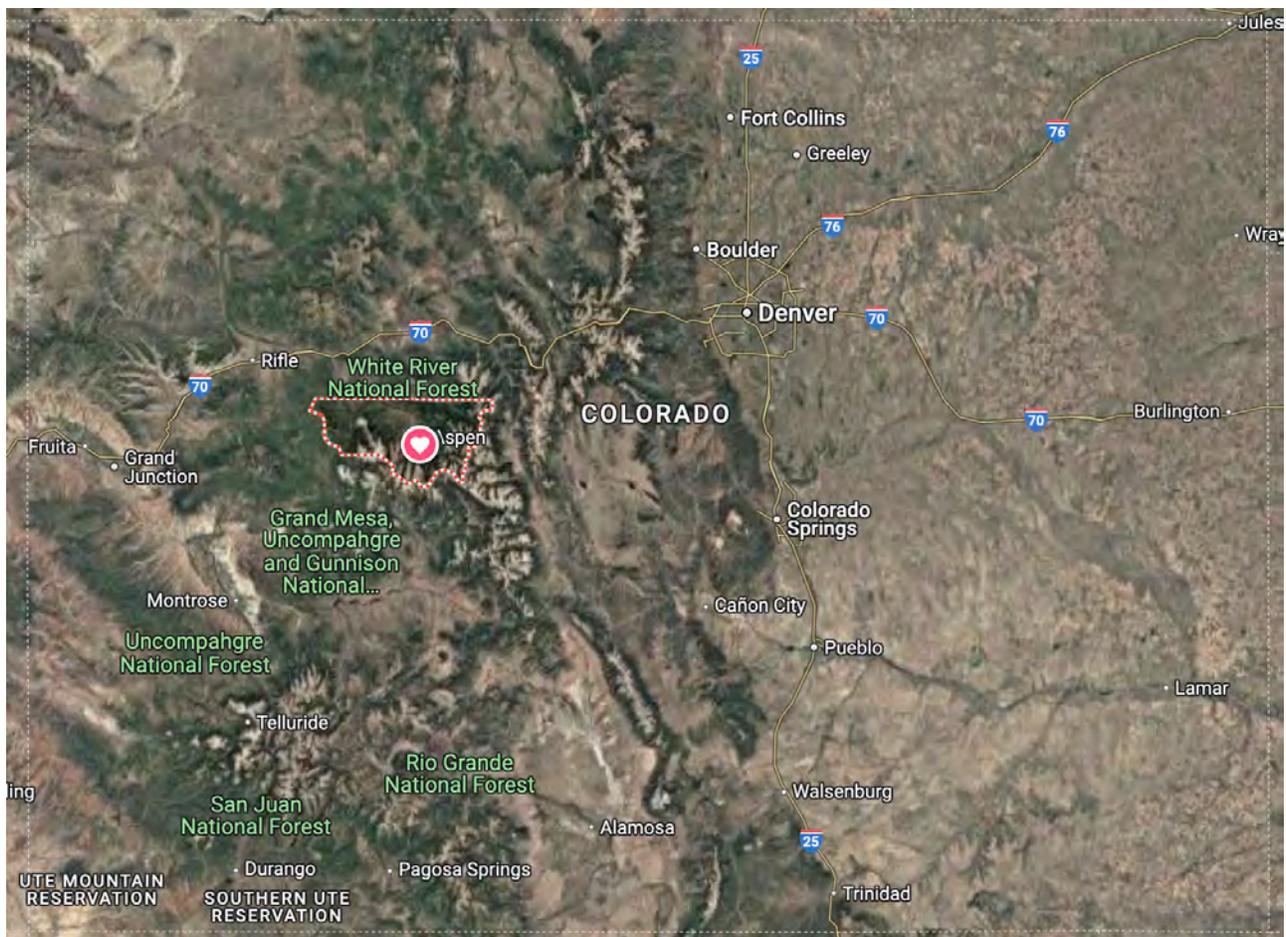


**AstroTourism Activity Opportunities Accessed from Old Snowmass/
Top of Capitol Creek Road**

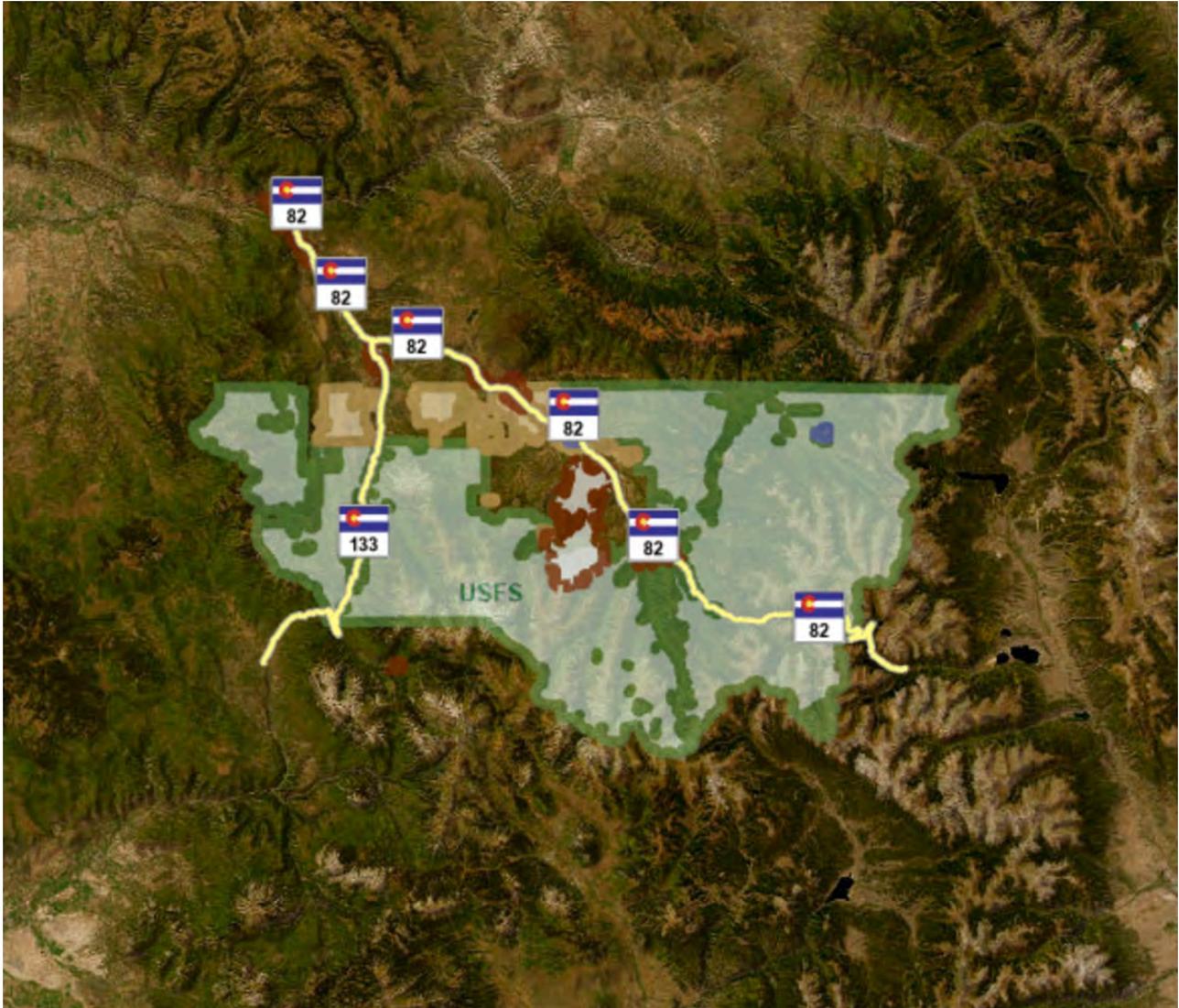


Topical Maps of Colorado, Pitkin County And Old Snowmass in the Roaring Fork Valley

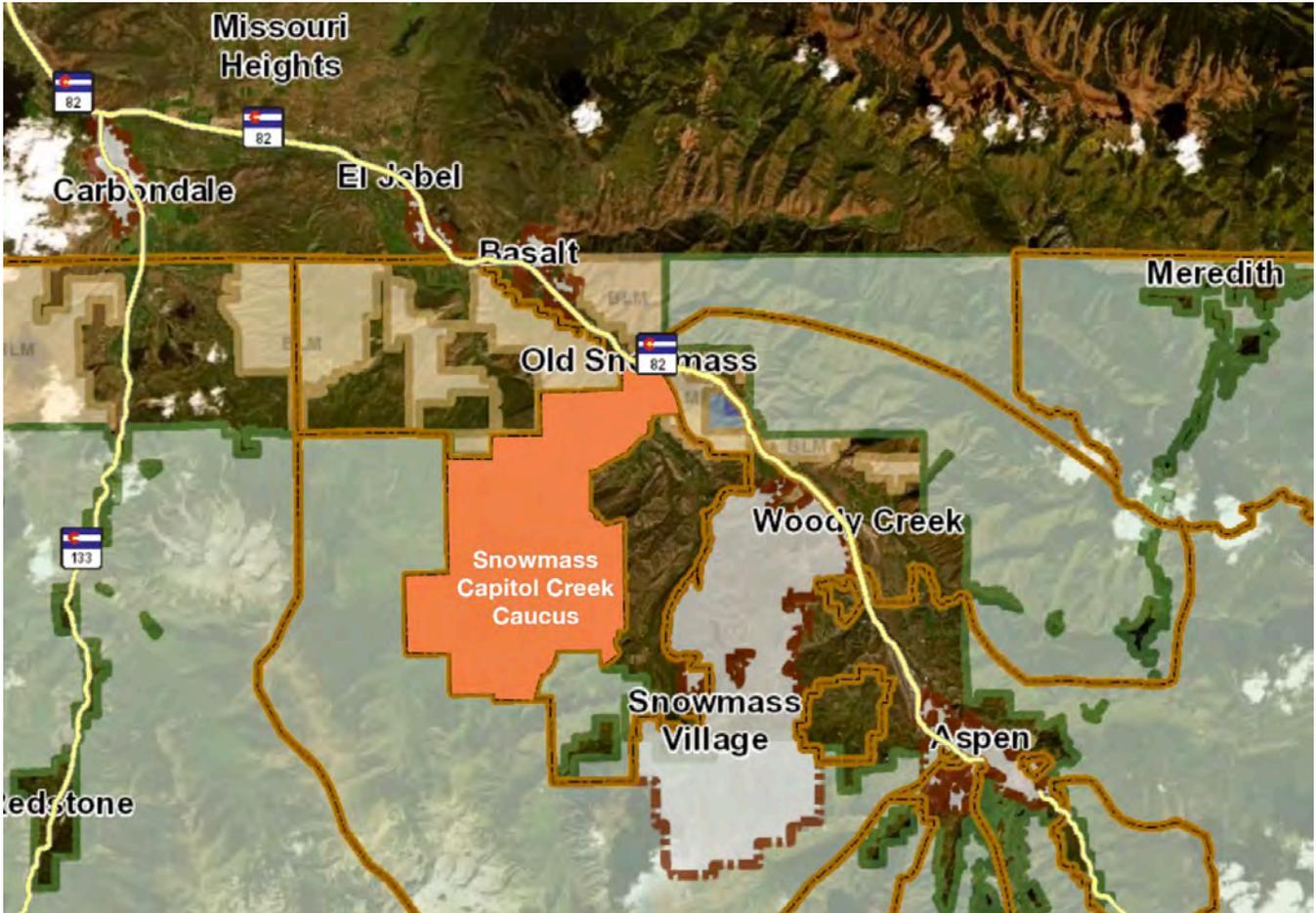
Pitkin County's Location within the State of Colorado
With Old Snowmass at the Heart



Close-up Topical View of Pitkin County
In the Elk Mountains Range of the Rocky Mountains



Map of Snowmass Capitol Creek Boundaries



DarkSky Initiative Background



View of the Harvest Moon Rising over Old Snowmass September 2024
Photo by Martha Ferguson

In 2022 it was noticed by many of those in residence that our traditionally dark night skies were becoming brighter. With dedication to protecting the natural environment within our Caucus area per the Caucus mission statement, residents became alarmed and brought this concern to the SCCC as an item to be addressed. It was decided unanimously that this issue would take a front seat needing immediate attention. We became aware of and enamored with the abundance of information on the DarkSky International website (formerly International Dark Sky Association) to reduce light pollution by way of advocacy and education to our local residents, and subsequently voted to pursue a designation of International Dark Sky Community. Thus was born WildSky Old Snowmass (www.wildskyoldsnowmass.org), a sub-committee within the Caucus that has since endeavored to put a curb on the ever-increasing pressure of light pollution within our area.

Part of our initiative is to share the information and the “how-to’s” on preserving our local night skies with neighboring communities, towns and cities within the Roaring Fork Valley. We have received many inquiries from neighboring communities, small and large, as to just that: “how do **we** do what **you** are doing?” Thus part of our mission, even though we are working to designate Old Snowmass as a dark sky community, is to step beyond our borders and advocate with facts and information how to preserve an area from light pollution and we have made many presentations in these other communities (see Outreach section below). Since the Roaring Fork Valley is relatively compact, our neighbors are our best allies in protecting the dark of night.



View of Adjacent West Sopris Creek in Neighboring Emma Caucus
Photo by Ann Driggers

Pitkin County County Lighting Ordinance January 22, 2025

WildSky Old Snowmass had the great fortune of starting our dark sky project at the same time Pitkin County began a major update of the County Lighting Code. We have worked with and been in constant contact for the past two years with Pitkin County Community Development (CommDev) which is responsible for putting together all codes within the County, important to Old Snowmass since the County is the enforcement tool for our community. In our favor was the fact that CommDev was already contemplating the concept of “dark sky” for their lighting update when we approached them on the topic of Old Snowmass becoming an International DarkSky Community, the first in Pitkin County and the Roaring Fork Valley. They were very excited and amenable to our requests, suggestions and changes per DarkSky International guidelines for lighting. WildSky put together a dynamic presentation open to the public at Aspen Center for Environmental Studies in January, 2024 and many County employees from the CommDev department attended. WildSky was subsequently invited to present dark sky material to Pitkin County public meetings on its lighting code update in Carbondale, Colorado and Aspen, Colorado with our presentation, a tool to introduce the updated code to the public. WildSky was also invited to present to the Pitkin County Planning and Zoning Commissioners public meeting on September 10, 2024 in preparation of their vote on the updated lighting code. The P&Z Board voted unanimously to approve the new code at that meeting. This was the first mandatory vote prior to advancing it to the final vote by the BOCC.

After further review and small changes, as well as the County P&Z’s approval, the updated Pitkin County Lighting Code was presented for a first reading on December 18, 2024 and final reading before the Pitkin County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) on January 22, 2025 when it was passed unanimously. Presented below is the approved and signed updated Pitkin County Lighting Code which became effective March 1, 2025.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF PITKIN COUNTY, COLORADO ADOPTING TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE 2006 PITKIN COUNTY LAND USE CODE, TITLE 8 OF THE PITKIN COUNTY CODE

- **REPEALING AND REENACTING SECTION 7-20-140, LIGHTING, TO SUPPORT THE COUNTY’S GOALS OF PRESERVATION OF THE NIGHT SKY, PRESERVATION OF RURAL CHARACTER, MINIMIZATION OF OFF-SITE IMPACTS, AND ENERGY AND RESOURCE CONSERVATION.**
- **AMENDING SECTION 3-70-50(d), WEST OF MAROON PLANNING AREA (WOMP) OVERLAY ZONE DISTRICT, TO REMOVE REFERENCES TO LIGHTING AND REFER BACK TO SECTION 7-20-140 FOR ALL LIGHTING REQUIREMENTS.**

Ordinance No. 004-2025

RECITALS

1. Pursuant to 30-35-301 C.R.S., the Board of County Commissioners (“BOCC”) of Pitkin County, a home rule county, is authorized to make and publish ordinances for carrying into effect or discharging the powers and duties conferred upon such counties by law and as seems necessary.
2. Pursuant to Section 2.8.1 of the Home Rule Charter (“HRC”), the BOCC is authorized to take official action by Ordinance for certain matters where action is prescribed pursuant to the Colorado Revised Statutes as amended.
3. The Community Development Department (Applicant) has proposed Land Use Code (LUC) Text Amendments to repeal and reenact Section: 7-20-140: Lighting and to amend Section 3-70-50(d): West of Maroon Creek Planning Area (WOMP) Overlay Zone District.
4. The current lighting code was adopted in 1999 and no longer fits the needs of our community. The proposal updates the lighting standards to meet the needs of the community today by incorporating advancements in lighting technology, and through the application of lighting industry standards and best practices.
5. The amendment supports autonomous solutions, and gives residents flexibility within limits to implement creative and innovative solutions. At the same time the amendment language is objective with clearly defined standards to streamline the review process and resolution of lighting enforcement issues.
6. The amendment values protection of the natural environment, preservation of the night sky, and protection of rural character.

7. The Pitkin County Planning and Zoning Commission considered the proposed Land Use Code text amendments at a regularly scheduled meeting on September 10, 2024, and recommended approval by a vote of 4-0, pursuant to Resolution No. PZ 008-2024.
8. The BOCC considered and approved by a vote of 5-0, the Ordinance on first reading at a duly noticed public hearing on December 18th, 2024. The BOCC approved and adopted by a vote of 3-0, the Ordinance on second reading at a continued public meeting on January 22nd, 2025.
9. The BOCC finds that the proposed text amendments are consistent with LUC Sections 2-30-40(i)(1) and 2-40-10(c)(1) and 2-40-10(e)(2), the Land Use Policies in the Code, and the Pitkin County Comprehensive Plan, as follows:
 - A. The amendment is consistent with the Master Plans for Brush Creek, Emma, Owl Creek, Upper Snowmass and The Valleys of Capitol Creek and Lower Snowmass Creek, which all “encourage the County to consider amendments to the lighting regulations to further minimize the impacts of outdoor lighting as new information and technology is made available.”
 - B. The amendment supports the County’s policy to implement the right to see the night sky without the interference of unnecessary artificial light from growth, urbanization and highway development as stated in the LUC Section 1-60-180(k) The Ecological Bill of Rights.
 - C. The amendment supports the goals of LUC Sections 1-60-70: Rural Development and 7-20-120: Scenic View Protection. To preserve the natural, rural scenery and natural landmarks of the County by minimizing the visible impacts of development.
 - D. The proposed amendment to Section 7-20-140 and Section 3-70-50(d), complies with the applicable provisions of the Land Use Code and the applicable Land Use Policies in Section 1-60.
10. The BOCC finds that the lighting standards of this Section shall be applicable to all exterior lighting within Pitkin County.
 - A. As of March 1st, 2025, light trespass and curfew regulations are in effect.
 - B. As of March 1st, 2025, building permit applications that include changes to or new exterior lighting shall bring the entire structure into compliance with the provisions of this Section.
 - C. Existing exterior light fixtures that do not violate the light trespass and curfew regulations shall be considered legal non-conforming for five (5) years from March 1st, 2025.
 - D. Within five (5) years of March 1st, 2025, all exterior light fixtures that do not conform to the requirements of this Section shall be replaced or retrofitted to comply with the provisions of this Section.

11. The BOCC finds that adoption of this Ordinance is in the best interest of the citizens of Pitkin County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of County Commissioners of Pitkin County, Colorado that it hereby adopts the following text amendments to the 2006 Pitkin County Land Use Code, Title 8 of the Pitkin County Code, and authorizes the Chair or the Chair's designee to sign the Ordinance and upon the satisfaction of the County Attorney as to form, execute any other associated documents necessary to complete this matter.

1. Repeal and reenact LUC Section 7-20-140 attached hereto as Exhibit A.
2. Amend LUC Section 3-70-50(d) attached hereto as Exhibit B.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND TITLE AND SHORT SUMMARY OF THE ORDINANCE PUBLISHED IN THE ASPEN DAILY NEWS ON THE 28TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2024.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND THE FULL TEXT OF THE ORDINANCE POSTED ON THE OFFICIAL PITKIN COUNTY WEBSITE (www.pitkincounty.com) ON THE 28TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2024.

INTRODUCED ON FIRST READING AT A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 18TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2024.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED ON SECOND READING AT A CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 22ND DAY OF JANUARY, 2025.

PUBLISHED BY TITLE AND SHORT SUMMARY, AFTER ADOPTION, IN THE ASPEN DAILY NEWS ON THE 30TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2025.

POSTED BY TITLE AND SHORT SUMMARY ON THE OFFICIAL PITKIN COUNTY WEBSITE (www.pitkincounty.com) ON THE 30TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2025.

ATTEST:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF PITKIN COUNTY, COLORADO



Sam Engen,
Deputy Clerk



Kelly McNicholas Kury,
Chair

Date: Jan-31-2025

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:



Richard Neiley, III
County Attorney



Suzanne Wolff,
Community Development Director

Exhibit A – LUC Section 7-20-140

Exhibit B – LUC Section 3-70-50(d)

Exhibit A

7-20-140 LIGHTING

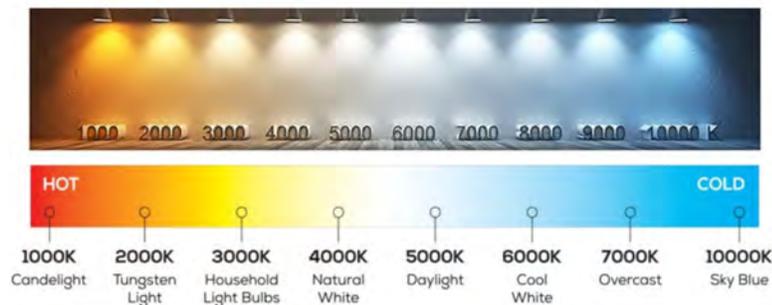
(A) INTENT

- (1) To give flexibility within limits and support the goals of Land Use Code (LUC) Section 1-60-180(k): the Ecological Bill of Rights, specifically the right to see the night sky without the interference of unnecessary artificial light from growth, urbanization, and highway development.
 - (a) Permit the use of exterior lighting that does not exceed the recommended levels specified in the Illuminating Engineering Society (IES) recommended practices for night-time safety, utility, security, productivity, enjoyment, and commerce.
 - (b) Minimize adverse offsite impacts of lighting such as light trespass, and obtrusive light. Curtail light pollution, reduce sky glow and improve the nighttime environment for astronomy, migrating birds and other wildlife.
- (2) To give flexibility within limits and support the goals of LUC Sections 1-60-70: Rural Development and 7-20-120: Scenic View Protection. To preserve the natural, rural scenery and natural landmarks of the County by minimizing the visible impacts of development.
- (3) To conserve energy and resources to the greatest extent possible. All exterior and interior light fixtures shall have a high efficacy as defined in the currently adopted International Energy Conservation Code (IECC).
- (4) These lighting standards acknowledge some exterior lighting is appropriate and necessary for the safety and enjoyment of people at night. What to light, why, and when, is a cornerstone of these lighting standards. Because the effects of light pollution can persist as far as 120 miles from the source, local control and regional coordination is encouraged for dark sky preservation and ecological protection. The following principles of responsible lighting design have guided the development of these standards:
 - (a) Useful – Lighting shall have an intended purpose.
 - (b) Targeted – Lighting shall be directed only where it is needed.
 - (c) Low Light Levels – Lighting shall be no brighter than required for the task.
 - (d) Controlled – Lighting shall only be used when it is necessary.
 - (e) Spectrum – Harmful short wavelengths shall be limited (blue and violet).

(B) GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL EXTERIOR LIGHTING

- (1) Conformance with All Applicable Codes:
 - (a) All exterior lighting shall be installed in conformance with the provisions of this Section and the currently adopted National Electric Code (NEC), International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), International Residential Code (IRC) and International Building Code (IBC).
- (2) Applicability:
 - (a) The lighting standards of this Section shall be applicable to all exterior lighting within Pitkin County.
- (3) Exemptions: All exterior lighting shall follow the provisions in this Code; however, any special requirements for lighting listed below shall take precedence.
 - (a) Lighting required by federal and state laws or regulations.

- (b) Lighting required by Pitkin County for public right-of-ways, monuments, and statuary.
 - (c) Temporary lighting if approved by a Special Event Permit.
 - (d) Underwater lighting in swimming pools and spas.
 - (e) Lighting that is only used under emergency conditions.
- (4) All exterior lighting shall be extinguished when sufficient daylight is available.
- (5) Nighttime Lighting Reduction Requirements: A curfew shall be observed between the hours of 10 pm and 6 am. All exterior lighting shall be extinguished during this time.
- (a) Exemptions: Exterior lighting reductions are not required for any of the following:
 - i. Photocell with timer set to one hour max, or motion sensor set to five (5) minutes.
 - ii. For non-residential uses where normal operating hours begin or end within the hours of curfew, the curfew applies from one hour after closing to one hour before opening.
 - iii. Egress lighting for steps, stairs, walkways, and building entrances of non-residential structures as required in the currently adopted IBC.
 - iv. Street lighting as permitted by subsection (B)(12) below.
 - v. Multi-family parking lot lighting as permitted by subsection (D)(2)(a) below.
- (6) Prohibited Lighting
- (a) Lighting that's intended purpose is to illuminate a building facade or landscape.
 - (b) Lighting that illuminates the Roaring Fork, Frying Pan, or Crystal Rivers, or their tributaries.
 - (c) Lighting that may be mistaken for warning, emergency, or traffic signals.
 - (d) Lighting of construction sites is prohibited except during approved construction hours (7am – 7pm Monday through Saturday) when sufficient daylight is not available and work is actively occurring.
 - (e) Colored lights (for example RGB LEDs).
 - (f) Blinking, flashing, moving, revolving, scintillating, flickering, and changing intensity lights.
- (7) Correlated Color Temperature (CCT) is a gauge of how yellow or blue the color of light emitted appears. All lighting shall have a nominal CCT no greater than 3000 Kelvin.



(8) Fully Shielded: All exterior light fixtures shall be fully shielded except as permitted in Table 1.

(a) Fully shielded is defined as a fixture constructed and installed in such a manner that all light emitted by the fixture, either directly from the lamp, light source or a diffusing element, or indirectly by reflection or refraction from any part of the fixture, is projected below the horizontal plane through the fixture's lowest light-emitting part. Translucent fixtures are not considered fully shielded.

(b) Examples of fully shielded fixtures:



(c) Examples of non-shielded fixtures:



(9) Light Trespass Limitations

(a) Exterior and interior point light sources shall not be visible from the property line during hours of curfew. A point light source is defined as a non-diffused single light source that is identifiable from one location.

(b) The maximum vertical illuminance level at the lot line, measured at approximately five feet (5'-0") above finished grade, shall be no more than 0.2 footcandles (fc) caused by exterior and/or interior light fixtures located on the site. To measure vertical light trespass, the light meter shall be aimed perpendicular to the property line, pointed towards the light source. Multiple readings shall be taken to ensure compliance around the property line. If the lot line abuts a public street, the illuminance values shall be measured at the centerline of the public street. These levels shall be used for enforcement, should concerns of obtrusive lighting or question of compliance arise.

(10) American flags: When possible, lower and remove flags from sunset to sunrise so illumination is not needed. Only illumination of the American flag is allowed, other flags are not permitted to be lit. To preserve the night sky a top of pole downward directed light is required.

(11) Seasonal Lighting, or string lighting, meant for temporary use and displayed on buildings or landscaping.

(a) Residential: Shall only be permitted between November 15th and January 30th.

(b) Non-Residential and Redstone Boulevard: Shall only be permitted between November 15th and March 1st.

(c) Shall comply with subsections (B)(4, 5, 6b, 6c, and 9) above.

- (12) Street lights may be permitted on local streets, as defined in LUC Chapter 11, at the discretion of the Community Development Director in areas with medium or high pedestrian traffic. Medium pedestrian traffic is defined as 11-99 pedestrians during the highest nightly average one-hour volume period. High pedestrian activity areas have more than 100 pedestrians during nightly average one-hour volume (IES, 2022). *Recommended Practice: Lighting Roadway and Parking Facilities* (RP-8-22). A traffic engineer or other accredited professional shall submit a Pedestrian Count Survey, as defined by the American Planning Association (APA).

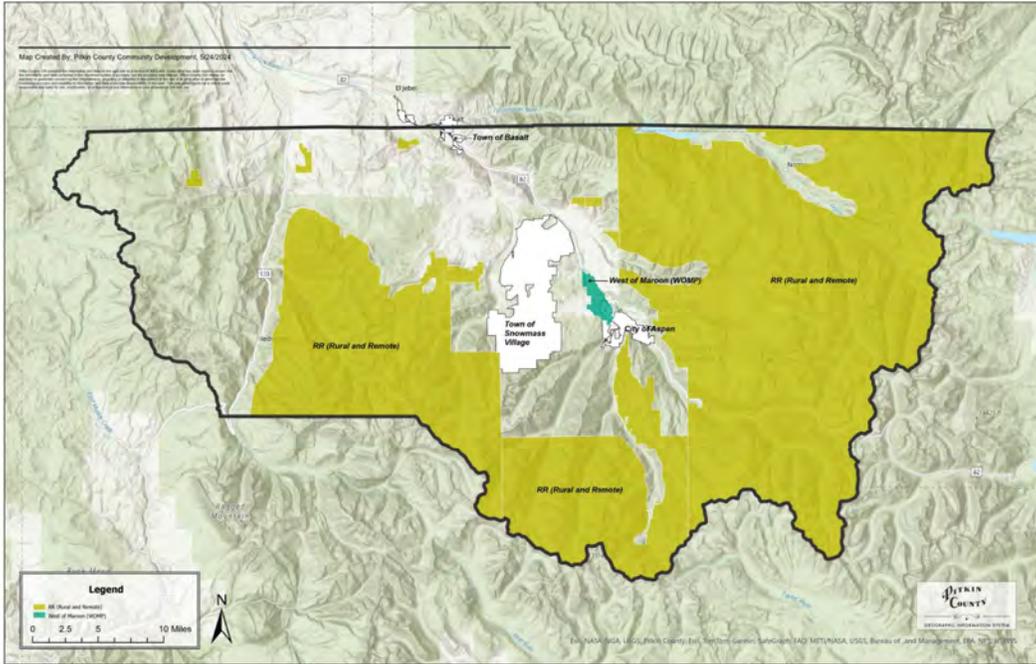
If permitted, all light fixtures shall meet the following requirements:

- (a) Shall comply with LUC Section 7-20-140(B) General Requirements for All Exterior Lighting
- (b) All fixtures shall be light emitting diodes (LEDs)
- (c) Fixture distribution shall be equal or less than the BUG rating of B1-U1-G1 in LZ2 and B0-U1-G0 in LZ1. Street lighting is not permitted in LZ0.
- (d) Fixtures for street lighting shall be mounted so that the bottom of the fixture is no higher than twenty feet (20'-0").
- (e) Initial lumen output shall be no more than 4,000 lumens.
- (f) Fixture spacing shall be no less than one hundred feet (100'-0").
- (g) All fixtures shall have a field adjustable dimming system to allow for onsite dimming once installed.
- (h) All fixtures shall have a Type II distribution.
- (i) All fixtures shall have standard house-side shielding options. Front-side shielding may also be required to control light trespass across the street. Front-side shields may be custom, but manufacturer standard shielding is preferred.

(C) LIGHTING ZONES - Ambient light is defined as general lighting of an area.

- (1) Lighting Zone Zero (LZ0): No ambient light
 - (a) LZ0 includes areas zoned Rural and Remote. The purpose of the rural and remote zone district is to conserve and protect the natural environment and its resources, while allowing for limited recreational uses and limited residential development.
- (2) Lighting Zone One (LZ1): Low ambient light
 - (a) LZ1 encompasses all areas not zoned as Rural and Remote or within the West of Maroon Creek Master Plan (WOMP) Overlay Zone District. These are areas of less dense residential and non-residential uses where lighting may be used for safety and convenience but may not need to be uniform or continuous.
- (3) Lighting Zone Two (LZ2): Moderate ambient lighting
 - (a) LZ2 includes areas within the WOMP Overlay Zone District, beginning with the Aspen/Pitkin Airport and the Aspen Airport Business Center (AABC) and continuing up the Highway 82 corridor to the City of Aspen limits. This area consists of dense residential, institutional, and commercial uses and is subject to a certain amount of existing ambient lighting and warrants a greater allowance for exterior lighting.

(4) Lighting Zone Map:



(D) REQUIREMENTS FOR RESIDENTIAL EXTERIOR LIGHTING

(1) For residential properties all exterior light fixtures shall comply with the initial lumen output in Table 1.

Table 1. Maximum Allowed Initial Lumens* Per Fixture.		
Lighting Application	LZ0	LZ1 + LZ2
Type 1. Up to two (2) unshielded fixtures per dwelling unit.	Not allowed	800 lumens
Type 2. Fully shielded fixtures.	630 lumens	1,260 lumens
Type 3. **Low-voltage point source hardscape light fixtures	500 lumens	500 lumens
Type 4. ***Linear Lighting	Not allowed	100 lumens/ linear foot
* Fixture lumens equal either the total initial lumens or lamp lumens multiplied by the number of lamps in the fixture. **Low voltage lighting uses less than 50V and requires a transformer device. *** Linear lighting shall be fully shielded so that the light source is not visible.		

(2) In addition to the maximum initial lumen output established in Table 1, above, a total lumen allowance for exterior light fixtures shall apply to each structure. This includes all building mounted fixtures and site lighting. The lumen allowance shall be based on the approved above grade floor area at a rate of 3.5 lumens/square foot. Single family residences are limited to a maximum of 35,000 lumens.

(a) Exemptions: Parking lot lighting may be permitted for multifamily residential developments containing 8 or more units at the discretion of the Community Development Director.

- i. Whenever possible, parking lot lighting shall be controlled by a motion sensor set to a maximum of five (5) minutes.
- ii. The preferred option is for low-level "bollard" fixtures that have a maximum of four feet (4'-0") mounting height. If pole-mounted fixtures are desired, twelve feet (12'-0") is the maximum mounting height.
- iii. Pole-mounted fixtures have a maximum limit of 3,000 lumens and a BUG rating of B1-U1-G1 or less and shall comply with the parking space or hardscape area methods outlined in Tables 3 and 4 in subsection (E)(2)(a) below.

(3) Driveway, sport court, and tree mounted lighting shall be compliant with the allowed initial lumens per fixture in Table 1. Mounting height is the vertical distance between the finish grade and the center of the apparent light source of the fixture. The light fixtures shall be aimed no more than 30 degrees from nadir. Nadir is defined as the invisible vertical line projecting downward to the ground from the center of the lens of the fixture.

- (a) Driveway lighting shall be controlled by a motion sensor set to a maximum of five (5) minutes. The preferred option is for low-level "bollard" fixtures that have a maximum of four feet (4'-0") mounting height. If pole-mounted fixtures are desired, twelve feet (12'-0") is the maximum mounting height.
- (b) Sports court lighting shall be controlled by a timer and turn off automatically after one hour. Pole mounting height shall not exceed sixteen feet (16'-0") and correct aiming, shielding, and/or internal louvers is required to prevent light trespass and/or glare.
- (c) Tree mounted lighting is permitted when used to illuminate outdoor patios, walkways, autocourts, driveways, etc. Tree mounted lighting shall not exceed twelve feet (12'-0") above grade and shall not be used for the sole purpose of highlighting vegetation.

(4) One address monument per property is permitted to be lit by one shielded or unshielded fixture compliant with Table 1. An internally illuminated channel shall be considered shielded if the face and sides are constructed of an opaque material.

(E) REQUIREMENTS FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL EXTERIOR LIGHTING –

(1) Limits to offsite impacts

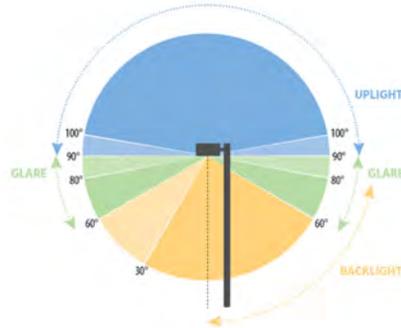
(a) All fixtures shall be rated and installed according to Table 2, which outlines maximum BUG (Backlight-Uplight-Glare) Ratings (per IES TM-15) for all individual fixtures installed.

BUG (Backlight, Uplight, Glare) Rating – The quantity of light per the most recently adopted IES TM-15 within various beam angles.

- *Backlight* – the percent lamp lumens (non-LED fixtures) or the fixture initial lumens (LED fixtures) distributed behind a fixture between zero degrees vertical (nadir) and 90 degrees vertical.

Uplight – the percent lamp lumens (non-LED fixtures) or the fixture initial lumens (LED fixtures) distributed above a fixture between 90 and 180 degrees vertical.

- *Glare* – the percent lamp lumens (non-LED fixtures) or the fixture initial lumens distributed 60 and 90 degrees vertical.



- (b) Property lines that abut public walkways, bikeways, plazas, and parking lots, the property line may be five feet (5'-0") beyond the actual property line for the purpose of determining compliance with this section. For property lines that abut public roadways, the property line may be the centerline of the public roadway for the purpose of determining compliance with this section.
NOTE: This adjustment is relative to Table 2 only and shall not be used to increase the hardscape area of the site.

Table 2. Maximum Allowable Backlight, Uplight, Glare Ratings.

Mounting Condition	Backlight	Uplight	Glare
Greater than 2 mounting heights from the property line	B3	U1	G2
1 to less than 2 mounting heights from the property line	B2	U1	G1
0.5 to less than 1 mounting heights from the property line	B1	U1	G0
Less than 0.5 mounting heights from the property line	B0	U1	G0

(2) Site lumen limit

- (a) The total installed initial light fixture lumens of all exterior lighting shall not exceed the total site lumen limit. The total site lumen limit shall be determined using either the Parking Space Method (Table 3) or the Hardscape Area Method (Table 4). Only one method shall be used per site. For sites with existing lighting, existing lighting shall be included in the calculation of total installed lumens.

Table 3. Allowed Total Initial Lumens per Parking Space Method.		
May only be applied to properties up to ten parking spaces (including handicapped accessible spaces).		
LZ0	LZ1	LZ2
0 lumens per space	490 lumens per space*	630 lumens per space*

Table 4. Allowed Total Initial Lumens per Hardscape Area Method.			
May be used for any project.			
	LZ0	LZ1	LZ2
Base Allowance	0 lumens per square foot of hardscape	1.25 lumens per square foot of hardscape*	2.5 lumens per square foot of hardscape*
Additional allowances for sales and service facilities.			
Drive Up Windows In order to use this allowance, fixtures must be within 20 feet horizontal distance of the center of the window.	0	2,000 lumens per drive-up window	2,000 lumens per drive-up window
Automobile Service Station Canopy This allowance is lumens per installed fuel pump. Each side of a two-sided pump qualifies for an allowance.**	0	4,000 lumens per pump	8,000 lumens per pump

* All non-residential structures are allowed the minimum lighting required in the currently adopted IBC, specifically Sections 1008.2.1 and 1008.2.3, even if the Parking Space or Hardscape Area Method calculation results in a site lumen limit less than that.

** Light fixtures mounted on Automobile Service Station canopies and other canopies shall be recessed so that the lens cover is flush with the bottom surface of the canopy or shielded by the fixture or the edge of the canopy. Lights shall not be mounted on the top or sides of the canopy. Signs that are compliant with sign regulations may be placed on these surfaces.

(3) Lighting Control Requirements

- (a) Controls shall be provided that automatically extinguish all exterior lighting when sufficient daylight is available using a control device or system such as a photoelectric switch, astronomic time switch or equivalent functions from a programmable lighting controller, building automation system or lighting energy management system, all with battery or similar backup power or device.
 - i. Exemption: Automatic lighting controls are not required for egress lighting required by the Building Code for steps, stairs, walkways, and building entrance.
- (4) Pole mounted fixtures shall be mounted so that the bottom of the fixture is no higher than sixteen feet (16'-0").
- (5) The following shall apply to sign illumination:
 - (a) Internally-illuminated signs are prohibited.

- (b) Sign lighting shall be directed downwards and shielded from neighboring property and the vision of passing motorists.
- (c) Initial lumen output shall not exceed 200 lumens per square foot of signage.

(F) AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS

- (1) Agricultural buildings compliant with LUC Section 5-20-70(j) do not have a total lumen allowance. These structures are permitted to have up to one light per entrance. It shall be fully shielded, directed downwards and have an initial lumen output equal to or less than 1,260 lumens.

(G) SPECIAL DISTRICTS: HISTORIC LIGHTING

(1) Historic Applications

- (a) For the preservation of the integrity of historic structures the County may relax requirements such as shielding, uplight, and light trespass upon request and subsequent approval from the Historic Preservation Officer (HPO) or Redstone Historic Preservation Commission (RHPC). All lighting related to historic properties or located in a historic district shall be otherwise consistent with the lighting standards laid out in LUC Section 7-20-140(B, D, E, and F) above, as applicable. For properties within the Redstone Historic District please refer to the Redstone Historic Preservation Committee Design Guidelines for additional information.

(2) Review Process

- (a) For historically designated structures, the HPO shall review and approve the proposed lighting to determine appropriateness. The HPO may vary lighting types as appropriate to the building but may not exceed the total lumen allowance for the structure.
- (b) If the property is within the Redstone Historic District Overlay the lighting plan shall be reviewed and approved by the RHPC prior to applying for permits.

(3) Design Standards

- (a) Light spill from historic properties shall be minimized to the greatest extent practical and the design shall be compatible with a property's or historic district's character, setting, and context.
- (b) If new exterior light fixtures are added, the design shall be based on historic site or building lighting patterns if known. If unknown, ensure that new lighting features are of a simple design that does not compete with the historic character of the property.
- (c) Limit the use of exterior lighting to entry lighting as required by the Building Code. Minimal site lighting may be appropriate for parking areas, walkways and patios.

(H) SPECIAL DISTRICTS: PITKIN COUNTY OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS (OST)

- (1) All lighting shall comply with LUC Section 7-20-140(B, D, E, and F) above, as applicable. Additionally all exterior lighting shall be reviewed and approved by the Open Space and Trails Board prior to applying for permits.
 - (a) Open Space: No exterior lighting is permitted within properties classified as nature preserves, riverine, or backcountry. Minimal exterior lighting as required for safety is permitted on properties classified as open space for facilities associated with agriculture, residential, and administrative uses.
 - (b) Trailheads and Greenways: Minimal exterior lighting as required for safety and wayfinding is permitted for trail amenities on properties classified as trailheads or greenways with medium or high pedestrian traffic, as defined by OST trail use counts.

- (c) Parks: Minimal exterior lighting as required for safety and wayfinding is permitted for park amenities and terrain. Elements such as gazebos, restroom entrances, and stairs may be illuminated. Lighting for nighttime recreation amenities shall not exceed the minimum levels needed for recreation and enjoyment of the space, and shall only be illuminated during active nighttime use. Lighting adjacent to historic resources shall be compatible with the surrounding historic character and compliant with LUC Section 7-20-140(G) above.

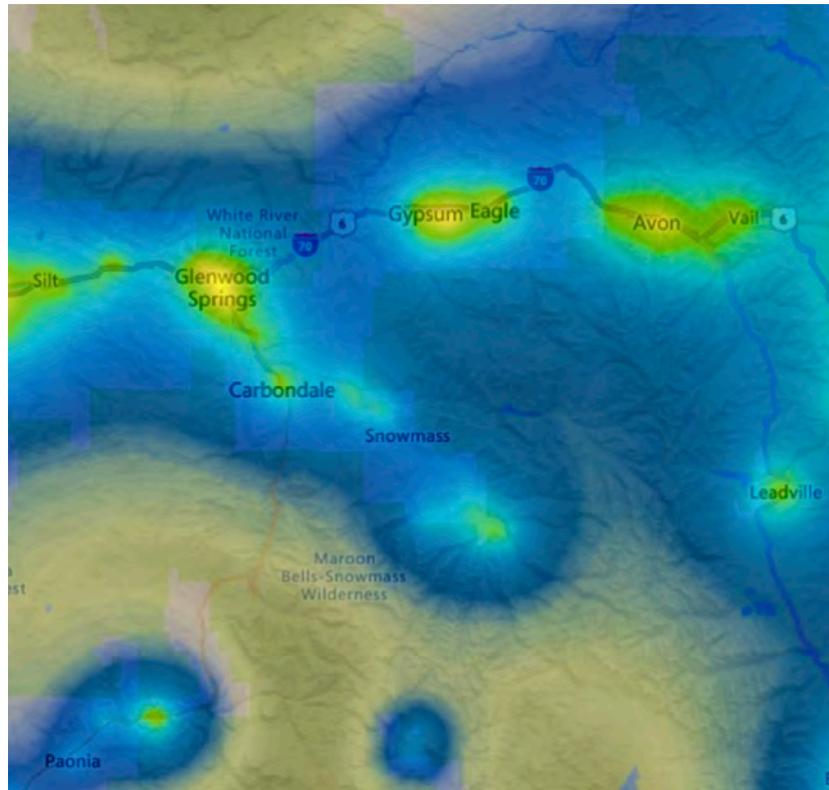
(I) SPECIAL DISTRICTS: ASPEN/PITKIN AIRPORT

- (1) Lighting associated with the airside facilities at the Airport (runway/taxiway system, deice pad, aircraft parking areas and other facilities located inside the security fence) is regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for safety and shall be exempt from these standards. All other exterior lighting shall comply with LUC Section 7-20-140(B and E) above.

(J) SPECIAL DISTRICTS: SKI-RECREATION ZONE DISTRICT

- (1) All lighting shall comply with LUC Section 7-20-140(B, D, and E) above, as applicable.
 - (a) Ski area operations occur around the clock in preparation for and throughout the ski season. Minimal exterior lighting as required for safety and wayfinding is permitted for general ski area nighttime operations, including but not limited to snow cat grooming, snowmaking, track vehicle maintenance, and work in and around ski area facilities. Exterior lighting shall only be illuminated during active nighttime use.

View of the Roaring Fork Valley Lighting Impacts



The above map shows the general land area where Old Snowmass is situated in the Roaring Fork Valley of Colorado. It is about halfway between Aspen at the top of the valley to Glenwood Springs at the bottom, a distance of 41 miles. As is shown, Glenwood Springs is quite bright with Carbondale and other smaller communities and their lighting footprints moving east up the valley. Old Snowmass is barely a dot on the map, but Aspen (15 miles to the east) and Snowmass Village (12.5 miles to the southeast) have created lighting impacts that affect our sky quality readings.

This infiltration of lighting from one locality to the next is the universal problem as light knows no boundaries and case in point (as mentioned above) are the two ski areas of Aspen and especially Snowmass Village with close proximity to Old Snowmass. Both use a considerable amount of uncontrolled nighttime lighting for activity areas at the bottom of ski areas for après ski, dinner and evening entertainment on the mountains in an attempt to attract tourist dollars. Both Aspen and Snowmass Village are incorporated and are controlled by their own city/town ordinances including lighting. Thus these are areas ripe for more discussion about and knowledge of how to attract astrotourism at night without using the “Las Vegas” bright light effect. In that vein, WildSky Old Snowmass has had preliminary meetings with members of the Snowmass Village town board as they begin to review and consider updating their lighting code.



Photo by Ann Driggers taken in the Roaring Fork Valley
with Light Pollution from Aspen on the Horizon

Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus Definition and Role Within Pitkin County

Caucuses in Pitkin County and their Role in Shaping County Codes

Old Snowmass remains a bucolic and rural community and is an officially recognized Caucus in Pitkin County as of November 18, 1974. The Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus (SCCC) is a non-profit neighborhood organization which prioritizes the natural environmental and quality of life in the Snowmass Creek and Capitol Creek valleys.

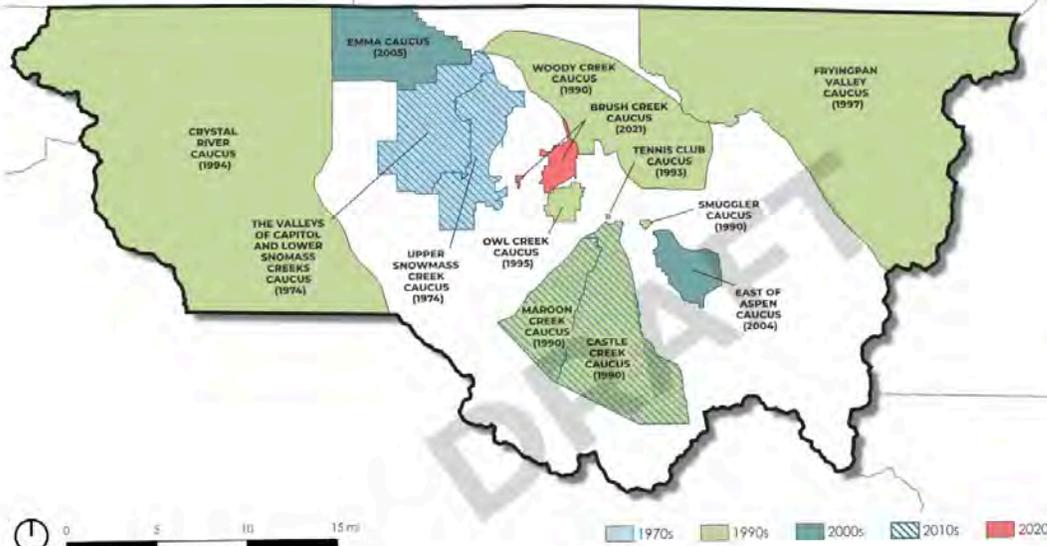
The word “Caucus” is traced to an Algonquin Indian term describing their advisory form of representative democracy. In the Pitkin County experience, the word connotes representative democracy at the most local level where policies are formulated and recommended by the people whom they most affect. Once formulated at the local caucus level, these policies provide elected and appointed County officials with recommendations to enact just laws and policies.

Pitkin County has long recognized the value of representative democracy, especially in rural county settings where geographic areas within the county may differ in priorities and values. The Pitkin County Home Rule Charter defines the statutory parameters of caucuses. The primary functions of Pitkin County Caucuses include making recommendations to the County on matters affecting the Caucus area including:

- Development of county laws
- Budgetary appropriations
- Land-use approval
- Rules and regulations and work-program matters

Recognized Caucus areas reflect geographically contiguous areas with social, economic, cultural and environmental communities of interest.

Caucus Area Chronology Map



Caucus Chronology

In Pitkin County, a caucus area is a geographically defined region within the county that allows residents to participate in community planning and decision-making processes, including the development and adoption of caucus master plans. A master

plan area refers to regions within the county for which master plans are developed. Master plan areas and caucus areas often share the same boundary, but not always, as shown on the Master Plan Areas Map.

Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus Master Plan

The SCCC advocates what it feels is its highest and best applicable recommendations for its legally defined area through a Master Plan. Pitkin County considers these recommendations through a series of meetings with the County Community Development Department, with overview by the Pitkin County Attorney followed by reviews from the Pitkin County Planning and Zoning Commission and finally the Pitkin County Board of County Commissioners. While a Caucus is endowed as an advisory arm to Pitkin County, importantly the overall authority and enforceability lies with Pitkin County and its Codes to implement building guidelines and constraints within its territory.

The Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus has identified in its Master Plan advisory recommendations to County government regarding its policies and decisions within the Caucus area. These include a comprehensive long-range plan to guide development in the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus area ~ a guide for current and future property owners in the Caucus area. In its Master Plan the SCCC identifies in its criteria. Most poignantly here is the enshrining of the Caucus' support of dark sky preservation:

IV. (4) RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT "Strict adherence to the Pitkin County Lighting Code in support of maintaining dark skies in the Caucus area.

The SCCC Master Plan as accepted and adopted by Pitkin County can be viewed here:

https://7ba39188-bb2b-4058-81c5-2868834e1cf3.filesusr.com/ugd/64b8b2_a145a6326d3c415a994916d74e265222.pdf

Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus Code Overlay

To further strengthen its position, the SCCC endeavored to draft a VCLS-0 Code Overlay meaning these rules apply in addition to the underlying County zoning thus becoming enforceable code at the County level. The Overlay represents further tightening/defining certain aspects of the SCCC area to maintain it as a rural community. It includes one point considered more restrictive than the recently updated County Lighting Code that further protects our dark skies, highlighted below. The Code Overlay was passed after reviews by County Planning and Zoning, followed by a unanimous vote in support of it by the Board of County Commissioners on December 3, 2025.

Attached below is the Pitkin County Ordinance Recitals adopting text amendments to the 2006 Pitkin County Land Use Code , Title 8 of the Pitkin County Code and Amendments to Zoning Regulations.

In an effort to simplify reading of this code (most of which addresses water, landscape and building material standards in the SCCC area) only the Recitals are added below along with Board of County Commissioner signatures; again, highlighted below is the one criterion for lighting in this document that specifically strengthens the County Lighting Code within our area located on Exhibit A (f) j 1.

j. In addition to the lighting standards contained in Section 7-20-140 of the Land Use Code the following standards shall apply on lands zoned VCLS-O:

1.All forms of sign illumination shall be prohibited, including internal and external illumination.



RECEPTION#: 713776, R: \$0.00, D: \$0.00
DOC CODE: ORDINANCE
Pg 1 of 16, 12/17/2025 at 09:13:37 AM
Ingrid K. Grueter, Pitkin County, CO

**ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF PITKIN COUNTY,
COLORADO ADOPTING TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE 2006 PITKIN COUNTY LAND USE
CODE, TITLE 8 OF THE PITKIN COUNTY CODE, AND AMENDMENTS TO ZONING
REGULATIONS**

- **AMENDING SECTION 3-40-190, VALLEYS OF CAPITOL CREEK AND LOWER SNOWMASS OVERLAY DISTRICT (VCLS-O)**
- **AMENDING SECTION 4-30-50(i)(2)(c), SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT**
- **AMENDING TABLE 4-1.A: PERMITTED USE**

ORDINANCE No. 044-2025

RECITALS

1. Pursuant to 30-35-301 C.R.S., the Board of County Commissioners (“BOCC”) of Pitkin County, a home rule county, is authorized to make and publish ordinances for carrying into effect or discharging the powers and duties conferred upon such counties by law and as seems necessary.
2. Pursuant to Section 2.8.1 of the Home Rule Charter (“HRC”), the BOCC is authorized to take official action by Ordinance for certain matters where action is prescribed pursuant to the Colorado Revised Statutes as amended.
3. The Snowmass/Capitol Creek Caucus (Caucus) proposed a Land Use Code Text Amendment and Amendment to the Zoning Regulations for the Valleys of Capitol Creek and Lower Snowmass Overlay Zone District (“VCLS-O”) to implement certain recommendations of the 2023 Valleys of Capitol Creek and Lower Snowmass Creek Master Plan (Master Plan). The proposed text and zoning amendments are attached hereto as **Exhibit A**.
4. The Pitkin County Planning and Zoning Commission agreed to initiate the zoning amendments on behalf of the Caucus. Therefore, the amendments are subject to review under Land Use Code Section 2-40-10(e).
5. The Pitkin County Planning and Zoning Commission considered the proposed amendments at a regularly scheduled public meeting on October 28, 2025, and recommended approval by a vote of 4-0, pursuant to Resolution No. PZ-007-2025.
6. The BOCC considered and approved the amendments on first reading at a duly noticed public hearing on November 5, 2025. The BOCC adopted the amendments at a continued public hearing on second reading December 3, 2025.
7. The BOCC finds that the proposed text and zoning amendments are consistent with Sections 2-30-40(i) and 2-40-10(c)(1) and (e) of the Pitkin County Land Use Code (“Code”), the Land Use Policies in the Code, and the 2023 Valleys of Capitol Creek and Lower Snowmass Creek Master Plan follows:
 - A. The proposed amendments are consistent with the Master Plan and apply to the land area within the VCLS-O area boundary. A fundamental premise of the Master Plan is: “to protect and preserve the quality of life and the rural/agricultural character of the Snowmass-Capitol Creek area in Pitkin County, Colorado; and to protect and preserve the scale of existing development.”
 - B. Implement site design criteria for new development that preserves open space, irrigated agricultural lands and pastures.

- C. Regulates special event uses and venues to minimize noise, traffic and other impacts associated with such uses.
 - D. The proposed amendments comply with the applicable provisions of the Code and the applicable Land Use Policies Section 1-60.
8. The BOCC finds that adoption of this ordinance is in the best interest of the citizens of Pitkin County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Pitkin County Board of County Commissioners that it hereby adopts the text and zoning amendments to the 2006 Pitkin County Land Use Code, Title 8 of the Pitkin County Code as shown in Exhibit A and authorizes the Chair or the Chair's designee to sign the Ordinance and upon the satisfaction of the County Attorney as to form, execute any other associated documents necessary to complete this matter.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND TITLE AND SHORT SUMMARY OF THE ORDINANCE PUBLISHED IN THE ASPEN DAILY NEWS WEEKLY ON THE 16TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2025.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND THE FULL TEXT OF THE ORDINANCE POSTED ON THE OFFICIAL PITKIN COUNTY WEBSITE (www.pitkincounty.com) ON THE 16TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2025.

INTRODUCED ON FIRST READING AT A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 5TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2025.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED ON SECOND READING AT A CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 3RD, 2025.

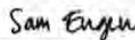
PUBLISHED BY TITLE AND SHORT SUMMARY, AFTER ADOPTION, IN THE ASPEN TIMES WEEKLY ON THE 11TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2025.

POSTED BY TITLE AND SHORT SUMMARY ON THE OFFICIAL PITKIN COUNTY WEBSITE (www.pitkincounty.com) ON THE 11TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2025.

THIS ORDINANCE SHALL BECOME EFFECTIVE 30 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION IN THE ASPEN TIMES AND POSTING ON THE OFFICIAL PITKIN COUNTY WEBSITE, FOLLOWING FINAL ADOPTION BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.

ATTEST:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF PITKIN COUNTY, COLORADO



Sam Engen
Deputy County Clerk



Kelly McNicholas Kury,
Chair

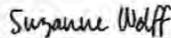
Date: Dec-11-2025

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:



Richard Y. Neiley, III
County Attorney



Suzanne Wolff,
Community Development Director

PLAN.1537.2025

Exhibit A - Land Use Code Amendments

Zoning in Pitkin County

Alongside building codes in Pitkin County, zoning plays a major role in shaping and setting the overarching vision, policy direction and enforcement for land use.

The Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus area of Old Snowmass contains several types of zoning, the majority of which is RS-30, established and applied by Pitkin County primarily for the Snowmass Capitol Creek area where low density residential development is appropriate keeping potential development density to 30 acres for one residential home. Additional zones include AR-10 agricultural with a minimum of 10 acres to maintain agricultural and open space while allowing for low-density residential development, found along the State Highway 82 corridor. Also located along this corridor is a small portion zoned B-2 to provide for the pre-existence of several commercial/low intensity uses. Even smaller is the portion along Highway 82 zoned PUB intended to provide for the development of public uses, facilities and services for governmental, civic and other non-profit uses. In this case, a US Postal Service building exists as well as a Colorado Department of Transportation bus stop/parking area. One other minute portion is zoned AH (affordable housing); at present this represents one pre-existing employee housing unit literally connected to the Old Snowmass Market as well as a pre-existing gathering of small log cabins, its main building a stage stop during the silver rush and currently privately owned located across Highway 82 overlooking the Roaring Fork River.

The standout takeaway of all these measures to protect Old Snowmass' rural character is that County zoning, the updated Pitkin County Lighting Code, the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus' Code Overlay and its Master Plan have kept our landscape wide open with less traffic, no new dense housing projects to brighten night skies, and that civic or municipal installations of any kind will never be allowed. It is the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus' pursuit of retaining its 100+ years of character in an area currently feeling development pressure that we have prevailed in protecting the creeks and streams, the open space, the reverence for wildlife and protection of the dark of night.

Lighting Inventory for Colorado Highway 82 & Snowmass Creek Rd

*Colorado and Federally Owned Property

*Commercial Businesses

Old Snowmass' number of commercial businesses is quite limited; in fact, there exists only one small area at the corner of Colorado Highway 82 & Snowmass Creek Road with a gas station, small market, liquor store, auto repair and limited storage units. To the east of this area is a United States Post Office; to the west, across Snowmass Creek Road is a Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Park & Ride lot.

While federal and state owned properties are exempt from DarkSky International's purview for lighting restrictions, WildSky decided to approach CDOT to see if they might work with us to reduce the impactful amount of light glare created by their older fixtures and bright bulbs. Through one of our Pitkin County Commissioners we were able to find the instrumental engineer in Denver, Colorado employed by CDOT who received our request and agreed to have the fixtures and light bulbs replaced! This they accomplished in short order and thus, light glare and pollution from the former electrical fixtures has been greatly reduced, allowing for a well-lit and safe parking area for Roaring Fork Transit Authority (RFTA) buses to safely pick up and drop off riders. With their upgrades, CDOT also changed all four light fixtures above the four stoplights at that corner with the same shielded fixtures as in the parking area.

Also located within the SCCC boundary is a United States Post Office, exempt from our process as well. Even so, we have reviewed and tested the exterior lights associated with it and found that only 2 out of 10 are operational and both have amber-colored bulbs. These were read with our Oppe IV light meter, the highest at 2000 kelvins. Please see Lighting Inventory below.

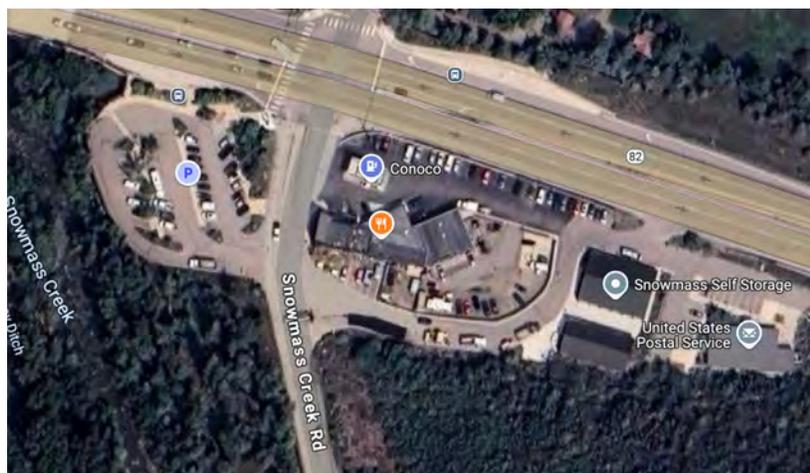
*Business Lighting

Corner of Colorado Highway 82 & Snowmass Creek Road

The commercial businesses mentioned above were recently purchased as a group by investors that, when approached, were very amenable to changing out all of the fixtures/light bulbs to be in compliance with Pitkin County's existing and new lighting code encompassing dark sky parameters.

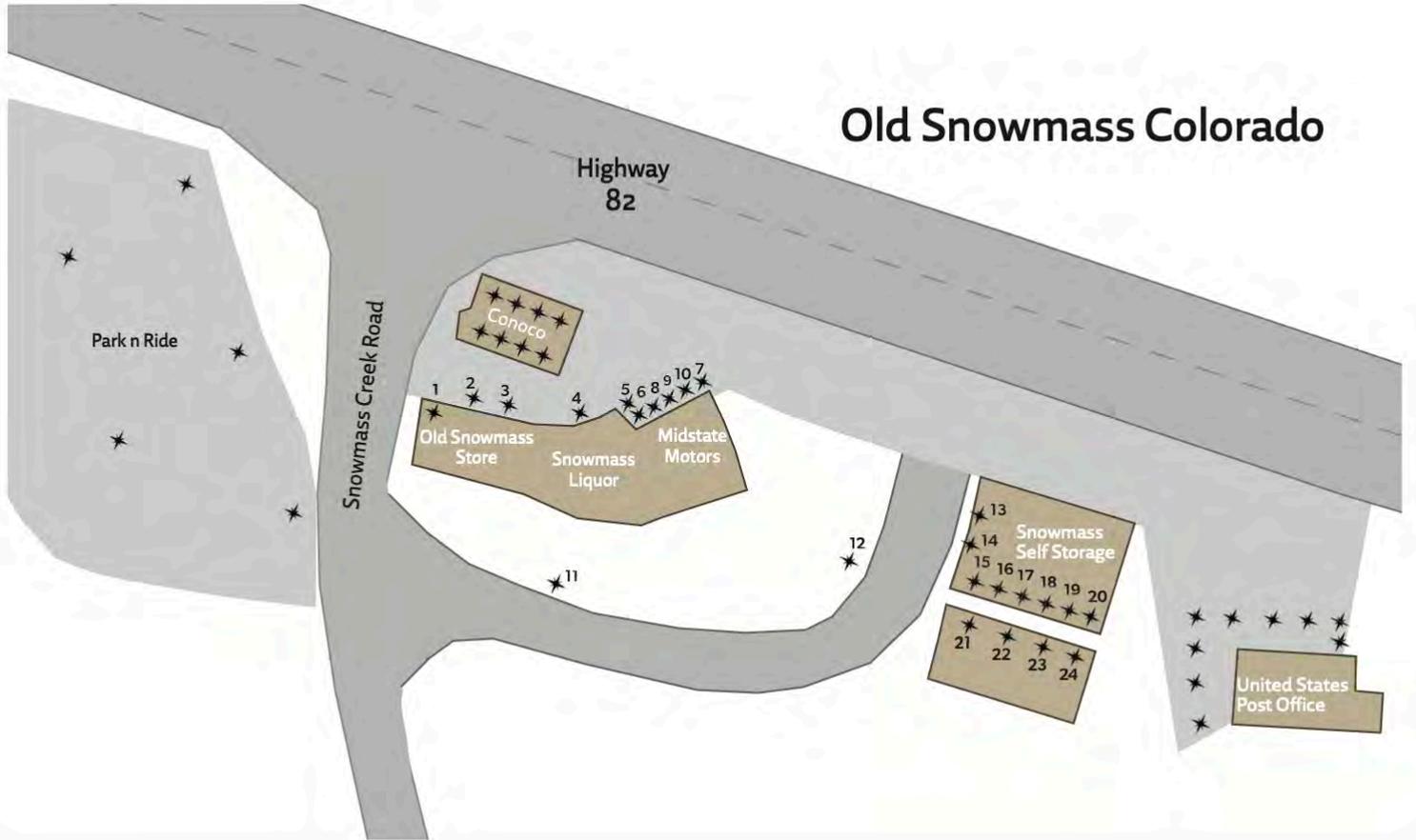
Please note that there are no existing or new installations of public lighting nor public outdoor recreational or sports fields that exist within the boundaries of the SCCC. Zoning within the SCCC precludes all such public amenities. In addition there are no city, town or community owned lighting within the SCCC area.

WildSky Old Snowmass conducted a Lighting Inventory of the few businesses located within the boundaries of the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus, Old Snowmass. They consist of a gas station, small market, liquor store, automotive repair shop and storage units.



View of Old Snowmass Corner Snowmass Creek Rd & Colorado Highway 82

Identification of All Business Lighting in Old Snowmass



Business Light Measurements

FIXTURE #	LOCATION	# OF FIXTURES	LAMPS/FIXTURE	FIXTURE TYPE	LAMP TYPE	KELVINS	SHIELDING	Operational
1,	Trash/Dumpster Area	1	1	Tall Outdoor Wall Sconce	LED	3700	Fully	Yes
2, 3, 4	Entry to Stores	3	Multiple	Cut Off Lights	LED	4300	Fully & Recessed	Yes
5, 6, 7	Entry to Auto Repair Shop	3	1	Tall Outdoor Wall Sconce	LED	3600	Fully	Yes
8, 9, 10	Entry Doors to Auto Repair Shop	3	1	Cylinder Outdoor Wall Sconce	LED	3000	Fully	Yes
11,	Parking Lot	1	1	Light Pole	Incandescent	0	Top	No. Owner will remove
12,	Parking Lot	1	1	Light Pole	Mercury Vapor	0	Top	No. Owner will remove
13, 14	Entry Door to Self Storage Building	2	1	Cylinder Outdoor Wall Sconce	LED	3000	Fully	Yes
15 - 23	Exterior to Two Self Storage Buildings	10	1	Integrated Outdoor Wall Sconce	LED	3000	Fully	Yes
Gas Station Canopy	Lighting for Gas Pumps	8	1	Canopy Lights	LED	3700	Fully & Recessed	Yes. Collective reading of all 8
EXEMPT FIXTURES:								
US Post Office	Exterior Surrounding US Post Office	10	1	Tall Outdoor Pole Lights	High Pressure Sodium/Amber Bulb	2000	Top	2 out of 10 operational
Colorado Dept of Transportation Park & Ride Lot	Lighting for Parking Lot	2	2	Tall Outdoor Pole Lights	LED	3800	Top	Yes
	Lighting for Parking Lot	3	1	Tall Outdoor Pole Lights	LED	3800	Top	Yes

WildSky Old Snowmass has met with the maintenance person for these businesses, identifying which lights have been changed already and which are or will be out of code once the new ordinance is passed in January, 2025. He has agreed to address each one, bringing them into compliance as soon as possible. At that time WildSky will revisit, inspect and take a second round of light measurements. We will report the outcome in our yearly report next year in 2026.

The photos below show clearly which lighting fixtures are in compliance and not creating light trespass; others clearly indicate which ones need updating. Once again, we anticipate these lights/fixtures are in the process of being updated.

Lighting Updates with Before & After Photos

The following are image displays of exempt exterior lighting at the corner of Colorado Highway 82 and Snowmass Creek Road showing light fixtures at the Colorado Department of Transportation-owned Park and Ride Lot (CDOT Park&Ride) and the US Postal Service Office. While exempt from DarkSky International, our efforts here are tangible.

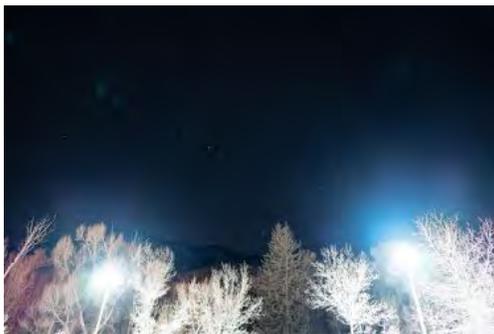
CDOT Park&Ride



Old Light Pole Fixture at Park&Ride
Fixture ~ Bulb Visible



Replacement Light Pole
Fully Shielded LED Double 3800 kelvins



Before



After

US Postal Service Building

Also exempt from DarkSky International, WildSky examined the existing lighting at the US Postal Service building at the northeast corner at Colorado Highway 82 and Snowmass Creek Road. Out of 10 there are two operable lights on poles. Both have amber bulbs and measured 2000 and 1900 kelvins respectively thus discernable light pollution from this location is very low.



US Post Office Day



Evening at 2000 Kelvins

Business Lighting Photos

Conoco Gas Station



Fixture #1



Fixtures #2 - 4



Fixtures 5 - 10



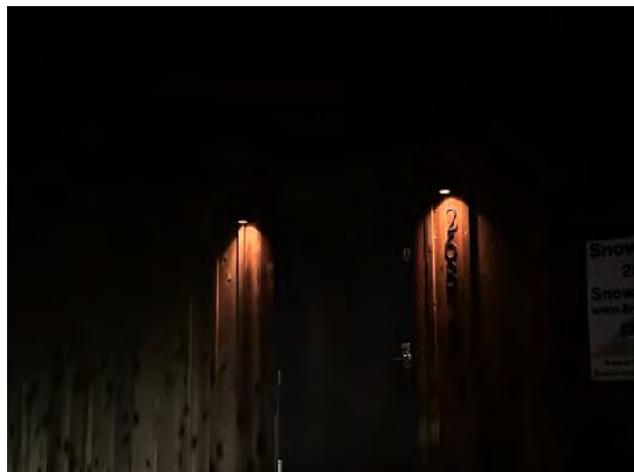
Fixture #12 (Non-Operational)



Fixture #13 (Non-Operational)



Fixtures #14 - 15



Fixtures #16 - 21



Fixtures #22 - 25



WildSky/SCCC's determination is that lighting needing attention is predominantly centered around the Auto Repair portion of the commercial buildings at the corner (Fixtures 5 - 10).

More specifically, fixture 1 is currently out of code with a reading of 3700 kelvins. Fixtures 8, 9 and 10, which sit in-between #s 5 - 7, have been read at 3000 kelvins and are rarely/if ever used. Major attention is focused on Fixtures 5, 6 and 7 which are currently out of code with readings of 3600 kelvins. After remedy, WildSky will make sure the shields and lower kelvin readings for #1 and #s 5, 6 and 7 are within acceptable limits. We have pointed these issues out directly to the owners of these businesses and met onsite with the property manager/maintenance person who have agreed that each fixture out of code and their remedies will bring them into (the updated) code; they have also indicated they will remove the non-operational lights/ poles. In fact, the owners have already changed out all fixtures in question and changed them to be downlit and below 3000 kelvin.

WildSky will review these changes in 2026 and take photographic and light meter evidence of the reduction of light.



Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus Commitment Demonstrating Effective Lighting Review & Implementation

Several reviews for new builds within the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus (SCCC) area are demonstrated below.

-
- **Fevaag Ranch**, reviewed July 2024. Specific language from the SCCC regarding the applicant’s proposed lighting:

Lighting:

The proposed house seems to include at least 17 exterior lights. Also, there appear to be six other lights proposed for the site. This situation seems incompatible with the Caucus’ Dark Sky policy, especially when the application refers to “wattage” which does not address relative brightness of lights, as do such measures as lumens, kelvins, and color rendering index.

Ultimately, this application was rejected unanimously by the SCCC with its concerns for failure to demonstrate plans “consistent with Caucus and County policies” including its lighting plan.

<https://pitkincounty.com/DocumentCenter/View/32316/PLAN08892023-Application-05092023?bidId=>

-
- **Darling Farm**, currently under review. <https://pitkincounty.com/DocumentCenter/View/32349/PLAN17272023-RE-Application-09142023?bidId=>

Specific language in applicant’s proposal regarding proposed lighting for the project:

10. LIGHTING (§7-20-140) The standards of Code Section 7-20-140 are applicable to all exterior lighting in Pitkin County. No lighting will be installed that violates the standards of said Section. All exterior lighting will be designed so that the bulb is not directly visible from adjacent and neighboring properties or from surrounding public rights-of-way. A detailed Lighting Plan will be provided at the time of building permit application.

143 DARLING FARM, LLC PIDs: 2645-182-01-001, 2645-183-01-003, 2645-184-01-001, 2645-184-01-002, & 2645-181-01-001 Page 103

Note: Owners of the Darling Farm are working closely with the SCCC and WildSky Old Snowmass to address all concerns regarding lighting. The owners fully endorse our position to protect the dark of night; in fact the location of this ranch sits in perhaps the darkest locale within the SCCC boundaries. Further, they hosted our autumn 2024 Caucus Picnic and Star Party for all residents of Old Snowmass on its property where WildSky gave a talk on the importance of preserving our dark of night and what the SCCC is achieving with our WildSky project. The owners have demonstrated above-average support to protect the night sky throughout the Darling Farm property.

- **Lazy O Ranch**, Removal of two out-of-code non-compliant lights

In Pitkin County all codes are enforced via complaint-driven notification. In early 2024 a resident contacted the Pitkin County Code Enforcement Officer numerous times to report two extremely bright floodlights that were on and off consistently at a neighboring ranch. These were unshielded lights on a very sensitive motion sensor, thus flickered on and off throughout the night creating massive light trespass. The officer physically visited the site a number of times with the ranch manager who complained he had done everything possible to ‘shield’ the lights. After inspection, the officer made it clear that the two lights were indeed still out of code and they needed to be fully shielded with code conforming LED light bulbs of 3000k or less.

The ranch manager continued to ignore the officer’s mandates to bring the fixtures into compliance which mandated the issuance of several Notices of Violation. These reached the Lazy O Ranch HOA Board President who acted immediately to have the floodlights in question removed.



SNOWMASS CAPITOL CREEK CAUCUS LIGHT MONITORING PROGRAM

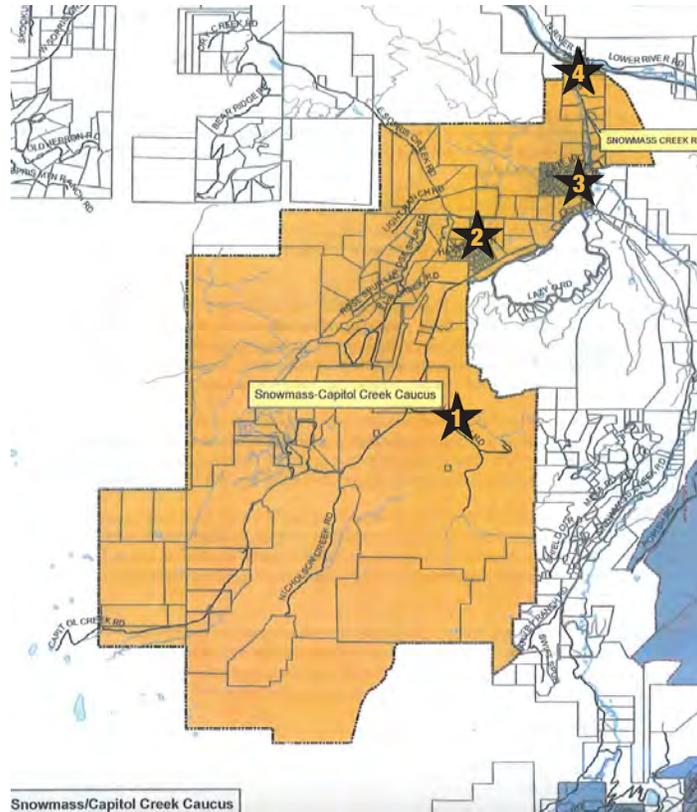
SQM Readings 2023 - 2025 Old Snowmass, Colorado



SQM DATA						
DATE	Location 1: Monastery	Location 2: Little Elk Creek Subdivision	Location 4: CDOT Park & Ride/Bus Stop	Air Temperature Avg.	% Cloud Cover	Time: Mountain Zone
10/15/23 Average of 5 Readings	21.31	21.27	18.51	46 F	0%	9 PM
09/07/24 Average of 5 Readings	21.02	21.37	18.63	61 F	Slight Cloud Coverage at Location 1	9 PM
10/01/24 Average of 5 Readings	21.22	21.27	18.63	50 F	0%	9 PM

2/27/25 Average of 5 Readings	21.27	21.33	18.27	32 F	0%	8 PM
5/26/25 Average of 5 Readings	21.09	21.33	18.16	44 F	0%	9:30 PM
Updated Location As of 10/20/25:	Location 1: Monastery	Location 2: Little Elk Creek Subdivision	Location 3: Gateway			
10/20/25 Average of 5 Readings *	21.21	21.27	21.23	32 F	0%	9:15 PM

Location of Sky Quality Readings 10/15/23 - 5/26/25



- Location 1: Monastery Road
- Location 2: Little Elk Creek Subdivision
- Location 3: Gateway
- Location 4: Park & Ride (Retired)

Per DarkSky International standard procedures for SQM readings, WildSky has taken six (6) readings at each location, the first one omitted for calibration and the remaining five (5) readings are averaged for the final reading.

WildSky/SCCC has started conducting quarterly monitoring in the latter part of 2025 to obtain more regular measurements of our night sky. The Park & Ride readings have been eliminated because, while lower readings from the Sky Quality Meter show improvement since the replacement of fixtures/bulbs by CDOT, these numbers are now not expected to change. We have chosen another better location within the community of Old Snowmass about one mile from the Park & Ride corner in a residential area called Gateway. We took our first reading from this location on October 20, 2025 and have reassigned this location to be Location 3 for future ease of identification. Any reference to Location 4 will denote the retired Park & Ride location.

The first five readings from October of 2023 through May of 2025 indicate that each location is holding fairly true over this one-plus year period. While the skies above Old Snowmass are fairly dark, it is evident with the naked eye and in photography that skyglow is creating a brighter night within the SCCC boundaries coming from neighboring Town of Snowmass Village to the southeast affecting Location 1 (see photo above) and Town of Basalt to the northwest (affecting Location 4) adding to brighter readings than were expected in these locations. Even so, the Milky Way is very visible along with many other stars and constellations at the St. Benedict's Monastery/Location 1, and Little Elk Creek Subdivision/Location 2. Both of these locations are quite dark with readings averaging over 21 in magnitudes/arcsecond, considered rural to rural/suburban transition on the Bortle Scale. Location 4 shows a low light dome as mentioned above which undoubtedly affects its readings at an average of 18.59 or bright suburban sky where only one or two stars are visible and the Milky Way is completely obliterated. Even so, after the original poles/lights were changed by CDOT, the second and third readings on this location do show improvement.

Outreach 2023 - 2024: List of Activities and Presentations by WildSky Snowmass

September 2023 - December 2024

The following are a list of the efforts of WildSky Old Snowmass on behalf of the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus to create community discourse on the importance of using smart lighting to preserve safety while curbing light pollution. We used photographs, timelapse videos and an original piece of music written specifically for our project to help illustrate and punctuate our information being presented. We've had an impressionable level of positive reaction to all of our talks and lectures which have had the desired outcome of reaching a vast number of residents in the Roaring Fork Valley become aware of the light pollution issue and asking what can be done about it. Education and awareness!



View of the Milky Way over Mt. Sopris in the Roaring Fork Valley
Photo Courtesy Ann Driggers

September 8, 2023
Annual Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus Picnic and First
Annual Star Party

Eat, Drink, and be Merry!

The Caucus picnic tradition is back! Johnno and Pete McBride have offered a beautiful place for a neighborhood gathering — thank you McBride brothers!

Who: The Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus Community

What: SnowCap Caucus Picnic! (Grill and Potluck)

Where: Johnno McBride's place: 5463 East Sopris Creek Road

When: Friday, September 8, 2023, 6 o'clock pm to 10 o'clock PM.

Why: *See old friends and meet new ones

*Munch grilled brats and burgers with fixings. Beer, wine, sparkling water are provided

*Look at the stars with two powerful telescopes!

*Find out about becoming a Dark Night Sky Community!

How much? Free---Donations gratefully accepted at the picnic or online at

<https://www.snowcapcaucus.org/support>



January 31, 2024
Presentation at Aspen Center for Environmental Studies

Preserving the Dark of Night: Chasing the Midnight Rainbow

This program was filled to capacity, attracting more attendees than before recorded. Martha Ferguson of WildSky Old Snowmass gave the presentation with photographs from local Ann Driggers, and special guest Aaron Watson, recent-Chair of DarkSky Colorado. Aspen Public Radio recorded it and broadcast it soon thereafter.

<https://aspennature.org/activity/preserving-the-dark-of-night-chasing-the-midnight-rainbow/>



Preserving the Dark of Night: Chasing the
Midnight Rainbow - ACES
aspennature.org

Note: The opening of all the WildSky programs and presentations start with visually inspiring audiences with time-lapse original photography of Old Snowmass and the Roaring Fork Valley written and directed by Martha Ferguson of WildSky Old Snowmass. Artistically woven by photographer Ann Driggers with original music composed by award-winning guitarist Johannes Linstead specifically for the WildSky Old Snowmass project, entitled The Dark of Night. It has been released as a single on all platforms to bring attention to light pollution and importance of keeping our night time as dark as possible. Press Arrow to Play, Adjust Sound

**The Dark of Night
Presentation by WildSky/
Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus**

<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/1075418693>



March 14, 2024 Presentation for The Rotary Club of Aspen



Weekly Newsletter

The Rotary Club of Aspen

Wednesday, March 13, 2024
 Editor: Samantha Johnston - [http://samanthajohnston@gmail.com](mailto:samanthajohnston@gmail.com)
 Obedient scribe: Bill Linn - bill.linn@rcaspen.com

March Happy Bucks

Aspen Animal Shelter



Rotary Readers met earlier this month to discuss their favorite books.

Photos: Left to Right: Amy Perini, Rotary Readers back club, from the back left, Samantha Johnston, Joanne Demaree, Diane Foster, Erik Snowles (on Zoom), Cindy Hachfeldt and Nathalia Crick. Front: Heather Kendrick and Eliza Kayser.

Books Are the Best!

The Rotary Readers will meet again at 5 p.m. Thursday, April 11 to discuss the book of the month, "Trust" by Herman Diaz.

Even through the war and effervescence of the 1920s, everyone in New York has heard of Benjamin and Helen Rank. He is a legendary Wall Street tycoon; she is the daughter of eccentric aristocrats. Together, they have risen to the very top of a world of seemingly endless wealth—all as a decade of excess and speculation draws to an end. But at what cost have they acquired their immense fortune? This is the mystery at the center of *Trust*, a successful 1927 novel that all of New York seems to have read. Yet there are other versions of this tale of privilege and deceit.

Herman Diaz's *TRUST* elegantly puts these competing narratives into conversation with one another—and in tension with the perspective of one woman lost on disorienting feet from fiction. The result is a novel that spans over a century and becomes more exhilarating with each new revelation.

At once an immersive story and a brilliant literary puzzle, *TRUST* engages the reader in a quest for the truth while confronting the deceptions that often live at the heart of personal relationships, the reality-warping force of capital, and the ease with which power can manipulate facts.



If anyone is interested in joining, they should email Samantha Johnston: samanthajohnston@gmail.com

Martha Ferguson — Night Sky Initiative Champion Ann Driggers — Backcountry Bon Vivant Wild Sky Old Snowmass



Martha Ferguson has always been enchanted by and engaged in the environment, growing up close to mountains, ocean and desert in Southern California. She majored in Social Ecology at the University of California, Irvine — the investigation of how individuals interact with and respond to the environment around them and how these interactions affect society and the environment as a whole. Moving to Aspen in 1979, she has been a resident of Old Snowmass since 1984, where she is serving a 4th term on the Snowmass Capitol Creek Canoe Board. She is championing the Dark Sky Initiative for Old Snowmass to become the first Dark Sky Community in the Roaring Fork Valley with the goal of preserving and amenity we take for granted here — the ability to see the Milky Way and thousands of stars in our own backyard — while bringing awareness to other fundamental, yet often overlooked elements associated with the darkness of night that affect all life on the planet.



Ann Driggers is a weekend warrior and a backcountry bon vivant who lives in Carbondale. She aims to explore as much of the wild and beautiful places of her local geography as possible, most often with her camera along for the ride. She has found inspiration by combining her love of adventure and photography to capture images of the natural world in a unique way. Ann loves to begin her day with a dawn patrol, watching the sunrise from a local summit and then sliding into work wiping the powder from her grinning face. The weekends are spent deep in the backcountry where she is always devising new routes and truly connecting with nature; returning with memories, pictures, and words to inspire others. Her greatest passion is night photography: the moon, the stars, and the Milky Way, which she captures while backpacking, bikepacking, wild ice skating and hut tripping in Colorado's Elk Mountains. The romance and allure of chasing magical nocturnal landscapes has caught her in its spell. Through her photography, she aims to share the breathtaking wonders of the night and inspire advocates for dark skies.

March 18, 2024.

Meet with Shashi Neerukonda, Roaring Fork Conservancy

Meeting with Sashi Neerukonda, Environmental Advisory Board to the
Town Council for the Town of Snowmass Village
Revisiting the TOSV Lighting Ordinance

March 20, 2024

Presentation at Basalt Public Library

Brief Talk on the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus and WildSky Old
Snowmass Launch of DarkSky Initiative

May 21, 2024

Meeting with Carbondale Environmental Board

Zoom discussion of dark sky information with the Town of Carbondale
Environmental Board

May 29, 2024

Presentation at Carbondale Public Library

Full interactive presentation on Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus and
WildSky Old Snowmass DarkSky Initiative In conjunction with Pitkin
County's Update of the County Lighting Code

May 30, 2024

Presentation at Pitkin County Library, Aspen

Full interactive presentation on Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus and
WildSky Old Snowmass DarkSky Initiative In conjunction with Pitkin
County's Update of the County Lighting Code

August 12, 2024 Stars Above Aspen

WildSky Old Snowmass invited to create a presentation table with information, pamphlet, take-aways and a representative from WildSky to answer questions about the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus/WildSky Initiative.

Multitude of attendees from up and down the Roaring Fork Valley came by and asked questions..WildSky also provided two telescope stations for viewing the night sky.



Stars Above Aspen, in partnership with the Aspen Center for Environmental Studies (ACES), is celebrating its 7th year. Join us for interactive presentations, guided telescope stations, exploring the Fiske Planetarium Minidome, captivating constellation storytelling, dining at the Sundeck, and many other activities. Tickets often sell out, so don't miss this opportunity for you and your whole crew to take part in this celestial celebration. Remember to bring a blanket for stargazing and dress warmly for when the sun dips below the horizon.

Stars Above Aspen Event Photos







**AspenSnowmass, FISKE Planetarium
Blue Origin**

May 16, 2024
Stars and Stripes: Preserving the Dark of Night with
Dr. Jeffrey Hall of the Lowell Observatory

Underwritten by the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus
WildSky Committee Member David Chase

STARS AND STRIPES:
PRESERVING THE DARK OF NIGHT WITH DR.
JEFFREY HALL

MAY 16 @ 7:00 PM
SHOW @ 7:00 PM / DOORS @ 6:00 PM

FREE WITH RSVP

SEATED SHOW / ALL AGES



Street Lighting for Enhancing Dark Skies
The Flagstaff SLEDS Project

FLAGSTAFF TODAY

HIGH-PRESSURE SODIUM	(10%)	
LOW-PRESSURE SODIUM	(70%)	

THE WORLD TODAY

CW-HIGH-TEMPERATURE WHITE LED	(70%)	
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FLAGSTAFF TOMORROW

PHOSPHOR-CONVERTED AMBER LED	(10%)	
NARROW BAND AMBER LED	(70%)	



Things we commonly hear
Dark Skies = No Lights



September 10, 2024
Presentation Before the
Pitkin County Planning & Zoning
Commission

Interactive Presentation on why the updated dark sky oriented lighting code is so important for all of Pitkin County. Q&A, followed by vote for Updated County Lighting Code. Passed unanimously.

September 17, 2024
Annual Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus
Picnic and 3rd Annual Star Party





**November 18, 2024 Presentation Before the
Pitkin County Board of County Commissioners
Scheduled Reading for Updated Lighting Code**

First reading by Pitkin County BOCC Regarding Updating the County Lighting Code. Second reading scheduled for January 22, 2025 for final reading and vote. Attended by WildSky Old Snowmass.



Pitkin County Board of County Commissioners
Jeffrey Woodruff, Patti Capper, Francie Jacober
Greg Poschman, Kelly McNicholas Kury, Chair

Outreach 2025: List of Activities and Presentations by WildSky Old Snowmass

February - November 2025

February 6, 2025

Zoom Presentation: Living Lab for a Living Planet Series

Group participants from around the globe whose mission is committed to protecting and renewing life on Planet Earth

Next Living Planet Group Meeting

Feb 6th 2025 @ 1pm ET

Theme: **Dark Skies**

Spotlight: Martha Ferguson,
Founder of Dark Skies Old
Snowmass

Photo credit to Ann Driggers

Register [here](#)



May 8, 2025

**Presentation for the Crystal River Caucus
Redstone, Colorado
7 pm Church at Redstone**

Presentation for this Caucus area in Pitkin County interested in DarkSky International and taking action to bring their lighting footprint down.



**August 10, 2025
4 - 7 pm**

**Meeting of the Minds
Pitkin County Caucuses
105 River Rock Ln
Woody Creek, Colorado**

An invitation and meeting for All Pitkin County Caucus board members was organized by Susan Taylor, Woody Creek Caucus President. The event was to gather, have meaningful conversations and interactions about current and upcoming issues in Pitkin County with an opportunity for WildSky Old Snowmass, represented by Martha Ferguson, to give a presentation and Q&A on why dark skies are ever important for our valley and how to go about becoming an International Dark Sky Community. It was mentioned that WildSky is available to speak with any caucus curious and intending to move forward with a dark sky designation. There was much support and interest.



Stars Above Aspen Astronomy Night
Presented by Aspen Center for Environmental Studies
AspenSnowmass, FISKE Planetarium
Blue Origin



Stars Above Aspen 2025



Stars Above Aspen Astronomy Night

Tuesday, August 12 | 6:00 – 10:30pm | Aspen Mountain



Stars Above Aspen Astronomy Night

Tuesday, August 12 | 6:00 – 10:30pm | Aspen Mountain

\$25 per person, children 10 and under are free, registration opens in July.

Explore the cosmos from 11,212 feet at the Sundeck at this all-ages event that's sure to be out of this world!

Featuring: Sunset Yoga, Hands-on activities, games & crafts , Telescope stations, STARLAB Planetarium, and more!

While we love your furry friends, please leave your pups at home for this event!







August 28, 2025

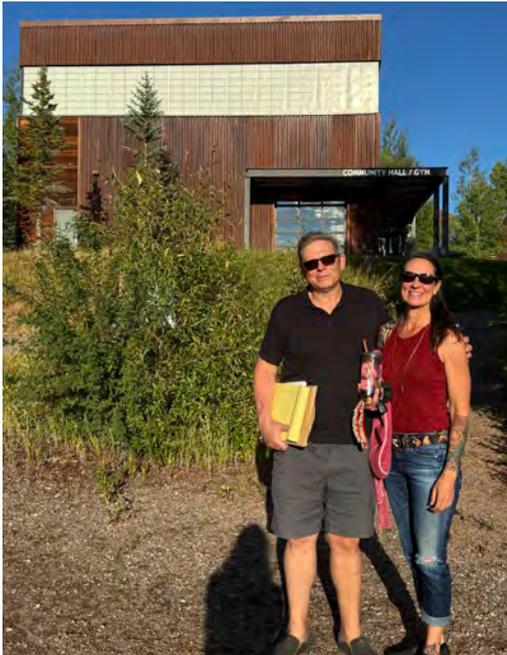
Presentation for the Woody Creek Caucus

**Woody Creek Caucus Meeting to be held 6:30 PM at the Community School Gym.
Everyone is Welcome. Please Bring your Friends and Neighbors**

Agenda:

- Martha Ferguson will tell us about the Dark Skies initiative she has implemented in Old Snowmass and how we might do the same in Woody Creek
- Land Use items: 174 Twinning Flats Rd., Chaparral events
- Pitkin County's 2050 Vision Plan: website: <https://pitkincounty.com/1606/Pitkin-County-Vision-2050> pdf: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pi3yW5tr-epu4cO2K5AuNIVBRftjxD1w/view?usp=gmail>
The main issues for Woody Creek are concern that the language in the plan will supersede our Master Plan with the county's new master plan, the recategorization of building zoning language in Woody Creek to something they are calling a "Transition Zone" rather rural agricultural that it is now, and language that will be to encourage and incentivize alternative forms of affordable housing* to be built outside of the urban growth boundary that might lead to extensive new development and sprawl in Woody Creek.
- An update on the Airport expansion

We look forward to seeing everyone.



Allen Jones, President of the Woody Creek Caucus

**September 13, 2025
Buttercup Ranch**

Annual Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus Picnic

GOOD EATS ✦ MUSIC ✦ BBQ ✦ STARGAZING

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE ANNUAL
SnowCap Community Picnic
Saturday September 13, 2025
from 5-9 pm

BUTTERCUP RANCH
1151 Capitol Creek Road

BRING A POTLUCK DISH TO SHARE

SPEND TIME WITH
NEW AND OLD FRIENDS



SPONSORED BY  SNOWMASS CAPITOL CREEK CAUCUS

Go to our website for information. Donations welcome.
WWW.SNOWCAPCAUCUS.ORG



Annual Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus Picnic & Star Party

September 28, 2025

**Pitkin County Environmental Volunteer Award
Presented to Martha Ferguson, Founder of
WildSky Old Snowmass**



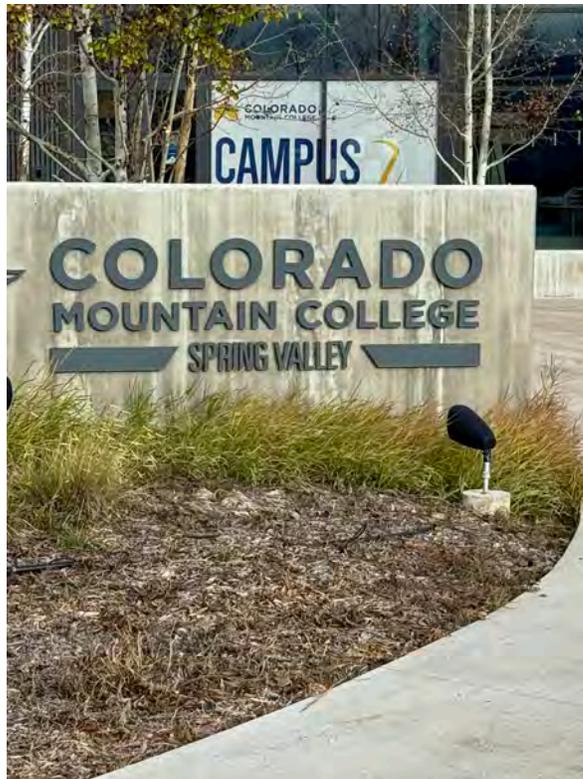
Martha Ferguson/WildSky Old Snowmass 3rd from left, front row

<https://www.aspentimes.com/news/pitkin-county-announces-winners-of-annual-volunteer-and-greg-mace-awards/>

November 20, 2025

**Presentation for Colorado Mountain College
Spring Valley Campus**

Invitation from Colorado Mountain College (CMC) to speak about the topic of light pollution and ways to mitigate overlighting on its 11 campuses throughout Colorado with an emphasis on energy savings and improved campus safety. The group was interested also in introducing the topic as it affects the environment across academics, health, sustainability and community engagement. In attendance were the Vice President/Campus Dean for CMC along with the CMC Program & Facilities Manager, Director of Risk Management, Executive Director of Facilities, Animal Facility Manager, the Founder/Ecologist from Roaring Fork Audubon, a representative of Eagle County (adjacent to Pitkin County) and interested local citizens.





View from Colorado Mountain College Spring Valley Campus



Presentation at the J. Robert Young Alpine Ascent Center CMC

Outreach: News and Public Radio Support

Article in the Sopris Sun

June 7, 2023

<https://soprissun.com/reveling-in-our-dark-night-sky/>



The Milky Way spills over Capitol Peak and Mt. Daly. Photo courtesy of Pete McBride

By Martha Ferguson
Special to The Sopris Sun

**Aspen Public Radio Recording of
Preserving the Dark of Night: Chasing the Midnight
Rainbow
Recorded Live at Aspen Center for Environmental Studies
Broadcast February 1, 2024**

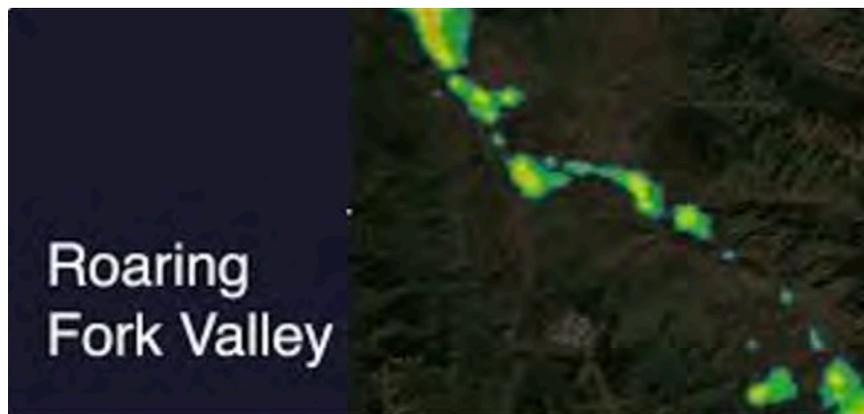
<https://www.aspenpublicradio.org/ideas-speakers-lectures/2024-02-01/potbelly-perspectives-preserving-the-dark-of-night-chasing-the-midnight-rainbow#:~:text=1%3A00%3A-28,-ACES>



= Listen in to Ann Driggers, outdoor adventurer/photographer, and Martha Ferguson ...

Aspen Daily News
February 5, 2024

https://www.aspendailynews.com/news/rfv-residents-see-the-light-on-dark-skies/article_27571422-c3f6-11ee-854c-879743ba87d0.html



= Interest in maintaining dark skies is growing in Colorado as growth and inappropriate use of nig...

The Aspen Times
May 14, 2024

<https://www.aspentimes.com/news/old-snowmass-working-to-become-first-dark-sky-community-in-the-valley/>



= Martha Ferguson is passionate about observing and enjoying what the night sky has to offer. Fro...

Letter to the Editor in the Aspen Daily News January 14, 2024



By WildSky Old Snowmass Founder Martha Ferguson

**The Aspen Times
December 19, 2024**

<https://www.aspentimes.com/news/pitkin-county-commissioners-consider-land-use-code-change-for-lighting/>

Group looks to get county a dark sky designation



A photo taken atop Aspen Mountain showing light pollution.
Ann Driggers/Courtesy photo

Aspen Daily News
January 28, 2025

[Dimming the lights in Pitkin County](#)



Exterior lighting in Aspen and greater Pitkin County contribute to light pollution that can be visible for over 100 miles.

Courtesy of Ann Driggers

Letters of Community Support

Resident of Old Snowmass, Jeffrey Woodruff
Just elected to the Pitkin County Board of County Commissioners

Support for Dark skies in Pitkin County
14 March 2023
Jeffrey H. Woodruff, Snowmass resident

As a resident of Snowmass, Colorado and an architect, I support a built environment that protects dark skies.

We live in a beautiful place. We share our backyard with mule deer and elk. Our vistas are dark; occasionally sharing the horizon with winter snow cats, grooming leased land for recreation. Some of our neighbors inherently protect our dark skies. We are bordered by USFS and BLM land and working ranches.

Tonight I will gaze from my backyard and watch the International Space Station appear in the night sky and disappear a few minutes later. I receive period alerts, that a team of international astronauts are visible in our skies, "Time: Fri Mar 17 8:08 PM, Visible: 7 min, Max Height: 78°, Appears: 10° above SW, Disappears: 9° above NE". (Some might argue this is night pollution, I would argue this is stunning and world powers actually studying and cooperating to discover what we can achieve. Meteor showers, lunar eclipses and even space stations draw us outside to marvel at our night sky). This joy, this moment to see the space station orbiting, requires darkness; a night sky free of pollution from landscape lighting, unnecessary illumination (outside of health and safety requirements) and man-made disturbances.

Protection of this wonder, through measuring foot-candles at property lines and keeping lamps from trespassing, is a matter for ordinances (to align with and meet International Dark Sky Association Model Lighting requirements as developed by the Illuminating Engineering Society) and courtesy (awareness for your neighbors and wildlife to enjoy the rest and peace from a dark sky and to wake up to the sun; the pleasure of a restful night, the purity of an unimpeded night sky to observe the International Space Station with your naked eye).

Shielding light loss in the built environment, allows Snowmass, Colorado neighbors to enjoy, protect and preserve the natural environment free from night time light pollution. Just as we enjoy our day time hikes and trails to explore beautiful visits, we must protect the night sky to enjoy the diurnal rhythms and witness the solar system in its natural state.

Jeffrey H. Woodruff, 14 March 2023

Aspen Center for Environmental Studies (ACES)



March 23, 2023

Dear International Dark Sky Association,

Aspen Center for Environmental Studies (ACES) is writing to offer our support for the community of Old Snowmass becoming a Dark Sky Sanctuary. As communities throughout our watershed continue to grow and develop it is essential that we maintain sanctuaries for wildlife. This includes ensuring that areas remain as free from light pollution as possible. ACES is thrilled to see the Old Snowmass caucus stepping up as the first community in our watershed (to our knowledge) to apply to become a Dark Sky Sanctuary.

We are also eagerly anticipating the educational programs they will be organizing as part of their designation. While our watershed has a plethora of environmental education programs there are very few that focus on the harms of light pollution to both wildlife and humans. Old Snowmass is an ideal place to fill this gap, the community is centrally located and easily accessible from many areas of the watershed. We hope their actions will inspire other communities throughout our watershed to follow their example or at least ensure regulations exist to minimize light pollution. If you require any additional information from us please don't hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Adam McCurdy
Forest and Climate Director
Aspen Center for Environmental Studies

Lowell Observatory/Dr. Jeffrey Hall



1400 W Mars Hill Rd, Flagstaff, AZ 86001-4499 | USA
lowell.edu | 928.774.3358

April 11, 2023

International Dark-Sky Association
C/O Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus

Dear IDA Board of Directors,

I am writing to express my support for the effort by the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus in pursuing an IDA Dark-Sky designation.

As is well evident in the maps in the Falchi atlas, the continental United States has no areas of natural dark skies east of the Mississippi River, and dwindling areas to the west of it. Even in the central Rockies, sandwiched between the growing light domes of the Front Range and Salt Lake, one finds only a few remaining places of natural dark.

The Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus has noted to me the increasing intrusion of light pollution in Pitkin County and in the picturesque valley that is home to spectacular places like Aspen, Maroon Bells, and the western end of Glenwood Canyon. It would be quite a loss to see the natural sky above these sights increasingly degraded by artificial light.

I'm therefore pleased to endorse the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus's application for IDA Dark Sky Community designation, and I know this will be a valuable step forward in preserving the beautiful natural environment above the Rockies as well as within them. I look forward to seeing the Aspen area added to the growing roster of IDA Dark Sky places in the western United States.

Sincerely yours,

Jeffrey Hall
Executive Director
Lowell Observatory

Resident of Old Snowmass: Judith Frey

Judith Frey
75 Capitol Creek Road
Snowmass, CO 81654

August 25, 2022

To the Snowmass-Capitol Creek Caucus:

It is my pleasure to support the initiative to establish a Dark Sky Sanctuary in Old Snowmass, Colorado. This broad valley of ranches and private homes is one of the darkest places in Colorado at night. The experience of the night sky, once available to everyone on earth, is increasingly rare in our age. To be able to see the stars, planets, and occasional comet is an inseparable component of the broader experience of the natural wilderness that we enjoy here.

The Dark Sky Sanctuary designation will increase the understanding of this issue among long-time residents and newcomers alike. Once there is a general commitment to this endeavor, the simple steps necessary to preserve the dark skies should make sense to most residents. My hope is that the community here engages together in a valley-wide effort to keep the skies dark so that this incomparable experience of beauty is available to all who live or visit here.

Sincerely,

Judith Frey

Aspen Valley Land Trust



April 14, 2023

Attn: International Dark Sky Association

RE: Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus International Dark Sky Community Application

This letter is to express support from Aspen Valley Land Trust (AVLT) for the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus's bid to designate their region as an International Dark Sky Community through the International Dark Sky Association. The area of interest, comprising 17,061 acres of rural and open space lands in the Capitol Creek Drainage of Old Snowmass, imbues the quintessential natural heritage of Colorado – containing vast ecological, cultural, open space and viewshed conservation values, in which the preservation of dark skies will invariably protect.

Since 1967, AVLT has helped private landowners conserve over 45,900 acres of working family ranches, scenic viewsheds, riparian and wildlife habitat, and recreational areas in the Roaring Fork and upper Colorado River watersheds. The oldest local land trust in Colorado, AVLT is a widely known and respected community based non-profit organization serving parts of Pitkin, Garfield, Eagle, and Gunnison Counties. We are committed to preserving vital open spaces through the creation, restoration, and defense of perpetual conservation easements. To date, AVLT has helped conserve over 5,140 acres across four different conservation easements within the Capitol Creek Valley, with over a thousand additional acres conserved in the Snowmass Creek Valley. The designation of this region as an International Dark Sky Community will greatly benefit these and future easements.

The Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus is dedicated to protecting the night sky from light pollution that is becoming rampant throughout the world, and it is noticeably creeping into the rural neighborhoods of Old Snowmass and the Roaring Fork Valley. It is essential that sanctuaries for humans and wildlife remain as free from light pollution as possible using this designation to educate, inform and advocate for smart lighting codes and to develop programs that invite the public to find out why it is important and how to participate. With this, they inherently advocate for conservation of the night sky for the spectacular observation of stars, planets and the Milky Way from their backyards.

We urge you to give the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus's application your highest consideration for their designation as a Dark Sky Community to ensure the quality of life and preservation of associated values for the surrounding community.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Stephens, Executive Director

Aspen Valley Land Trust
320 Main St #204, Carbondale, CO 81623
970.963.8440

Aspen Skiing Company



April 28, 2023

Dear Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus:

I'm writing to express Aspen Skiing Company's support for making Old Snowmass a Dark Sky Sanctuary.

As it happens, I helped write the Carbondale dark sky ordinance when I was on the Planning and Zoning Commission there, so I'm very familiar with the value of keeping night skies dark. Old Snowmass is a perfect place for such a sanctuary, and it might well encourage other towns and municipalities to follow suit or to expand their night lighting restrictions. Remember: our valley gets national attention, and can serve as a role model beyond our borders.

Way to go! And please let us know if we can do anything else to help make this a reality.

Best,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Auden Schendler".

Auden Schendler
SVP, Sustainability
Aspen Skiing Company

Wilderness Workshop



April 19, 2023

P.O. Box 1442
CAMPDENALE, CO 81623

TEL (970) 963-3977
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www.wildernessworkshop.org
info@wildernessworkshop.org

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*Deceased

Dear International Dark Sky Association,

Wilderness Workshop is writing in support of the community of Old Snowmass becoming a Dark Sky Sanctuary. As development and growth continues throughout the Roaring Fork Valley and across Western Colorado it is essential that we take steps to preserve a dark nighttime environment. Limiting and reducing light pollution benefit wildlife and allows ecosystems and natural processes to function as they have for millennia.

Wilderness Workshop applauds the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus for their initiative in seeking this designation and we hope that their actions will inspire other communities throughout our region to follow their example and advocate for and enact regulations to protect the nighttime environment from light pollution. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

Will Roush, Executive Director

"Going wild since 1967"
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The Crystal Valley Environmental Protection Association

PO 921 Carbondale CO 81623 www.cvepa.org EIN 84-1048136

The purpose of the Crystal Valley Environmental Protection Association is the protection and preservation of the natural environment, its scenic and historic resources, and to encourage conduct, that will sustain those resources.

Greetings Dark Skies International,

I have learned of and am writing to support the designation of The Old Snowmass Valley of Western Colorado as a Dark Sky Community. I am very familiar with the valley. Old Snowmass is well known for the protected lands of the Windstar Foundation of John Denver and the Rocky Mountain Institute Energy Think tank of Amory Lovins. Additional to that the valley is home to numerous large ranches, many in conservation easements, and the sprawling Saint Benedicts Monastery. These properties are backed up by a large expanse of dedicated wilderness area and contribute greatly to the revered darkness that we are all trying to protect.

As our larger valley continues to grow at an unprecedented rate we see light pollution rushing in to illuminate our previously brilliant dark sky. It is incumbent on us all to protect the darkness that remains.

The Crystal Valley Environmental Protection Association encourages you to bring Old Snowmass Valley into the fold of Dark Skies Communities.

John Armstrong

President

CVEPA

Aspen Education Foundation

May 18, 2023

Dear International Dark Sky Association:

As an Aspen Education Foundation Board member and retired Principal of the Aspen School District, I am writing to wholeheartedly support the efforts of the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus in pursuing IDSP certification.

The Aspen School District community embraces the outdoors. One way in which we do so is through an extensive outdoor education program. For over fifty-five years, thousands of Aspen/Snowmass students have ventured into the backcountry to develop perseverance, resilience, an understanding of their surroundings, and an appreciation of each other's differences. Students have spent countless nights reflecting under the star-lit skies at Capitol Lake, Avalanche Creek, Buckskin Pass, Snowmass Lake, and throughout the Maroon Bells Snowmass Wilderness. The program is embraced by our community and has distinguished our school district as the preeminent public school outdoor education program in the country.

In my 30-plus years of supporting students in this program, I unfortunately have begun to see an intrusion of light pollution while in the backcountry. My hope is that through IDSP certification, we can prevent our dark skies from being increasingly degraded, and hopefully decrease light pollution in this stunning area where students learn immensely about themselves, others, and the world around them.

Thank you for your efforts and consideration.

With best regards,

Craig Rogers
Aspen Education Foundation Board
Aspen School District Principal - Retired

Design Workshop

Design Workshop, Inc.
Landscape Architecture
Planning
Urban Design
Strategic Services

120 East Main Street
Aspen, Colorado 81611
970.925.8354
designworkshop.com

April 26, 2023

International Dark Sky Association

RE: Snowmass Creek Capitol Creek Caucus International Dark Sky Community

On behalf of Design Workshop, we have prepared this letter recommending the Snowmass Caucus implement a dark sky designation. Our firm has been very involved in designing projects in the area and believe that most property owners are naturally attuned to the benefits of maintaining the dark sky. However, there may be some property owners that are unaware or unfamiliar with the negative effects of light and desire lighting that would change the character of the night environment. Our firm has implemented dark sky ordinances in many communities we have planned around the western United States, and the resulting benefits—both tangible and abstract—for residents, neighboring communities, and wildlife is significant.

One of the many reasons people choose to live in rural environments such as the Snowmass/Capitol Creek Valley is because of the peace and quiet that comes with living in the country and the ability to view and enjoy the night sky. This has subtle but significant impacts, especially for future generations. The erosion of this quality is rapidly under threat due to the urbanization of the mountain valleys in Colorado. Several benefits to a dark sky designation for the Snowmass/Capitol area would be elimination of unneeded lights that waste energy. Defining the low levels of light, shielding the light sources, and checking expansion of unnecessary light will preserve the special character of the valley.

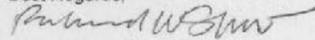
The proximity to public lands and wilderness areas further increases the importance of implementing a dark sky initiative in this area. As open and undeveloped land decreases in the Roaring Fork Valley, so too does the presence of truly dark skies unfettered by light pollution. The adjacency of the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness and other essential public lands is a significant factor in the protection of dark skies as well.

Bright lighting isn't necessarily safer lighting. Bright, glaring lights contract the eye's pupils and create sharp contrast between light and darkness, making the area outside of the illuminated location difficult to see, creating deep shadows that offer concealment. Dark sky friendly lighting improves overall safety. Lower lighting levels, warmer light temperatures, and better coverage are safer lighting methods.

Both wildlife and domestic animals are impacted by outdoor lighting. Prolonged exposure to artificial lighting creates disorientation, alters behaviors, and changes breeding cycles. It disrupts natural processes in both plants and animals.

In our experience, light pollution is a real factor in the quality of life we can preserve. With that in mind, we urge the Caucus to consider initiating the designation of a dark sky area to protect what is today a precious resource.

Best Regards,



Richard Shaw, Principal

DESIGNWORKSHOP

Memo from Francie Jacober, Chair Pitkin County Commissioner

From: Francie Jacober francie.jacober@pitkincounty.com
Subject: dark skies
Date: August 21, 2023 at 5:21 PM
To: Martha Ferguson marthaferguson3@gmail.com



Thank you, Martha, for your thoughtful and thorough letter to the Board of Commissioners on the Dark Sky Initiative. To be honest, we commissioners were surprised that we hadn't already approved this. And we look forward to taking action.

I live above Prince Creek Road at the base of Sopris and I rejoice every night at our beautiful dark skies. I see almost no lights from my bedroom window. It is lovely.

Thanks for your hard work on this issue. It is worth everyone's attention.
Warmly, Francie

Francie Jacober
Pitkin County Commissioner, District 5
970-379-8511
francie.jacober@pitkincounty.com

Letter from Roaring Fork Audubon



ROARING FORK AUDUBON

TO: Martha Ferguson
Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus
Citizen Advocate for Dark Skies in Snowmass and
Beyond

FROM: Roaring Fork Audubon
info@roaringforkaudubon.org

RE: Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus

Roaring Fork Audubon (RFA) is a local chapter of the National Audubon Society. We are an all-volunteer board that works for all of the people in the Roaring Fork Valley and our native animals with emphasis on our native birds. We speak for the animals that have no voice, and one of our missions is to educate people in the valley about the importance of protecting our disappearing bird populations.

Since Joni Mitchell's protest song with the lyrics "you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone" was sung about 60 years ago, we have lost more than one-third of the birds in North America! This number will certainly and sadly rise.

Birds as part of our ecosystems are imperative. They play many roles including rodent control, insect control, pollination and seed dispersion. All of our habitats require birds in order to survive.

RFA and our 850+ members support the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus in its mission to have its area designated as an International Dark Sky Community, working with the International Dark Sky Association.

PO BOX 1192

Carbondale CO 81623

www.RoaringForkAudubon.org

Roaring Fork Audubon 501C3 84-0731814



ROARING FORK AUDUBON

RFA has been working with other communities in our valley to encourage them to adopt bird friendly living. The Snowmass Caucus is the first to proceed with this essential designation.

Twice each year, billions of birds fly between wintering and breeding grounds, facing innumerable threats along the way. In North America, 70 percent of bird species migrate and, of those, 80 percent migrate at night, using the night sky to navigate. Light attracts, disorients, confuses and exhausts migrating birds and makes them vulnerable to collisions with buildings. They can circle in confusion until they land at dawn and are subject to other urban threats.

It is estimated that structure collisions cause one billion bird deaths annually in the U.S. In our region, lights from homes and businesses have led to record high death rates for migratory birds.

Research from the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, co-authored by Colorado State University Assistant Professor Kyle Horton, showed that one of the main factors causing bird deaths is illuminated windows. The researchers also calculated that, if half of the building's windows had been darkened during peak migration periods, bird kills would have been reduced by around 60% over the past two decades. The sheer strength of the link between lighting and collisions is surprising. The potential to save birds simply by reducing light pollution is exciting.

Migrating and nocturnal birds will use the light from the moon, stars and setting sun for navigation during their bi-annual migrations. Light pollution hides their navigational aids. Artificial, city lights especially interfere with this instinctive behavior. They

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ROARING FORK AUDUBON

draw night-migrating birds toward brightly lit buildings in urban areas.

National Audubon staff and chapter leaders are partnering with cities, building managers, and other local organizations to implement Lights Out programs and solutions that minimize negative impacts and reduce excess lighting, especially during the months when birds migrate.

RFA's hope is that Pitkin County's implementation of this one solution that is as simple as flipping a switch will lead to more awareness and that others will follow. Lights Out is a win-win for birds and cities and the people who love both. By working together toward a dark sky every spring and fall, we will keep birds safely on course and out of harm's way. Each light matters, and your commitment makes a difference.

Please agree to support the proactive proposal and the advanced thinking of the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus.

We encourage all our communities to follow the lead of the Snowmass citizens. If you are interested in contacting us about this or other bird friendly actions, please find us on roaringforkaudubon.org.

Thank you,

Mary Harris, Chair
Roaring Fork Audubon

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