

# MBCA

**morongo basin conservation association**

January 2, 2020

Dawn Rowe, Supervisor Third District

Dear Dawn,

Happy New Year!

Before setting down to compose this letter I took opportunity to review the history of the efforts to address light pollution within the Morongo Basin. Formed in November 2010 under then Supervisor Neil Derry and subsequently supported by Supervisor Ramos, the Morongo Basin Dark Sky Alliance began advocating for the creation and adoption of a new lighting ordinance. The Alliance was, with your encouragement, subsequently re-named the Third District Dark Sky Committee and was pleased to host a dark sky tour in August of 2019. Following the tour we were encouraged and appreciative of the commitment expressed by the County to undertake the crafting of a new lighting ordinance that we understood would be modeled on the ordinance adopted by the City of Malibu.

During the dark sky tour compelling reasons were presented for controlling un-needed, inappropriate, wasteful and damaging lighting. These included the economic benefit of preserving the dark night sky for tourism purposes as well as saving energy; the safety benefits where the use of excessive unshielded lighting often *reduces* security and visibility through dangerous unwanted glare; the health benefits for both humans and wildlife of utilizing shielded lighting of the proper color temperature; and the critical value of a dark night sky for the purposes of military training.

Over the course of the last 9 plus years of advocacy for controlling lighting and reducing light pollution, Joshua Tree National Park has been designated as a Dark Sky Park by the International Dark Sky Association and visitation to the Park has exploded to over 3 million visitors a year. This reflects the value that cannot be dismissed of this precious resource.

On behalf of the Third District Dark Sky Committee I respectfully ask that the County continue to work diligently on the creation of a lighting ordinance that will serve to enhance and preserve the economic value of a dark night sky, and to protect the health and safety of the desert residents of the Third District and the Morongo Basin.

Sincerely,



Steve Bardwell, President, Morongo Basin Conservation Association

Cc: Terri Rahhal, + Andy Wingert

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