

International Dark Sky Place Annual Report: October 2021 - December 2022



Date

Wednesday, November 2, 2022

General Information

International Dark Sky Place Name

Borrego Springs, CA

International Dark Sky Place Category

International Dark Sky Community

Designation Year

2009

Guidelines Version

2009

Your Name

Betsy Knaak Chair, Borrego Springs Dark Sky Coalition

Email Address

abdnha2@att.net

Primary Contact

Betsy Knaak Chair, Borrego Springs Dark Sky Coalition

Primary Contact Email Address

abdnha2@att.net

Primary Contact Phone Number

(760) 767-3052

Secondary Contact

Dorothy Hogan Member, Borrego Springs Dark Sky Coalition and webmaster

Secondary Contact Email Address

dorothyhogan@earthlink.net

Secondary Contact Phone Number

(760) 767-3052

What is the physical address of the Place?

652 Palm Canyon Drive
Borrego Springs, CA, 92004-0310
United States

Is the site currently under Provisional Status?

No

Are you an IDA Delegate, Affiliate, or Chapter Representative?

No

Night Sky Quality Monitoring

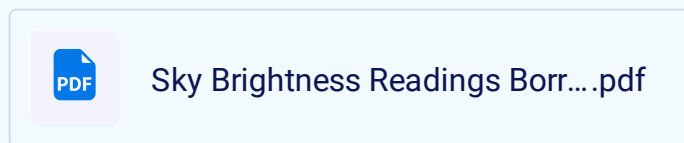
Total average or typical zenith night sky brightness reading reported in the original application:

21.30

Total average or typical zenith night sky brightness reading for this reporting period:

21.30

Upload your night sky quality raw data documents for this reporting period:



Upload a map (PDF or image) that shows the locations and names of the places that were used to take SQM measurements:



Lighting Compliance

Parks, Sanctuaries, and Communities, please fill out the applicable row to describe your lighting compliance rate (%) with your Lighting Management Plan/Policy (whole numbers only):

| | Year of Certification | Compliance % in Original Application | Current Compliance % | Anticipated % for Next Reporting Period |
|--------------------|------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|--|
| Communities | 2009 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

What actions have you taken to meet the requirements of your Lighting Management Plan/Policy during this reporting period? Include a summary of any actions taken with privately owned lighting that helped improve your night sky quality as well:

Communicated and assessed lighting complaints:

New construction just outside DeAnza Country Club; contacted owner through a mutual acquaintance; light fixture was shielded and motion detector installed.

At Holiday Homes Park, manager was contacted with suggestions for improving sign and landscape lighting; new manager came and lights were adjusted and turned off earlier; recent assessment came back fine and the new manager is very supportive.

Residence on Bending Elbow Drive: Bright driveway lights on the property brought to our attention. Personal letter written to owner by a member of our coalition who knew the owner, suggesting an easy solution of replacing the bulbs in the two light fixtures on the gate with lower 25 watt bulbs. Owner complied.

Have you used any fixtures from the IDA Fixture Seal of Approval (FSA) Program?

No

For International Dark Sky Communities and Reserves, have there been any changes to your local outdoor lighting ordinances? If yes, please describe and provide a link to the updated policy if available:

Yes, we worked through our San Diego County Supervisor for his support and his assignment of County staff to us to create a "Zone C" overlay to the lighting code that applies to IDA Dark Sky Communities in San Diego County. We cooperated with and supported Julian, CA, in creating this overlay, which allowed our neighboring town of Julian to become a Dark Sky Community.

https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/san_diego/latest/sandiego_regs/0-0-0-76851

Outreach, Education, and Media

Please fill out the following table to summarize all outreach efforts from the past reporting period (whole numbers only).

| Total # of Events | # of Unique Efforts Offered | Total # of Attendees for All Events |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 39 | 3 | 1010 |

Note - "unique efforts" offered represent different programs at your site. For example, all star/astronomy related events should be classified as one type of effort, "night hikes" as another type of effort, etc.

For each unique event type your Place hosted, provide all of the following information (up to 100 words per entry; 1000 total word limit): Event name; Date or range of dates of all events under that name; Number of attendees; Brief description of the event and the values that you promoted (i.e. wildlife/ecology, lighting, culture/heritage, IDSP status, ordinance/policy, astrotourism, energy security and conservation, human health, etc.).

1. Farmer's Market Dark Sky Booth, Weekly on Fridays Nov - May, 8 am-Noon, ave. 25+ people - telling residents and visitors about dark skies, answering questions about lighting, handing out literature, explaining what an IDA dark sky community is and our IDA status.

2. Night Walks, Monthly Nov - May, evening hours, average 23 people - experiencing the desert at night, looking up at the dark sky, experiencing the quiet and the night, and discussing wildlife and importance of darkness to plants and animals.

3. Astronomy and Stargazing Programs, Monthly, Nov - Apr, evening hours, average 25 people, includes an indoor program about what we'll be seeing through the telescope, followed by outdoor viewing.

Did you promote the IDA and its mission during your outreach programs/events? If so, describe:

Yes, we always talk about the IDA, that it is the international organization that sets the standard for lighting and confers the designation for our community, and we use the logo and many of the brochures, and also promote the website as a great source for information, to learn more, and to answer many of the questions people have.

Is there any programming, ongoing or planned, blending the arts and/or culture with dark skies? If so, describe:

We have an iPhone photography series coming up where we will touch on dark sky photography.

What have you noticed about your visitors' experiences? For example, is attendance/visitation of dark-sky programs consistent, growing, or dropping off? Have visitors provided any feedback on their experiences at your site? Please describe:

Dark sky programs continue to be very popular and well attended. We have more interest in programs and stargazing than we have instructors or leaders for these events.

Our series, mentioned above, where a relatively small group (20-25) come into a classroom setting first to learn about what they are going to see in the telescope, have a chance to ask questions while seated inside, and then to go outside and look through the telescope without waiting in long lines, is very popular and has quite a following.

Provide social media handles or website links used to promote dark skies (these will be added to your Place's IDA page):

<https://www.abdnha.org/borregodarksky/>

<https://www.facebook.com/BorregoSpringsDarkSkyCoalition>

Has your Place participated in any IDA-led initiatives such as International Dark Sky Week, the Under One Sky conference, or other relevant promotions during this reporting period?

No

To update our records, please provide a photo of your erected sign with your respective International Dark Sky Place label:



Briefly describe how educational materials are being dispersed/provided at your Place:

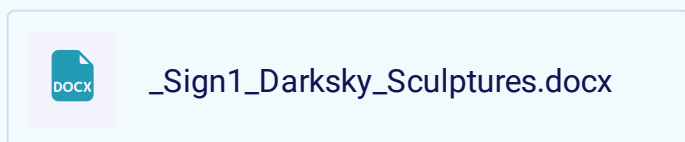
Educational Materials Dispersed/Provided:

Biweekly email blasts
Weekly at Farmer's Market Booth
On our website for download
Our printed brochures at local visitor centers and real estate offices
We are developing a new brochure for use in 2023 targeting new residents, winter "snowbirds", renters, and Airbnb visitors and owners. Julian and the SD IDA Chapter are interested in copies when we are ready with the brochure.

Describe any permanent or temporary exhibits that have been created this reporting period (these may include trails, informative waysides, interpretation signs, gift shop items, etc.):

Dark Sky interpretive panel as part of the new Tourist Plaza in front of the Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association's Nature Center on the main street in Borrego Springs.

Upload photos showing any of the above items you are currently providing (limit 5 photographs):



Briefly describe any efforts undertaken to reach new audiences. If this was not part of your efforts last year, describe what you plan to do to engage new visitors in the 2023 reporting period:

The panel in front of the Nature Center mentioned above will be seen by thousands of springtime visitors from throughout the county and world.

The brochure we're developing is in response to new residents who moved to our small town during the years of the pandemic and the increased number of people who are using Airbnb rentals here since the pandemic.

Partnerships

Have you worked with any external partners to promote the dark-sky movement within and outside of your Place's boundaries? If so, identify these partners and explain the result of this collaboration:

Local branch of the San Diego County Library - provide brochures, literature, staff tables

County Parks - cooperated on a local stargazing event

State Park - interpreter from Anza Borrego Desert State Park serves on the Borrego Springs Dark Sky Coalition

Julian - share information with Julian, CA, provide mutual assistance

Borrego Springs Chamber of Commerce - Dark Sky Community and dark sky information appears in our community's annual visitor guide published by the Chamber.

We use, with permission, photos dark sky photographers who photograph in our desert area.

We have a good relationship with our Sponsor Group (local planning group) when new projects come before the group.

We have a good relationship with our local newspaper to promote or cover programs, special events.

Have you collaborated with an IDA Delegate or IDA Chapter on dark-sky issues since the last reporting period? If so, please describe:

We attend San Diego IDA Chapter meetings and report on activities in Borrego Springs and share information and ideas.

Are there any ongoing conservation and/or research programs at the site? If so, who runs them, and what are the goals?

There is an air quality monitoring program as part of our Borrego Springs Revitalization subcommittee.

The Sponsor Group (our local planning group) is very aware of our dark sky status and references it with projects that come before it.

Briefly describe future plans (in 2023 and beyond) to engage with existing and new partners and how you will expand the dark-sky movement:

Plans are in place for fall and winter public programs, coordinating with the Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association, the Chamber of Commerce for our booth at the Farmer's Market. We are at work on writing, designing, a printing a new brochure, widely anticipated and already requested by others.

Success in Light Pollution Control, Leadership, and Future Threats

For Dark Sky Communities, briefly describe any new or ongoing projects and/or renovation activities that have taken place during this reporting period:

We don't have a lot of new construction in our small town. What we have is ownership changing hands and more homes becoming short term rentals (Airbnb). We are creating new brochure to address that, to be distributed at the Chamber, real estate offices, at the Farmer's Market, local newspaper, and website.

Have the "threats" identified in your application for certification:

Increased

If the "threats" identified in your application for certification have increased or decreased, please provide a brief explanation of how they have changed (i.e., increased/decreased visibility of light domes, new sources of glare/problematic lighting, new industry/development, etc.):

Increased to to continual education needed within the community with so many new people moving to rural communities from urban areas since the pandemic.

Provide a brief description of how you will continue to manage "threats" over the next year:

We are creating new brochure to address that, to be distributed at the Chamber, real estate offices, at the Farmer's Market, local newspaper, and website.

Change in Ownership, Place Size, or Access

What is the total size of your Place (in square kilometers only)?

112.422

For Dark Sky Communities and Reserves, what is the current population size?

3073

Additional Information

What do you consider the greatest single benefit of the IDA certification to your location?

Community pride in the designation is motivation to work together to protect the dark sky overhead.

Did you have any dealings with IDA over the last 12 months regarding any certification issues? How were they handled by IDA?

Always provide us with great printed materials.

Thank you for completing your 2022 Annual Report! Please provide us with any additional information that you would like us to know about your Place and/or your efforts to combat light pollution:

It takes ongoing work and effort by a group of people working together to keep the educational information going and finesse on the part of those people in a small town to try to correct poor lighting. Our Borrego Dark Sky Coalition started in 2007 when we decided to apply to the IDA for the community designation, following in the footsteps of Flagstaff.

Thank you for being the IDA and your ongoing efforts to protect and education about dark skies.