

# Colorado Chapter IDA Policy N/SLP-1 Final version 1.0, January 2021

## Nomination and Support Letters for International Dark Sky Places applicants within the State of Colorado

### Background:

The Colorado Chapter of IDA has a mission to encourage and support the preservation of the dark skies above Colorado. The Colorado Chapter of IDA receives requests for Nomination and Support Letters from points of contact representing Communities, Parks, and other areas such as Sanctuary, Reserves, and Urban Night Sky Place candidates that are pursuing Dark Sky and Night Sky designation by IDA's International Dark Sky Places (IDSP) Program. In an effort to help Colorado applicants develop dark sky preservation programs and subsequent applications consistent to applicable IDA guidelines, the Colorado Chapter of IDA has prepared a Nomination and Support Letter Policy (N/SLP-1). The policy is intended to provide uniform criteria that the Colorado Chapter will use to help requesters prepare mature applications, minimize review cycles, and help applicants satisfy the key IDA requirements for Dark Sky designation.

The Colorado Chapter N/SLP-1 policy for Nomination letters is intended to be consistent to IDA expectations. Generally, Colorado Chapter members can provide Nomination letters, however, the Chapter as an organization will prefer to defer to a knowledgeable local contributor that is an IDA member in good standing, that has an in-depth understanding of the respective Dark Sky designation effort. Ideally that person has some experience working with IDA on IDSP activities and has some understanding of IDA requirements. The Chapter may be able to find a nominator/contributor if needed, pending the availability of local expertise and level of support that may be needed.

The Colorado Chapter N/SLP-1 policy for Support Letters is intended to assess Dark Sky preservation activities and where assistance could be helpful, via the summary guidelines and requested information outlined below. The N/SLP-1 policy guidelines and requested information is designed to gather information and provide a basis for a formal support letter from the Colorado Chapter of IDA. In this way, the Colorado Chapter can better understand how to support applicants, and the support letter can be tailored to the specifics of the Community, Park, Sanctuary, Reserve, or Urban area.

The information requested below is a subset of the information required for the formal application to the IDA IDSP Program Manager (PM). The subset of information listed in this policy is current as of 2018 IDA Guidelines but is expected to evolve and be updated as IDA requirements change over time. If there is a discrepancy between guidelines listed here and IDA IDSP PM requirements, the IDSP PM requirements shall take precedent and is the final authority.

As an option, applicants could and are encouraged to provide an advance draft copy or detailed outline of their application, which can help to satisfy the Colorado Chapter suggested Support Letter Guidelines. If a verbal discussion is preferred or might be more efficient, please don't hesitate to let us know. A verbal discussion along with the requested content, plus potentially additional follow-up questions may be helpful for us to clarify or understand how we can best encourage and support your Dark Sky Preservation Program.

Applicants are encouraged to inform the Colorado Chapter of their plans for application submittal to IDA well in advance of their submittals to IDA to provide opportunities for assistance to help meet IDA requirements and expectations. Applicants are encouraged to plan their preparations to allow the Colorado Chapter a minimum of 30 days for review and comments to applicants request for Support Letters. The Colorado Chapter reserves the option of deferring a support letter.

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Guidelines for Colorado IDSP applicants:

- 1) Have you identified an IDA member willing to provide a signed nomination letter for your application? If not, the Chapter may be able to help find a knowledgeable IDA member willing to be a contributor and ongoing advisor that could provide a Nomination letter.
  
- 2) Has the IDA (IDSP) Program Manager opened a case file for your pending application?
  - a. Have you submitted the IDSP Inquiry form and submitted the pre-application fee?
  - b. Have you committed to IDSP PM when you plan to submit a mature/final application? If so, what year and quarter are you targeting?
  
- 3) Has the local jurisdiction updated and approved a Lighting Ordinance (LO) or Lighting Management Plan (LMP) compliant with IDA Guidelines appropriate to the Dark Sky Place (Community, Park, Sanctuary, Reserve, Urban)?
  - a. Has the LO/LMP been reviewed and approved by the IDA IDSP Program Manager?
  - b. Can you please provide the link where the LO or LMP can be found on the local jurisdiction website or alternatively, provide a copy of the LO or LMP?
  - c. IDA requires a lighting inventory of all lighting owned or contracted out for the benefit of the local jurisdiction for Communities, Parks, Sanctuaries, and Reserves. Has a lighting inventory been completed? Does it include required elements (CCT, Lumens, shielding, number of fixtures, adaptive controls, images, and if compliant or not).
  - d. Has your local jurisdiction committed to bring into compliance all noncompliant lighting within IDA amortization expectations?
  
- 4) Can you offer a description of your public outreach activities, including events, physical or virtual, that promote dark sky preservation? If you have created flyers, brochures, or presentations, can you share a copy of those outreach materials?
  
- 5) Can you describe your Sky Brightness Measurement Program? Please include a description of your procedures used to measure night sky brightness, such as when are measurements taken, under what conditions, the period of record including dates and times of measurements, and the locations of measurements.
  - a. Do you need help with defining a Sky Brightness Measurement Program?
  - b. Can you please provide some sample measurements, or a table or spreadsheet of your SQM measurements as typically expected in the IDA application?
  - c. Can you provide an outline of your measurement plan?
  - d. For Parks, Sanctuary and Reserves, IDA has minimum sky quality standards, as defined in the appropriate IDA guidelines. Have your measurements met those

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standards? Has nighttime photography documented light domes and any other impacts to the night sky?

- 6) Can you provide a short description of your strategy for support letters, and provide a summary list of the support letters received to date?
- a. Have you received support letters from your local jurisdictions (Community, Park, County(s), etc.

(IDA recommends a reasonable number of (individually crafted) support letters from key organizations such as your local jurisdiction (Mayor/Town Council, County Government, Park Manager, Forest Supervisors, etc.), and key organizations and businesses such as local electric provider, chamber of commerce, HOA, and educational institutions such as local schools, colleges, (public/private). Form letters are generally discouraged.)