

April 6, 2023

To the Coloma-Lotus Advisory Committee:

I know we are going to discuss tonight many issues of natural damage to our community, and ways to recover from it. I would like to make mention for future consideration some human-created damage to our environment that we must stop and reverse. It is the increasing installation of bright, blue-white outside lights that are not shielded and blaze out in all directions. The increasing unnecessary light pollution is attacking our dark sky.

Coloma is a model for night lighting that is safe for people, our wildlife, and the environment. I thank the State Park staff for restoring and maintaining our amber (dark yellow) street lights. This color preserves human night vision, maintains animal and plant biorhythms, and provides a safer outdoor experience. Amber lights provide more even lighting, while increasingly popular blue-white lights on streets and buildings create pools of dark areas that are difficult to navigate and feel less safe.

I urge the CLAC to stand with and support any regulations the County may adopt to make us a true Dark Sky community. I recommend that everyone look at the website DarkSky.org to learn about what a Dark Sky is, and how we can all help reduce unwanted and unhealthy glare. The nonprofit explains the harm of bright blue-white lights and describes how to overcome this pollutant. Very helpfully, they have a list of [lighting fixtures](#) that keep light aimed where it is supposed to be, that can help us buy sky-friendly items.

I also want to share that El Dorado County already has [good regulations](#) on unnecessary outdoor lighting that can be found online at edcgov.us/Government/planning/Documents. If you have lighting installed that does not follow these guidelines, or is unnecessarily blue-white, please replace your fixtures with a Dark Sky approved one. If you experience an egregious light violation, you can [make a complaint](#) to County Code Enforcement. Go to edcgov.us, then the Government tab, then Code Enforcement. The complaint form link is on the lower part of the page. For a complaint in the Placerville city limits, the form is different and I can share that.

This is an issue that affects all of us. I was out of state for a few months and since I came back last November, I have not experienced a truly dark sky in Lotus. The light is creeping in. We need to reverse this, for us and also for our businesses like campgrounds that advertise us as a destination to come see the stars. The American Automobile Association and other traveler-focused publications advertise Dark Sky Destinations. We need to be added to that list, and I urge the CLAC to participate in any way we can.

I have some more information on this topic and am happy to share it with the community. I am also happy to send this electronically with links that go to the websites, just contact me.

Thanks for the opportunity to speak,

Sara Schwartz C.R. Kendall
skpriority @ earthlink .net