



Bruneau Dunes State Park
27608 Sand Dunes Rd
Mountain Home, ID 83647

Dear Dark Sky Association,

Idaho Business for the Outdoors and the members we represent support the efforts of the Bruneau Dunes State Park's application to become a Dark Sky Park. As a nonpartisan, business member based organization, Idaho Business for the Outdoors supports and advocates for the valuable role our outdoors and public lands play in sustaining Idaho's state economy, our public health, and a strong and diverse business community. We urge you to vote for the approval of Bruneau Dunes State Park as a Dark Sky Park.

In 2020, state parks and recreation contributed \$1.2 billion to Idaho's economy and served 7.7 million visitors. On average, Idaho State Parks had 7.5 million visitors in 2020 and 2021 compared to an average of 5.8 million visitors from 2018 to 2019. This sharp increase in visitors over the last 2 years has also prompted both the State of Idaho and Bruneau Dunes State Park to look for ways to improve their State Park facilities.

The Bruneau Dunes State Park and its observatory is home to the largest telescope for public viewing in the state of Idaho. The park routinely hosts programming around the telescope and astronomical events such as eclipses and planet viewings. Since the telescope is a big attraction at the park in addition to the sand dunes, the telescope is undergoing necessary renovation and upgrades. If the Bruneau Dunes State Park was approved as a Dark Sky Park, the telescope, observatory and other facilities would continue to be maintained and used by all types of observers.

Another dark sky park in Idaho would be a welcome addition to the existing Central Idaho Dark Sky Reserve, less than 100 (exact number unsure, Skylar help) miles away from the Bruneau Dunes State Park. Since its inception in 2017, the Central Idaho Dark Sky Reserve has proven to be both a tourist attraction but also a force for light pollution prevention in nearby towns. A Dark Sky Park near the Boise metropolitan area would, much like its Central Idaho counterpart, be a space for education and enjoyment by locals and out of town visitors.

In conclusion, Idaho Business for the Outdoors and its members support Bruneau Dunes State Park's application to become a Dark Sky Park. Both our organization and its members believe that a new Dark Sky Park in Idaho would benefit not only the Bruneau Dunes State Park, the State of Idaho, our business members, but also dark sky enthusiasts worldwide.