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Halfmoon Bay., V0N1Y2  
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Dear

The Sunshine Coast and Sechelt are still blessed with DARK SKIES. This is confirmed by NASA and NOAA satellite imagery which shows bright spots over Comox and Powell River and, of course, Vancouver, but darkness over our Coast.

Dark Skies are a treasure and, along with clean air and clean water are attributes which help define the quality of our environment. They can be a benefit in many ways to our community.

Dark skies are an obvious benefit to those who take pleasure and maintain their sanity by looking at the stars at night, whether in the structured way called astronomy or merely as refugees from the glare of urban living. Dark skies are one of the features that draw eco-tourists and astro-tourists to our Coast. Even developers have a stake in maintaining a glare-free night, as their customers, the purchasers of the new developments, are drawn here, in part, by the quality of our night.

Another benefit is to bird migration, which occurs mainly at night. The dead birds that dot the sidewalks around night lit skyscrapers are merely the birds that were most severely affected by light pollution. Many others are, to varying degrees, confused and disoriented by light being pumped skyward and arrive at their destinations more fatigued and less able to take part in their cycle of life. However, birds are not the only ones whose safety is improved by protection of dark skies.

Our personal security and safety are better served if lights are designed to direct the light where it is needed and not horizontally into the eyes of the potential victims of crime or unsafe environmental conditions. We are less able to see suspicious activity around a building if the lights from that building are shining out into our eyes. Coastal mariners report that entering waters close to human habitation at night is more disorienting and hazardous than elsewhere because of the difficulty in seeing navigational lights against the glare of shore based lights.

Our dark skies should be treasured. Unless we actively preserve them, they will not last for long as continuing development occurs on the Coast.. Preserving dark skies is not only inexpensive, but also can be revenue saving and, if tourism is factored in, revenue producing. All that is required is to install the correct type of fixtures in outdoor lighting applications. The correct fixtures are called "full cut-off" fixtures and I have included a sheet to describe what is

meant by this term. The included pages come from [www.darksky.org](http://www.darksky.org), the web site of The International Dark Sky Association. If, instead of spending good money to pump light skyward, light is reflected down, smaller wattage bulbs can be used

The various local governments can help by amending their purchasing guidelines for outdoor lighting under their jurisdiction. They can also enact building codes that will encourage the correct kind of lighting as a condition for obtaining building permits and subdivision approvals and lease agreements.

The SCBBCOA, Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Business Association and the Economic Development branch of local government can help in several ways. First, I hope that they will recognize dark skies as the asset that they are. Second, I hope that they will promote our dark skies in the outreach communications that they produce to advertise our community. For example, our community letterhead and welcome signs could read: Sechelt---Land Between Two Waters---A Dark Sky Community. Finally, I think it would be very helpful if they were to design a programme whereby businesses and other agencies (schools etc) in the community, which are already or become compliant with dark sky lighting guidelines, are recognized and publicly praised. Even a certificate of commendation, to be hung in the public part of their business, would be a good start.

School Boards can help by not only reviewing their outdoor lighting procurement policies, but also by including material on the importance of dark skies in the environmental studies section of their science curricula, both in primary and in secondary school.

I hope that I have presented this initiative in a way that will elicit the support of you and your colleagues. As mentioned, I would be most happy to come to one of your meetings and amplify these points and answer questions should you feel that this is appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

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