



# TUBAC FIRE DISTRICT

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Emilio Falco, Ph.D.

Chair, Tubac DarkSky Committee

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Dear Dr. Falco;

We are pleased to provide this letter of endorsement to the DarkSky Places application by the Tubac AZ DarkSky Committee.

Our five member publicly elected Board of Directors serves the Tubac Fire District and encompasses a 160-mile response area in Santa Cruz County, Arizona. The District provides fire and emergency medical services to Amado, Carmen, Tumacacori, Tubac, and large areas of Rio Rico, including most of the elementary schools, middle schools, and high school.

The mission of Tubac Fire District is to be “committed to the safety of our community through the delivery of fire suppression, medical services, and public education.” Four TFD fire stations are located strategically throughout the district’s service area and each station is staffed with at least one paramedic on duty for 24 hours. Tubac Fire District was established in 1974 and we have served our community for almost 50 years.

The Tubac Fire District Board of Director’s supports this application for many reasons. Dark Sky designations raise awareness of light pollution. The impact of light pollution on fauna and even flora is well known. The Tubac community is in a major bird migration corridor, attracting bird watchers in large numbers. Mitigating light pollution means enhancing the positive economic impact of our environment, in particular for birding.

Although Tubac is in a valley amidst light pollution peaks, it is clear that this pollution is growing and will encroach more as time passes. The light domes of Tucson and Nogales are prominent, North and South, and Sierra Vista is also visible near the left edge. A designation as a DSP for Tubac will fuel the efforts to mitigate this problem and to keep up with the inevitable light encroachment. The designation will also help Tubac attract visitors who will return home with increased knowledge of the critical importance of protecting night skies.

A DarkSky Places designation will also help protect our most prized astronomical asset, the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory's Fred Lawrence Whipple Observatory (FLWO), the largest field site of the Center for Astrophysics/Harvard & Smithsonian. Tubac, Arizona is just below Mt. Hopkins, which is home to FLWO and dozens of diurnal and nocturnal species found in few, if any other places in the world. The town and its residents have long supported efforts to protect dark skies in this sensitive area.

A Dark Sky designation would also promote dark sky event collaboration with the Tubac community, the Tubac Presidio State Historical Park & Museum and the Tumacacori National Historic Park. According to the National Parks Foundation, "...park programs comprise nearly one third of parks' total economic value; parks are the catalysts for community building, historic preservation, and lifelong learning."

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "S. M. Johnson".

Respectfully,

Tubac Fire District Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in cursive script, likely belonging to the Tubac Fire District Fire Chief.

Tubac Fire District, Fire Chief