



Burnett Mary REGIONAL GROUP

Practical Solutions for Natural Resource Management

Ref Out 201704026

26 April 2017

IDA Board of Directors
Dr John Barentine
International Dark-Sky Association
3223 North First Avenue
TUCSON, ARIZONA 85719
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Dear Dr Barentine

RE: Letter of Support for an IDA Dark-Sky Park Application for the Bunya Mountains, Queensland

"I have loved the stars too fondly to be fearful of the night." Galileo Galilei

The Burnett Mary Regional Group (BMRG) is pleased to support the submission for an *International Dark-Sky Park Application for the Bunya Mountains in South East Queensland, Australia*. To achieve IDA classification, would not only be a first for National Parks in Queensland (and second in Australia) but it would inspire, benefit and link our local communities as global communities.

As a not-for-profit, non-Government organisation, BMRG is the peak body for natural resource management. The BMRG region encompasses the Bunya Mountains which is home to a unique assemblage of plants, animals, and ecosystems which includes more than thirty (30) identified rare and threatened species. The iconic values of the Bunya landscape holds immense cultural and environmental significance and BMRG manages the Bunya Mountains Murri Ranger (BMNR) Program to conserve, protect and care for Bunya country.

BMRG acknowledges the global contribution that the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) makes to protect the night skies for present and future generations. As such, BMRG supports and shares the IDA vision to secure the Bunya Mountains as a Dark Sky Park

1. to protect nocturnal species from unwanted light sources – as known, many species of flora and fauna rely upon darkness for survival
2. to protect the night environment from artificial light sources – combatting light pollution helps improve observing and mapping star-studded skies
3. to promote astro-tourism atop the Bunya Mountains – what better way to view the clear Southern night skies than amidst the beauty of Bunya arms wide open

BMRG looks forward to continuing and working in the spirit of mutual respect. Therefore, please do not hesitate to contact me directly, should any further details be required in relation to Burnett Mary Regional Groups' support for the application.

Yours sincerely,

Sheila Charlesworth
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Email: sheila.charlesworth@bmrq.org.au
Mobile: 0428 087 472

PO Box 501 Bundaberg Queensland 4670

197 Bundaberg Street Bundaberg Queensland 4670

TOLLFREE TELEPHONE: 1300 13 BMRG

T: 07 4181 2999 • F: 07 4154 1427 • E: admin@bmrq.org.au • W: www.bmrq.org.au

Burnett Mary Regional Group for Natural Resource Management Limited
ABN: 15 144 005 229

Bunya Mountains,
M/S 501
DALBY,Q 4405

26 April, 2017

IDA Board of Directors,

Dear Sir/ Madam,

We hereby support the application to have the Bunya Mountains classified as a Dark Sky Area.

The Bunya Mountains are a place of natural beauty and deserves to be protected in whatever way is possible. We believe this classification will benefit the area.

Yours sincerely,

Allan & Kym Govan
Bunya Mountains Horse Drawn Tours
PH 07 46683115

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Cameron Davison** <cameron.s.davison@gmail.com>

Date: Saturday, 9 February 2019

Subject: Support Letter - Bunya Dark Sky Park

To: Bruce Thompson <bruce.indigigrow@gmail.com>

To the Bunya Mountain community, the Bunya Mountains Aboriginal Corporation & all Custodians, Astronomers, National Parks and Wildlife, Guests, Government and to all people, to whom an unadulterated view of the night sky is their birth right.

My name is Cameron Davison, I am 23 years of age, living and working in Sydney, my ancestral Country. I am a proud young, Gadigal, Dhungutti and Biripi man.

I have pursued a career in Caring of Country, which has had me working to protect the Sydney Basin's Aboriginal heritage sites & the ancient knowledge associated with them, Sydney's Ecological Communities, many of which have Critically Endangered status and our waters, through various innovative projects like OysterWatch, NSW's Stream & Climate Watch initiative and the removal of invasive fish species. I am recognized also for my work in the revival efforts of Sydney's Traditional Language which I have taught at University of Technology Sydney

Now I write to you in effort to conserve our Night Sky.

The term 'Country' in an Aboriginal context, or in my traditional language, 'Nura' might be translated as something as such; Place and its intrinsic properties and features, to which all things, biotic and abiotic are interconnected and related to. This includes, of course, the land & it's many fauna, flora and fungi. The waters, but also the skies & starlight

Ecologically, darkness is an integral part of an ecosystem's holistic health, most obviously as it sustains nocturnal fauna, of which many unique species call the Bunya Mountains home Fire Beetles, Tawny Frogmouth's & Mountain Possums, to name a few.

Throughout the world, nocturnal species are depleting vastly on account of light pollution and Australia has one of the world's worst records of extinction of native species

Culturally, the Bunya Mountains are of utmost significance in that they are the site of one of East Coast Australia's greatest gatherings of times past. The triennial Bunya Bunya ceremony as enabled by the Bunya Pines three-year great harvest of choice edible nut. My sincerest hope is that I am of the generations that will live to see its revival. In Western Sydney, at the foot hills of the Blue Mountains, by one of many ancient walking tracks through the Great Dividing Range. A grove of remnant Bunya Pines stand as testimony to the cross-country influence and cultural significance of this Country and its Ceremony, all of which is associated with the appearance of an Emu and two Kangaroos in the stars, constellations which as a result of light pollution will be void of most Sydney's night skies, tonight.

All the individuals and collectives I addressed in beginning my statement have an opportunity to elect the Bunya Mountains as an International Dark Sky Park which would make it the second of its kind, in Australia, along with Warrumbungle National Park.

In doing so, you would be conserving not only the Stars but all Country

I hope you vote in favor of Bunya Mountains International Dark Sky Park so as that Country and that we all and the many generations to proceed us may enjoy the benefit of unadulterated night skies.

Thank you, very much. Cameron Davison.

Deb Frecklington MP

Member for Nanango



17 May 2017

IDA Board of Directors
Dr John Barentine
International Dark-Sky Association
3223 North First Avenue
Tucson, AZ 85719, USA

Dear Dr Barentine,

RE: Bunya Mountains (Qld) National Park IDA Dark Sky Park

In my role as the Member for Nanango in the Queensland State Parliament, I have been asked to support the application from Mr James Barclay for the Bunya Mountains National Park to be considered for designation as a Dark Sky Park.

Bunya Mountains National Park is partly located within my state electorate of Nanango. The park is about 200km (or three hours drive) from Queensland's capital city, Brisbane. It is Queensland's second oldest national park and is the home to the world's largest stand of ancient bunya pines, and more than 30 rare and threatened species.

A large portion of the Park is within the boundary of the region known as the South Burnett. The South Burnett is a regional area, which promotes many attractions such as rich agricultural pastures, a growing wine industry, fine local produce, access to wildlife nature, family activities, fun recreational activities. The opportunity to reconnect with nature, fresh air and freedom is another drawcard.

I understand the Dark Sky Park designation for the Bunya Mountains National Park could be another tourism drawcard for our region.

Yours sincerely,

Deb Frecklington MP
Member for Nanango





INTERNATIONAL DARK-SKY ASSOCIATION

International Dark-Sky Association
1225 North First Avenue, Tucson, AZ 85719, USA
tel +1.323.295.4199
www.darksky.org

7 January 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR THE PROTECTION OF BUNYA MOUNTAINS DARK SKIES

I write to you as an environmental scientist with 30 years' experience in measuring light pollution and monitoring its biological impact, and, as the Vice President of the International Dark Sky Association (IDA). As an IDA board member since 2014, and now as the Vice President, my goal is to raise the profile and awareness of the international arm of the association focusing on Dark Sky Places (DSP) and light pollution issues.

Australia is recognized as the darkest of the developed continents globally and as the Australian board member of the IDA I am particularly keen to see this resource protected. Expansion of the DSP program nationally will benefit a wide range of conservation values, including astrotourism, astronomy, heritage, human health, safety, energy, wildlife, environment and ecological values.

The Bunya Mountains represent a fantastic example of a very high quality dark sky place, with dark sky values near perfect (21.79 out of a maximum of 22). Sky quality unheard of in North America and Europe and worthy of protection for future generations as well as for future social, commercial and environmental benefits.

I urge you all to recognize and value your dark sky overhead, an asset that we all take for granted when we have it and reminisce about when we don't. You have an opportunity to lead the way in Queensland as the first DSP for that State and one of the first in Australia.

If I can provide any further assistance in your endeavor please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely

Dr Kellie Pendoley PhD

Perth Zoo; Board Member

International Dark Sky Association; Vice President

IUCN Marine Turtle Specialist Group; Australasian Region Vice Co-Chair

Gorgon Marine Turtle Expert Panel; Member

North West Shelf Flatback Turtle Conservation Program Scientific Panel; Member

Interim Executive Director: J. Scott Pollockhead

Emeritus Director: David L. Crawford, Ph.D.

Board of Directors: Ken Korman, President, USA • Kellie Pendoley, Vice President, Australia • Kim Patton, Treasurer, USA • Jessica Dwyer, Secretary, USA • Laurel Ann Dorset, USA • Gloria Chigona, USA • Diane Krutson, USA • Alejandro Sanchez Miguel, Spain • Diana Osipova, USA

Karlie Noon
Astrophysicist
<http://www.aboriginalastronomy.com.au/people/karlie-noon/>
Karlie.Noon@csiro.au

To the Bunya Mountains community, government, guests, astronomer and Bunya Peoples
Aboriginal Corporation,

My name is Karlie Noon, I am a proud Gamilaraay lady who was born and raised on my nation in the country town of Tamworth, NSW. I was the first Indigenous female to obtain a combined degree in physics and maths. I am now currently in the final stages of obtaining a Masters degree in astrophysics and am an advocate for Indigenous knowledges and participation in STEM fields. For my contributions and advocacy, I was a 2019 finalist for the ACT Young Australian of the Year award.

I write to you all today to support the nomination of Bunya Mountains as an International Dark Sky Park. In Australia, we have some of the most beautiful Country which is considered one of our most desired features. I use the word Country in the Aboriginal sense of the word, including our land, water and sky. This is an opportunity to preserve both land and sky, benefitting animals including humans, bringing astro-tourism to the region and protecting the geographic and cultural significance of the Bunyan Mountains for future generations.

I hope you are able to vote positively when making a decision on this dark sky nomination.

Warmest regards,
Karlie Noon

James Barclay
Kingaroy Observatory
Geoff Raph Drive
Kingaroy QLD 4610

Dear James,

Re: Dark Sky Park designation for the Bunya Mountains

As the Regional Tourism Organisation for the Southern Queensland Country region, Southern Queensland Country Tourism (SQCT) is pleased to support Kingaroy Observatory in its application to the International Dark Sky Association, for Dark Sky Park (DSP) designation for the Bunya Mountains National Park.

SQCT have identified hero experiences for the region that deliver on our core brand promise. The designation of the Bunya Mountains National Park as a Dark Sky Park aligns well in delivering on the hero experience of 'Natural Beauty' for the visitor. Also, stargazing is of extraordinary appeal to both domestic and international visitors who reside in urban areas, who do not see starry nights due to heavy light pollution.

DSP designation of the Park will also will enhance the tourism offering of the destination by ensuring the preservation of the dark skies for future generations to come and the protection of nocturnal species that rely on the darkness for their survival. This will provide us with the opportunity to broaden our promotion of eco- and astro-tourism in the region.

SQCT unreservedly supports this application and looks forward to confirmation of its approval.

Yours Sincerely,



Mary-Clare Power
Chief Executive Officer



Department of
**National Parks,
Sport and Racing**

3 October 2017

James Barclay
27 Hilltop Drive
Elesmere
Qld 4810

Our Ref: CTS 20245/16

Dear Mr Barclay

The Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing (the department) is pleased to offer in-principal support for the nomination of the Bunya Mountains National Park for International Dark Sky Park designation by the International Dark Sky Association.

Based on our telephone discussion on 1 September 2017, I understand that you intend to write the nomination over the next six months and will provide a copy to the department before it is submitted. I also understand that you will consult the local councils and the local community with regard to the nomination.

Consulting the local councils and the local community is particularly important because the department is unable to control light pollution originating from roads and residential areas outside the boundary of the national park. For the department to uphold its support for this nomination, it must be evident in the nomination that the Bunya Mountains can be maintained as a dark place.

I acknowledge that you require a letter of support (to be addressed to Mr John Barentine of the International Dark Sky Association), a map of the national park and a list of nocturnal animals. I believe it is appropriate for the department to provide the letter of support after we have reviewed the draft nomination. We will shortly provide the map and a list of nocturnal animals in a separate letter.

As discussed, the department can provide only nominal contributions towards the development and implementation of the nomination. The department has made this decision because we are heavily committed over the coming years to a sweep of other high priorities associated with the Bunya Mountains National Park.

I wish you good luck with your nomination. Should you have any enquiries please feel to contact me on 0455 098 756 or via email michael.phelan@qld.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Phelan'.

Michael Phelan
Principal Ranger
Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

146 Herries Street
PO Box 1442
Toowoomba BC 4350
Website www.rpsr.qld.gov.au
ABN 11 322 391 452



Mayor Keith Campbell

T (07) 4189 9155
F (07) 4162 4806
E mayor@southburnett.qld.gov.au
W www.southburnett.qld.gov.au



SOUTH BURNETT
REGIONAL COUNCIL

South Burnett Regional Council
ABN 89 972 463 251
PO Box 224
Kingaroy QLD 4610
T 1300 789 279 or (07) 4189 9100
F (07) 4162 4806
E info@southburnett.qld.gov.au
W www.southburnett.qld.gov.au

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

IR 2353107 KC:BB

8 May 2017

IDA Board of Directors
Dr John Barentine
International Dark-Sky Association
3223 North First Ave
Tucson, AZ 85719
U.S.A

Dear Dr Barentine

Re Bunya Mountains (Queensland, Australia) National Park IDA Dark Sky Park

South Burnett Regional Council supports the application of the Bunya Mountains National Park as an 'International Dark Skies Park'.

The designation of the Bunya Mountains National Park as an 'International Dark Skies Park' would be beneficial in many ways such as; encouraging sensible lighting ordinances, raising local awareness of the importance of preserving our dark skies, attracting more tourists many of whom do not have the opportunity to see many stars at all due to the amount of lighting in their suburbs and cities and protecting the nocturnal wildlife that rely on darkness for their survival.

This would also be the very first National Park in Queensland and only the second in Australia, to have an International Dark Sky Park classification.

The Bunya Mountains is a spectacular wilderness range forming an isolated section of the Great Dividing Range situated about 150km from the coast and lying almost centrally between Kingaroy and Dalby.

The immense subtropical range of cool, green rainforest, eucalypt forests and woodlands is home to the world's largest forest of bunya pines. High altitude grasslands include rare grasses of international interest.

Customer Service Centres

- Blackbutt 49 Hart Street
- Kingaroy 45 Glendon Street
- Nanango 48 Drayton Street

- Murgon 42 Stephens Street West
- Wondal Cnr Scott & Mackenzie Streets

The Bunya Mountains rise abruptly from the surrounding plains to an average elevation of 975m reaching over 1100m above sea level at Mounts Mowbullum and Kiangarow. The range features panoramic mountain scenery and breathtaking views over the South Burnett region and southern plains.

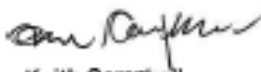
Nights are alive with the sounds of the nocturnal creatures and a myriad of stars. The Bunya Mountains are home to 121 species of birds, countless red-necked wallabies and swamp wallabies also live in the cover of the rainforest.

The Bunya Mountains was formed about 30 million years ago probably as a remnant of an old shield volcano. Over eons, basaltic lava flows cooled and solidified into basalt which has eroded and weathered – eventually forming the deep red-brown and black earths of the Bunya Mountains today.

The Bunya Mountains has approximately 30 permanent residents and gives the thousands of visitors it receives each year a unique wilderness experience. Should the Bunya Mountains become an accredited 'International Dark Skies National Park' Council believes that it would draw together diverse groups with common interests of protecting and preserving the unique Bunya Mountain environment.

South Burnett Regional Council supports this application and encourages your favourable consideration.

Yours faithfully

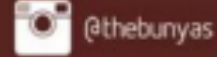
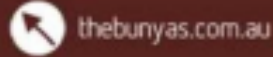
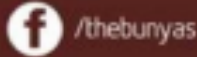


Keith Campbell
MAYOR

Bunya Avenue
Dandabah Village
Bunya Mountains Q 4405



T: 07 4668 3131
F: 07 4668 3171
E: info@thebunyas.com.au



IDA Board of Directors
Dr. John Barentine
International Dark Sky Association
3223 North First Ave.
Tucson, AZ. 85719
U.S.A

April 19, 2017

Re Bunya Mountains (Old) Nat. Park IDA Dark Sky Park Application

Dear Dr. Barentine,

I am writing to confirm our support for the Bunya Mountains National Park to obtain International Dark Sky Classification. We recognise that this classification would go a long way to protecting what we already know is a magnificent experience at The Bunyas – that is viewing the night sky with minimal unnatural light.

As a business directly bordering the national park, we already promote to visitors the natural wonder of the night sky up here. We get a lot of tourists from the city where they very rarely see the stars, let alone the wonders of the Milky Way.

Our business is open between the hours of 8am and midnight. Most of our already shaded lighting is within the restaurant anyway and provided for the safety of patrons arriving and leaving our premise. There are no outside lights to our knowledge, on the Bunya Mts.

We are happy to work with national parks to ensure our lighting does not adversely affect any attempt to gain and retain this classification.

In the long term, we believe this classification will benefit our business and consequently visitors to our region.

Kind Regards,

Eleanor

Eleanor Kratzmann

IDA Board of Directors
International Dark-Sky Association
3223 North First Avenue
Tucson, AZ 85719, USA



McKinney House
L1 487 Ruthven Street
Toowoomba QLD 4350

Bunya Mts. National Park Dark Sky Park application

It is with great pleasure that the Executive Board of Tourism Darling Downs, offer their underlying support to the Director of Kingaroy Observatory and IDA member, James Barclay in his Bunya Mountains National Park - Dark Sky Park Application.

The Bunya Mountains National Park is perched 1100 metres high and 200 kilometres north-west of Brisbane and considered Queensland's second-oldest national park, being gazetted in 1908. It's there the ancient rainforest-clad peaks stand tall and shelter the world's largest formation of bunya pines (*Araucaria bidwillii*) - once a popular meeting place for Aboriginal folk to gather nuts in the 1800s.

<https://www.queensland.com/en-in/attraction/bunya-mountains-national-park#surGc8JA2CakTk2.99>

The Tourism Darling Downs organisation represents The Darling Downs - a region of Australia twice the size of Switzerland, which includes the Bunya Mountains, a unique region placed on the UNESCO World Heritage site tentative list in 2010. We would be proud to exercise stewardship and offer the marketing and promotional support for this amazing region.

Our clear purpose is to develop and promote the region, showcasing our unique and spectacular natural assets - and experiences - to visitors and locals alike. Exemplified on our website here: <https://visitdarlingdowns.com.au/>

The link here to our Big Sky Country Drives exemplifies our focus on our big open skies and stargazing: <https://visitdarlingdowns.com.au/listing/big-sky-country-drives/>

In Australia - and in Queensland especially - these vast, clear and open night skies are one of our finest assets. Astro tourism resonates especially with tourists from Asia, and other heavily industrialised countries, where Light Pollution compromises the ability to stargaze.

Visitation to The Bunyas is currently estimated at over 250 000 visitors a year - with little promotion. Our Darling Downs region enjoys over 2 million overnight stay visitors each year, and 4.5 million day trip visitors per annum.

This in turn generates over \$1.3b in visitor spend in the region, bringing exposure and prosperity to the local communities, reinvesting these funds in the region.



We have been in consultation with Ruth Coulthard who led the IDA Dark Sky Reserve application for the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority in Wales. Brecon Beacons was forthcoming about the excellent benefits their National Park has derived from the Dark Sky Reserve certification, and they include:

- Dramatic uplift in awareness of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
- Over £1million in (free) marketing and promotion of the region, raising their profile as a destination dramatically
- A small yet significant reduction in light pollution.

In closing, we ask that the IDA Board of Directors assess and approve the Bunya Mountains Dark Sky Park application,

Kind Regards,

Ruth

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ruth", with a horizontal line underneath.

Ruth Wetmore CEO

**Tourism Darling Downs
Queensland
Australia**

+61 410 221 983
ruth@visitdarlingdowns.com.au

visitdarlingdowns.com.au