



PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING DARK SKY WEEK

WHEREAS, the aesthetic beauty and wonder of a natural night sky is a shared heritage of all humankind. The experience of standing beneath a starry night sky inspires feelings of wonder and awe. Many people in Albemarle County live under a dome of light pollution—excessive artificial lighting at night that disrupts natural darkness—and may never experience the visual wonder or ecological and health benefits of living under a dark sky; and

WHEREAS, light pollution has scientifically established economic and environmental consequences, which result in significant impacts to the ecology and human health of all communities; and light pollution represents a waste of natural resources amounting to roughly \$3 billion per year of wasted energy in the U.S. and contributes to climate change, and

WHEREAS, Albemarle County has adopted the Biodiversity Action Plan to protect the many species which rely on undisturbed night environments to hunt, mate, and thrive. Albemarle County is home to Fan Mountain Observatory operated by the Astronomy Department of the University of Virginia. The southernmost edge of Albemarle County is less than ten miles from the James River State Park which is one of four Virginia State Parks designated as an International Dark Sky Park by the International Dark Sky Association; and

WHEREAS, peak spring bird migration falls during Dark Sky Week and 80% of migrating birds fly at night and need starlight to navigate; and

WHEREAS, the International Dark-Sky Association is the globally recognized authority on light pollution and has created International Dark Sky Week to raise awareness of light pollution, and provide free education, resources, and solutions to the public to encourage the protection of and enjoyment of dark skies and responsible outdoor lighting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that we, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors, do hereby recognize

April 13-20, 2026

as

INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY WEEK

and ask each resident to join us not only in observing and pondering this important week, but also in raising awareness and support for protecting our precious dark sky resources.

Signed this 1st day of April 2026.

Ned L. Gallaway, Chair

Albemarle Board of County Supervisors