

**SANTA FE COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

RESOLUTION NO. 2026 - 107

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING RESPONSIBLE OUTDOOR LIGHTING AND THE
PRESERVATION OF SANTA FE COUNTY'S DARK SKIES**

WHEREAS, Santa Fe County recognizes that naturally dark night skies are a valuable natural, cultural, and scientific resource that contributes to the County's unique character, quality of life, and environmental stewardship; and

WHEREAS, Santa Fe County has long valued the conservation of its natural landscapes, rural character, scenic resources, and environmental quality, and recognizes that preserving dark skies compliments these longstanding community values and planning objectives; and

WHEREAS, excessive, unnecessary, or poorly designed artificial light at night contributes to light pollution, sky glow, glare, and light trespass, diminishing visibility of the night sky and adversely affecting residents, visitors, wildlife, and natural ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, scientific research has established that light pollution has significant environmental, ecological, economic, and public health consequences, including disruption of nocturnal wildlife, migratory birds, pollinators, vegetation, and other ecological systems, while also contributing to increased energy consumption and unnecessary public and private expense; and

WHEREAS, the widespread use of artificial light at night has contributed to increasing levels of sky glow throughout the world, with scientific studies indicating that the brightness of the night sky continues to increase annually, reducing opportunities to experience naturally dark skies; and

WHEREAS, responsible outdoor lighting can improve visibility and safety by directing light where it is needed, reducing glare, minimizing unnecessary illumination, and improving nighttime visibility for motorists and pedestrians; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is internationally recognized for its exceptional dark skies and has become a destination for astronomy, astrophotography, outdoor recreation, education, scientific research, and dark-sky tourism, with nine DarkSky International-certified International Dark Sky Places that contribute to the state's economy and reputation; and

WHEREAS, Santa Fe County recognizes that preserving dark skies supports tourism, outdoor recreation, scientific research, cultural heritage, environmental conservation, and the health and well-being of present and future generations; and

WHEREAS, the Five Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting, developed by DarkSky International and the Illuminating Engineering Society, encourage lighting that is useful, targeted, low in brightness, controlled, and warm in color, providing a practical framework for reducing light pollution while maintaining public safety and security.

SEC CLERK RECORDED 08/20/2026

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Santa Fe County Board of County Commissioners hereby:

1. Directs County staff to evaluate existing outdoor lighting standards, policies, and practices and to develop recommendations for the Board's consideration regarding potential amendments to the Sustainable Land Development Code or other applicable regulations that reduce unnecessary light pollution while maintaining public safety and supporting responsible development.
2. Encourages collaboration with residents, experts, businesses, utilities, community organizations, Tribal governments, and state and national partners to promote education and the adoption of responsible outdoor lighting practices throughout Santa Fe County.
3. Expresses the Board's commitment to preserving Santa Fe County's dark skies for the benefit of residents, wildlife, visitors, scientific research, cultural traditions, and future generations.
4. Direct County staff to assess, identify, and recommend parks, green spaces, open spaces, and other areas of Santa Fe County where the night skies can be viewed by all communities, and study the applicability to Santa Fe County programs such as the HREE program.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED ON THIS 11th DAY OF AUGUST, 2026.

**SANTA FE COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

By: _____

Justin S. Greene, Chair

ATTEST: _____

Katharine E. Clark
County Clerk

DATED: 08/12/2026

COUNTY OF SANTA FE)
STATE OF NEW MEXICO) ss

BCC RESOLUTIONS
PAGES: 2

Approved as to form:

Walker Boyd
Walker Boyd
Santa Fe County Attorney

I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for
Record On The 20TH Day Of August, 2026 at 02:57:10 PM
and Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # 2090176
In The Records Of Santa Fe County

Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office
Katharine E. Clark
Deputy _____ County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM

