

**MASON COUNTY RESOLUTION
SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO PRESERVE NIGHT SKIES**

WHEREAS, Mason County residents recognize the Texas Hill Country for its diverse ecosystems, ethics for land stewardship, rich cultural heritage, and breathtaking scenic beauty; and

WHEREAS, the increased use of land for recreational and non-traditional agricultural uses in recent years has placed greater focus on the community economic and financial benefits of the region's scenic beauty, wildlife and open space, making activities such as tourism, outdoor recreation, hunting and fishing important to many community members; and

WHEREAS, due to the above-described increased use of land, accompanying light trespass from night lighting fixtures has been steadily on the rise, negatively impacting the natural environment and the quality of life of the people and wildlife in this region by, among other things, reducing night sky visibility and enjoyment for landowners and visitors alike;

WHEREAS, a number of cities in the Texas Hill Country have adopted outdoor lighting ordinances to preserve the night skies around their cities, including the cities of Mason, Llano, Fredericksburg, Dripping Springs, Horseshoe Bay and Johnson City;

WHEREAS, several Texas Hill Country communities and Texas State Parks have been designated a Dark Sky Park or Community by the International Dark-Sky Association, including Enchanted Rock State Natural Area, South Llano River State Park and the cities of Dripping Springs and Horseshoe Bay;

WHEREAS, concerned citizens and city leaders have formed the Hill Country Dark Sky Reserve representing a reserve area initially bound by the cities of Llano, Fredericksburg and Mason (with Enchanted Rock State Natural Area as the core of the reserve area) in order to protect the night skies in this reserve area, educate landowners about light trespass and better lighting and apply to be designated a Dark Sky Reserve by the International Dark-Sky Association;

WHEREAS, Mason County is committed to supporting practices that limit or minimize light trespass from night lighting fixtures in order to protect the beauty of the night skies and allow others the full benefit and use of their private property; and

NOW, THEREFORE, by action of the Mason County Commissioner's Court at a duly noticed and held public meeting and as reflected in the minutes of the Court, be it resolved that Mason County:

1. will promote and encourage outdoor lighting fixtures and practices that follow up-to-date suggested guidelines and use available technologies for efficient, cost-effective, non-intrusive lighting,
2. will work with its partners to educate and encourage landowners, businesses, resident communities and public entities to join this commitment to reduce energy

consumption, save money, reduce light trespass and protect the health and well-being of people and wildlife, and

3. supports Hill Country Dark Sky Reserve's application to the International Dark-Sky Association for a designation of the reserve area as a Dark Sky Reserve.

Adopted this ____ day of _____, 2017

Jerry Bearden, County Judge

Reggie Loeffler, Commissioner Precinct 1

Will Frey, Commissioner Precinct 2

Buddy Schuessler, Commissioner Precinct 3

Stephen Mutschick, Commissioner Precinct 4

ATTEST:

Pam Beam, County Clerk