



October 20, 2025

Town of Lake City, Board of Trustees
PO Box 544
Lake City, CO 81235

Dear Esteemed Trustees,

The Lake Fork Valley Conservancy (LFVC) requests your support to help us expand our Dark Skies Education Program. The LFVC has been conducting dark skies educational programs for the past several years, through the efforts of its Dark Skies Coordinator, Phillip Virden. To date he has conducted numerous events educating locals and visitors and has raised over \$40,000 to support the development of the observatory up at Slumgullion Pass. He has also been serving as an advisor for several groups seeking Dark Skies designations. He has been doing this for years on his own dime and with use of his own equipment. We will soon hire an outreach coordinator who will take over much of the logistical work for Phillip, but we also need our own equipment so we can run programs into the future. Summer programming will continue with Phillip as lead, but we are also planning to take our astronomy programs to regional schools, starting with the Lake City Community School, focusing on astrotourism job training program.

We request \$2,500 from the Town of Lake City to purchase two Celestron NexStar 8SE Computerized Smart Telescopes that can be projected to screens for community and student viewing. These will be used for outreach programs and to train students to be astronomy guides. Total cost is \$3,400 for the two scopes and an additional \$1,500 for projection hardware, of which LFVC will cover \$2,400.

These efforts are expected to benefit our community in the following ways:

- 1) Brings much needed and more diversified and sustainable tourism dollars to the region.
- 2) Provides STEM educational and job opportunities for regional youth.
- 3) Promotes dark skies protections by educating target communities about light pollution and mitigation options.
- 4) In the long-term, through additional Dark Skies designations and local lighting regulations, protection of nocturnal habitats improves quality of life for both wildlife and people.

Please let me know if you require any additional information. We appreciate your willingness to consider our request!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Camille Richard".

Camille Richard, Executive Director