

Washington State Audubon Conservation Committee Resolution (WSACC) Form

Title of Resolution - Lights Out Washington

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Definition of issue:

Millions of birds navigate at night using star patterns and the rotation of the sky to guide them. Night lights disorient their migration, causing them to veer off course, slam into surfaces, or circle endlessly, wasting crucial energy and, ultimately, collapsing from exhaustion.

Many songbirds like warblers, thrushes, orioles and some North American sparrows are nocturnal migrants. Without the light of the sun, these travelers use the earth's magnetic fields and the stars to navigate during their long journeys, which can span thousands of miles and traverse continents. Artificial light at night (ALAN) can disrupt bird migration in a variety of ways, including disorienting birds from their routes and causing collisions with buildings, resulting in millions of bird fatalities each year. In addition, artificial light at night disrupts the natural patterns of wildlife, contributes to the increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, disrupts human sleep, and obscures the stars in the night sky.

The National Audubon Society established its first Lights Out Program in Chicago in 1999. Today there are fifty Lights Out cities and 10 state or regional Lights Out Programs in the United States. Many Lights Out programs are made up of a network of organizations. Five of the state or regional programs include DarkSky International. This partnership first began in 2000.

Audubon Lights Out Programs typically consist of three elements: awareness, engagement and advocacy. These aspects would provide various entry points for different chapters throughout Washington depending on the capacities of their membership and financial strength.

What specific action are you requesting from WSACC?

- Provide information and resources to Audubon Chapters in Washington to promote the Light's Out Program and to increase awareness of the yearlong impacts of artificial lighting at night.
- Encourage Audubon Chapters to collaborate with other environmental programs, such as DarkSky International to promote the Lights Out Program and to address the ongoing problems with bird collisions with buildings, conserving dark skies.
- Develop strategies and solutions to coordinate statewide and local legislative efforts for the Lights Out Program and bird-safe buildings.

What specific resources can you, or the organization contribute to this action.

Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society (OPAS) will provide assistance to:

- create and write proclamations for promoting Lights Out awareness in communities
- work with DarkSky Olympic Peninsula (DSOP), or local DarkSky contact or other conservation groups as appropriate
- develop and disseminate brochures at a wide array of community events and venues
- develop slide presentation to offer to community groups
- research and share appropriate light pollution resources and its effect on the ecosystems of humans, birds, and wildlife in general.
- [BirdCast](#)

Is Strategic Timing involved?

Bird Migration occurs two times a year. Light pollution occurs nightly all year long at great cost to birds, all wildlife, humans, and the ecosystem overall.

State your chapters position on this issue

The mission statement of the Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society is to promote birding and habitat conservation through science-based education, advocacy and stewardship.

In view of this mission statement, OPAS is committed to reducing artificial sources of light that confuse, disorient, and potentially harm birds. Specifically OPAS in partnership with DarkSky Olympic Peninsula will work with individuals, businesses, and communities to:

- promote the shielding of outdoor lights to prevent light from being emitted upwards
- engage in public education about the hazards of light pollution and the dangers it presents to birds, the environment and all living forms.
- turn off unnecessary lights by midnight during bird migration (March 1st - June 15th, August 1st - November 15th; [BirdCast migration dashboard](#))

List Points in support of your chapters position

Proclamations were issued for the Cities of Port Angeles and Sequim in April and May, 2025.

The OPAS Board approved partnering with DarkSky Olympic Peninsula in May, 2025. A slide presentation took place at the Dungeness River Nature Center on August 9, 2025 and more are planned at the Senior Center and Libraries.

Who takes a different position on this issue:

Inertia. Change is difficult. Education is critical to gaining public support so that market demand will persuade big box stores to sell the appropriate downward facing light fixtures and warm spectrum lights.

What is the rationale for the different position:

Unsupported belief that ALAN reduces crime when data from Lights Out cities show otherwise.

Contact information for at least one person or group

Joyce Volmut Co Chair of OPAS Conservation Committee

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Patty Giffin Dark Sky OP/OPAS Lights Out Program Coordinator

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Identify and describe which of the following WSACC conservation objectives are addressed by your request:

Protecting/conserving birds during migration

Protecting the habitat of birds

Reducing risks to birds, insects and wildlife in general

Contributing to biological diversity

Resolution:

Whereas Bird Migration is the seasonal movement of birds flying between breeding grounds and wintering grounds that occurs each spring and fall; and,

Whereas Over 35 million birds will fly over Clallam County during spring migration, According to Birdcast on August 29, 2025, 1,533,900 crossed Washington and an estimated 3,782,200 birds in flight were recorded at 1:20 AM PDT during peak migration; and,

Whereas Bird Migration is a journey rife with risks; and,

Whereas 80% of North American song bird and other species migrate at night relying on natural clues like the moon and stars to navigate; and,

Whereas Light pollution in the form of bright artificial light at night and sky glow can disorient migrating birds, causing collisions with windows and solid objects, or confusion as they circle in upward beams of advertising lights; and,

Whereas North America has seen the demise of more than 3 billion birds since the 1970s; and,

Whereas More than 99% of people live under a haze of light pollution that fragments the night sky; and,

Whereas Light pollution or the excessive use of artificial outdoor light disrupts the natural patterns of wildlife, contributes to the increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, disrupts human sleep, and obscures the stars at night.

Whereas, Birds fly into windows because they do not perceive glass but instead just see their habitat reflected back at them with deadly results, killing hundreds of millions of birds each year.

Now, therefore be it resolved that chapters in the State of Washington will advocate for bird safe buildings in their communities, including bird-protective windows, shielded night lighting, and reduced night lighting through Lights Out Washington, and they will create awareness, engage in activities and advocate for Lights Out and other bird safe programs.