**Dark Sky Park Protocol for Rappahannock County Park**

Version 100.2 Revised October 13, 2022

The Rappahannock County Park was granted a Silver Tier Dark Sky Park status on February 21, 2019 by the International Dark-Sky Association. Upon request, the Rappahannock County Recreational Facilities Authority (RCRFA) will make the Park available for at least 9 scheduled events: either presentations organized by the Rappahannock League for Environmental Protection (RLEP) or scheduled Dark Skies viewing nights overseen by a Rappahannock County Recreational Facilities Authority (RCRFA) board member. All Dark Skies events will be supervised by a RCRFA board member. *Participants on Free Observations Evenings must register at least 24 hour prior to viewing date. Check this link to find Dark Skies documents, including Registration Form.* <https://rappahannockcountypark.weebly.com/park-documents.html>. Individuals who have not registered in advance must fill out the Registration upon arrival in order to participate.

All Park Regulations for use of Park apply to Dark Skies events. <https://rappahannockcountypark.weebly.com/park-documents.html>)

**Dark Skies Plan**

The Dark Skies program will follow the most recent Dark Skies Plan approved by RCRFA. To see plan, policy, and 2022 event dates, go to:

<https://rappahannockcountypark.weebly.com/park-documents.html>

**Questions:** [rappdarkskies@gmail.com](mailto:rappdarkskies@gmail.com) or 540-675-5330

**DESIGNATED AREAS FOR AFTER DUSK USE**

Areas of the Park designated for after dusk use include:

* the gravel parking lot
* the covered pavilion and restrooms
* the asphalt pad where the shuffleboard and cornhole facilities are located and the skateboard park
* the open field east of the tennis courts.

*All other areas of the park are excluded from after dusk use including the playground, tennis courts, basketball court, walking trails in the forested area, and western property line.*

**PARK RULES FOR AFTER DUSK USE**

1. Only astronomical observations, night photography, and dark sky events are permitted.
2. Scheduled Dark Skies nights will be scheduled and posted on the Rappahannock County Park website and in local media. Any cancelations due to weather or other reasons will be posted on the website.
3. Participants in Dark Skies events must stay in designated areas listed above. Other areas of the Park are closed at dusk.
4. Participants using the Park during Dark Skies events are solely responsible for injury or damage to property or persons. The RCRFA, the County of Rappahannock, its agents or employees accept no responsibility for injury or damage to property.
5. The individual/group using the Park on Dark Skies nights agree to pay for damages caused by their use.
6. Trash and debris must be removed from the Park on the date of use.
7. Alcohol, fireworks, and unleashed pets are prohibited.
8. Electric generators are prohibited.
9. Amplified sound is not permitted without prior consent by the RCRFA.
10. Use of car headlights shall be minimized and directed away from adjacent private residences.

**ENFORCEMENT**

1. Participants will be reminded to comply with the Park Rules for After-Dusk Use as they arrive and/or at the start of any scheduled programming.
2. Individuals who violate the Park Rules will be given a warning and escorted from the Park by event Security. Repeat offenders may be excluded from future events.