



YUKON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, Yukon Centre

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Dear Candidate,

In addition to the long summer days of the midnight sun, Whitehorse, the Wilderness City is blessed with long, star-filled and aurora rich nights. Sadly, due to light pollution from the City, most Whitehorse residents are being deprived access to the natural treasure. Winter tourism is a fast-growing sector of our economy, but again this investment is at risk because we are losing our dark sky. This is a concern we are hearing more and more from Whitehorse citizens, across the community and across demographics.

The good news is light pollution is reversible and we can reclaim our night sky. It is possible to use light responsibly to enhance the use and enjoyment of the night time environment, enhance public safety and reduce light pollution impacts. But it takes will to make change.

Question 1:

There is a growing body of research that proves the negative effects of light pollution on both our natural environment and human health. For example, in 2016 the American Medical Association¹ re-affirmed their warning about human health effects from artificial light at night resulting in increasing risks for obesity, depression, sleep disorders, diabetes, breast cancer² and more. **If elected, what would you do to reclaim our night-sky heritage, protecting the environment and human health from the negative effects of light pollution?**

Question 2:

The bright-white light used in many LED exterior and street lights is now known to cause up to 5-times more light pollution than the current amber coloured street lights. There are a growing number of complaints from Whitehorse citizens and visitors about the negative effects from the bright-white lights on their homes and outdoor experiences. Furthermore, human eyes are more impacted to blue-rich white light because blue light scatters more within the eye, causing glare effects, which has implications for road safety, especially for older eyes. **Would you support and advocate for the responsible use of outdoor lighting: this being limiting use of lighting to areas where needed for safety and convenience and requiring the use of warm-white or amber-coloured night-sky friendly lighting on buildings and roadways?**

¹ <http://www.atmob.org/library/resources/AMA%20Health%20Effects%20Light%20at%20Night.pdf>

² <https://www.isglobal.org/documents/10179/6225531/NdP+Luz+azul+cancer+ENG.pdf>

About us: The Yukon Astronomical Society is a Yukon-based, non-profit organization, devoted to popularizing astronomy and related sciences, in all the communities of the Yukon. We are part of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, which gathers more than 5000 members nationwide.

Our mission is to help all Yukoners learn more about astronomy, to enhance understanding of, and inspire curiosity about the Universe through public outreach events, education, and support for astronomical research. Also part of our mandate is to build and operate a public astronomical observatory that the public can regularly access. The construction of this facility is in process.

Sincerely,

Vikki Zsohar
President, Yukon Astronomical Society
RASC Yukon Centre