

Objective

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Establish viewing/observing facility

Observing sites

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No surprise, different people have a different idea of what a "dark site" is. From conversations with various people most of the differences seem related to how far away they are. I'll arbitrarily define different dark or observing sites as follows:

- Very remote dark site > 4hr drive
- Remote dark site 2-3 hr drive
- Close by observing site < 1 hr drive
- Local observing site < 0.5 hr drive
- Robot scope site

Very remote site

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Description

Four or more hour drive from Longmont
Example - trip to NW Nebraska ranch 4 or 5
years ago

Requirements

- Place to eat, sleep
- Power
-

Activities

- Observing
- Probably little public outreach

Remote dark site

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Description

Within 2 or 3 hour drive
of Longmont

Example DAS Kline site

- Place to setup scopes (access needed)
- Within 2 to 3 hour drive
- Warming shelter
- Restroom
- Power
- Rv parking
- Piers and pads

Close by observing site

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Description

Within 1 hr drive

Example - Mount Research Observatory

Requirements

- Place to setup scopes
- Power
- Shelter
- Restrooms
-

Activities

- Observing
- Getting started classes
- Imaging clinics

Local site

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Description

Within 1/2 hour drive

Example - Sandstone south
shelter

Requirements

- Restrooms
- Shelter
- Power
-

Activities

- Observing
- Imaging or observing clinics
- Public outreach
- Intro to observing

Robot Scope Site

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Description

Remotely controlled robot site

Requirements

- Observatory space
- Power
- Internet
- On site personnel

Activities

- Imaging

A

Planning Process

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To accomplish a complex goal such as building a dark sky site, we should manage it as a project or a series of projects.

- We should adopt a cycle of proposal, design, and review at various stages of project
- Similar to local government sketch, preliminary, and final subdivision reviews
- We do not necessarily need 3 formal views maybe only concept and final review

Governance

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We will need to establish how the dark site/observing facility project is managed both during construction and after it is completed. There are several ways this could be done.

- LAS only - change LAS charter to have formal exec committee or advisory board; audit is difficult (only necessary if we put in for grants)
- Involve other clubs in the region
- Separate 501-c or LLC (Setup a separate corporation to develop and manage the site)
- Astroleague MARS (ie manage through the Astroleague Mountain Region -- idea is on agenda of the AL's long range planning committee)

There has been some interest from members from other clubs such as Denver and Boulder. Majority of the interest is within LAS itself.

Funding

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- Member contributions
- Local companies and foundations
- Boulder Co. Lottery funds
- Direct ownership through LLC

Action Items

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- Publish meeting notes
- Set up planning committee
- Planning committee volunteers: Brian Kimball, Gary Garzone, Randy Cunningham, Julie Carmen, Jim Elkins, Wayne Green,
- Come up with a list of possible (affordable) projects