

CITY HALL | FREDERICKSBURG, TEXAS

HILL COUNTRY DARK SKY CONFERENCE

AGENDA | MAY 28, 2026

- 11:00 Lunch**
- 12:00 Welcome and Opening Remarks**
Mayor Randy Briley | *City of Fredericksburg*
Judge Daniel Jones | *Gillespie County*
- 12:10 City of Boerne: Building a Dark Sky Community**
Ryan Bass | *City of Boerne*
- 12:40 State of Affairs in our Region**
Dawn Davies | *Hill Country Alliance*
- 1:00 Break**
- 1:15 Nighttime Economy, Ecology, and the Perceptions of Safety - A Practical Lighting Guide**
Christoph Gisel | *Arup*
- 1:45 TPWD Advances Dark Sky Stewardship at Enchanted Rock and Beyond**
Hannah Pickens | *Enchanted Rock State Natural Area*
JJ Fleury | *Texas Parks and Wildlife Department*
- 2:15 Break**
- 2:35 Lighting the Dark Sky: PEC's Partnership with Dark Sky Communities**
Jared Fields | *Pedernales Electric Cooperative*
- 3:05 The Power of Partnership: How Grassroots Groups and Local Leaders Protect Our Skies**
Moderator - Cliff Kaplan | *Hill Country Alliance*
Kathleen Brinkman | *Kerr County Friends of the Night Sky*
Michelle Molina | *Comal County Friends of the Night Sky*
Vicki Guidry | *Blanco County Friends of the Night Sky*
- 3:50 Closing Remarks**
Katherine Romans | *Hill Country Alliance*
- 4:00 Happy Hour and Networking Reception**

HOSTED BY The City of Fredericksburg
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH Hill Country Alliance & Gillespie County EDC

MEET YOUR SPEAKERS



Randy Briley | Mayor-Elect, City of Fredericksburg

Randy Briley is a U.S. Navy veteran and former Fortune 500 corporate executive who served on the Fredericksburg City Council from 2023–2025. He also served on the Board of Directors for the Gillespie County Historical Society and Pioneer Museum from 2023–2026, and is the newly elected mayor of Fredericksburg.

Daniel Jones | Judge, Gillespie County

Gillespie County Judge Daniel Jones leverages 17 years of legal experience, primarily serving local government. After working as Fredericksburg's Presiding Municipal Judge and later City Attorney, he transitioned to the courthouse in 2022. He holds a law degree from the University of Tulsa.



Ryan Bass | Environmental Program Manager, City of Boerne

Ryan is the Environmental Program Manager for Boerne, balancing local growth with stewardship. He oversees dark skies, forestry, and water programs, reviewing development plans for lighting compliance while leading the city's International Dark-Sky Community designation efforts. He holds a BS in Forestry from Stephen F. Austin State University.



Dawn Davies | Night Sky Program Manager, Hill Country Alliance

Drawing on 17 years in informal environmental and science education, in her role with HCA, Dawn guides communities and partners in eliminating light pollution, coordinates regional stewardship, advances dark sky policies, and supports the growth of community-based Friends of the Night Sky groups. She holds a B.A. in Culture, Ecology & Sustainability.



Christoph Gisel | Lighting Design Director, Arup

Christoph is based in Austin and leads Arup's Lighting team, combining strong design thinking with technical expertise. He is passionate about public spaces as catalysts for social connection and is a trusted advisor in human-centric, community-focused, and DarkSky-friendly lighting design.



Hannah Pickens | Interpreter/Resource Specialist, Enchanted Rock SNA

Hannah is the interpretive ranger and natural resource specialist at Enchanted Rock State Natural Area. Holding a BS in Environmental Science from the University of Portland, she coordinates research collaborations and educational programming to protect and celebrate the site's diverse natural resources.



JJ Fleury | Planning & GIS - Program Director, TPWD

JJ Fleury is the Program Director for the Planning and Geospatial Resources Program at Texas Parks and Wildlife, with over a decade of experience in park design. He holds a master's in landscape architecture from UT-Austin and previously served in the Peace Corps developing ecotourism in Guatemala and the Philippines.



MEET YOUR SPEAKERS



Jared Fields | *External Relations Representative, Pedernales Electric Cooperative*

Jared has worked for six years building strong relationships with elected officials, chambers of commerce, businesses and, community organizations within the PEC service territory. He's played an active role in outreach and education efforts, providing behind-the-scenes insights on outage preparedness, safety protocols, and PEC's commitments to reliability and emergency response.

Cliff Kaplan | *Program Director, Hill Country Alliance*

Cliff has driven HCA initiatives since 2015 and supports its Water, Night Sky, and Communities programs. He is a founding board member of Texans for Responsible Aggregate Mining (TRAM), Comal Conservation and the Friends of Lost Maples State Natural Area. Cliff holds masters degrees in Community and Regional Planning and Public Affairs from UT Austin.



Kathleen Brinkman | *President, Kerr County Friends of the Night Sky*

Kathleen, a Texas transplant for 20 years, practiced law for over four decades in commercial, corporate, and bankruptcy law. She holds degrees from Hollins University and the University of Denver, including a Masters in Environmental Management. She is a founding member of the KCFNS and committed to preserving and enhancing our Hill Country view of the Milky Way.

Michelle Molina | *President, Comal County Friends of the Night Sky*

Growing up in San Antonio with family across Uvalde, Real, and Kerr Counties, Michelle spent her youth exploring Hill Country rivers. An interior designer passionate about art and the outdoors, she serves on Bulverde's Planning and Zoning Commission. Michelle also presides CCFNS and Bulverde Neighborhoods for Clean Water, dedicated to protecting her beautiful home state.



Vicki Guidry | *Vice President, Blanco County Friends of the Night Sky*

San Antonio native Vicki Guidry retired to Blanco after a 32-year oil and gas career. Noticing encroaching city lights, she joined local dark sky efforts to help form Blanco County Friends of the Night Sky. As Vice President, she handles community outreach, education, the annual school art contest, and the newsletter.

Katherine Romans | *Executive Director, Hill Country Alliance*

Katherine, Director of the Hill Country Alliance, has 15 years of nonprofit and legislative experience. She served as a U.S. House Natural Resources Committee aide and led HCA's landowner outreach program, connecting landowners to conservation resources. Katherine holds a Master's in Environmental Management from Yale.



MEET YOUR HOSTS



City of Fredericksburg

Fredericksburg, Texas, located in the heart of the Texas Hill Country, is a charming city known for its rich German heritage and vibrant culture. Founded in 1846, Fredericksburg offers a unique blend of history, locally-owned shops, award-winning wineries, and scenic beauty. The hospitality of its people defines our picturesque town.

Hill Country Alliance

The Hill Country Alliance is committed to preserving the beauty of the Texas Hill Country for future generations. Our mission unites diverse partners to protect open spaces, starry skies, clean water, and the region's unique character. We aim to ensure that the landscapes and resources that have sustained communities here for over 14,000 years remain accessible and sustainable.



Gillespie County Economic Development Commission



Formed in 1989, the mission of the Gillespie County Economic Development Commission is to encourage, enhance, and promote managed economic development. It identifies and develops resources that attract business investment, and provides information to county citizens seeking economic resources, and to those interested in investing in Gillespie County.

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