

BLINDED BY LIGHT?

- by Katherine Spitz, Pebble Beach, Landscape Architect, AIA, ASLA, LEED AP

Paul Simon sang “Hello darkness, my old friend,” and when it comes to the night sky, we do want darkness to be a friend. After all, we are lucky here in the Del Monte Forest, we can still see stars glittering in the sky, framed by the trees.



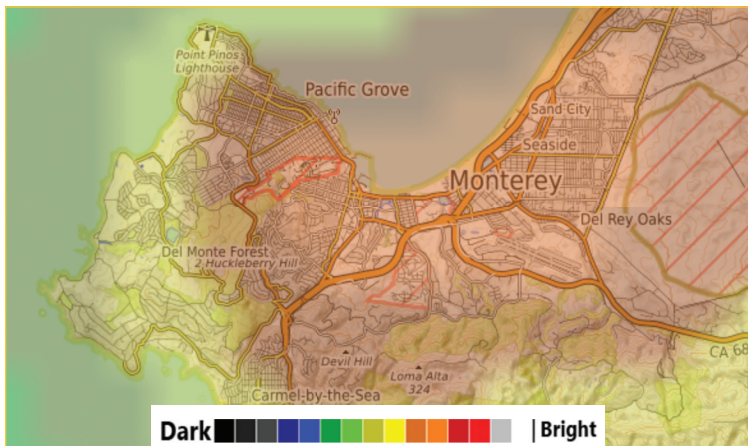
It’s a big problem. Artificial lights have created light pollution. Light pollution is a bright glow that lightens the night sky and obscures the view of stars. Astronomers noticed the problem first, they became unable to see the stars, and therefore could

For some of us, darkness is scary. And for good reason. Nyctophobia (fear of the dark) is a vestigial trait hearkening back to the days when humans were prey for predators who hunted at night. Our eyes don’t work well in darkness, and lights, first fire, now electrical, made us safer. We felt less vulnerable. We could see the predators.

So, we lit up the night, installing flood lights, entry lights, driveway gate lights and tree up-lights around our houses. And I am not including urban or industrial lighting. Even here, in the semi-rural Del Monte pine forest, we are often surrounded by the glow of bright outdoor lights illuminating neighboring homes and obscuring the starry skies.

not gather data. According to NOAA, nearly one third of the world’s population will never, ever, be able to see the Milky Way.

Light pollution affects us individually by disrupting the diurnal rhythms necessary for our health. It is also detrimental to wildlife, nocturnal animals requiring darkness for reproduction, hunting, protection, and migration. For example, imagine how deleterious it is for owls, whose eyes cannot easily adjust to light during their night predation. You might be surprised to know that bright nights are even harmful to plants, whose reproductive cycles are triggered by periods of dark and light. All that light is just messing things up!



Many people believe that they will be safer with bright lights surrounding their house, but eye doctors and engineers tell us that very bright light creates very dark contrasting spots, to which our eyes, like those owls, cannot adjust. Low level, carefully directed, even illumination is best for your eyes, your safety, and your neighbor. Less can be more.

Light pollution is now mapped to identify dark areas for stargazing.
From darksitefinder.com

(Continued on page 3)



Below are three of the many separate, distinct Pebble Beach community entities that work closely together and are often confused with one another:

**DEL MONTE FOREST
PROPERTY OWNERS**

A NON-PROFIT CALIFORNIA CORPORATION

3101 Forest Lake Road, Pebble Beach, CA 93953
Email: dmfpropertyowners@gmail.com
Website: www.dmfpo.org

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**Del Monte Forest
Property Owners**

501 (c) 4 Non-profit
Funding from dues and donations
Communication and Safety
Roads Maintenance Monitoring
Social Enrichment

www.dmfpo.org
dmfpropertyowners@gmail.com
831.373.1618



**Pebble Beach
Company**

World Famous Private Enterprise Resort
Special Events
Roads, gates, and trails stewardship
Architectural Review
Forestry services for its properties
Reclaimed Water Project Financing

www.pebblebeach.com
831.647.7500

Del Monte Forest Property Owners

A voluntary membership social enrichment organization
\$50 per calendar year dues

Del Monte Forest Conservancy

Annual October Indian Village Community Picnic
Stewardship of conservation easements
and owned lands in Del Monte Forest
Voluntary donations/no members

Pebble Beach Company

Private Enterprise Resort
Yearly emblem & road fees
(Some road fees are \$50
and are confused with
DMFPO membership
dues although
not related)



**Del Monte Forest
Conservancy**

501 (c) 3 Non-profit
Funding from donations and rents
Preservation and Enhancement of
Open Space Holdings
Healthy Forest Planning / Maintenance
Forestry services for its properties
Casita de Lemos Management

**www.delmonteforest
conservancy.org**
831.373.1293

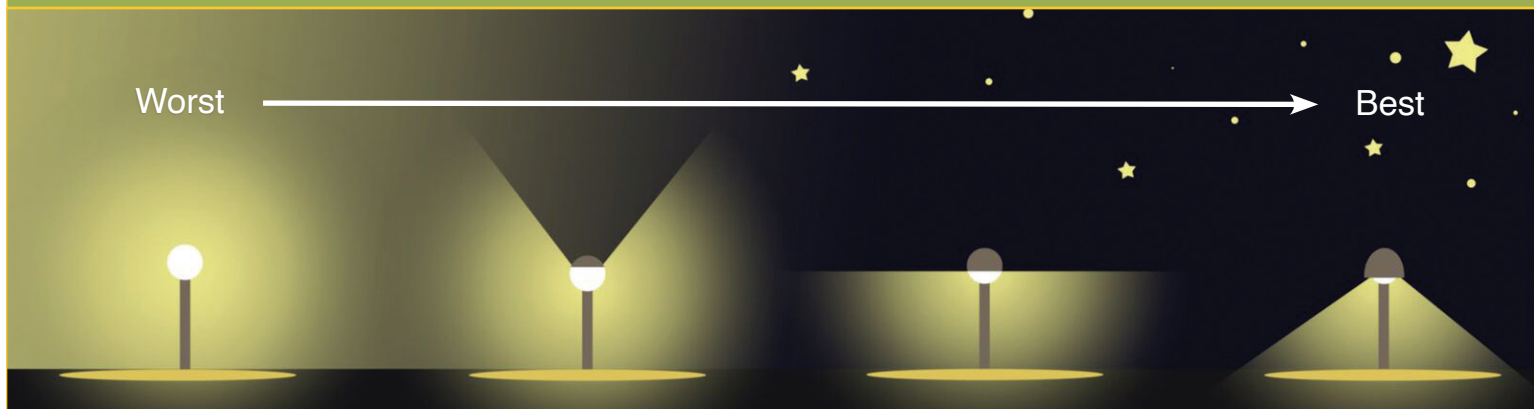
Some other
Pebble Beach
affiliated entities:

Community Services District
(Wastewater/CA Highway Patrol/
CAL FIRE/GreenWaste Recovery)

Monterey County
(Sheriff/Coastal Commission/
Land Use Advisory Committee)

Open Space Advisory Committee

Unified School Districts
Pacific Grove/Monterey/Carmel



It has become such a significant economic problem that jurisdictions worldwide have developed “Dark Sky” lighting regulations to reduce light glare and pollution in residential applications (and of course, commercial and industrial). Monterey County and Del Monte Forest have dark sky ordinances with which homeowners are expected to comply.

But why should you care about something as remote as a star? To paraphrase Robert Frost, “good lights make good neighbors.” Light pollution is called light trespass when a property owner’s light shines on adjacent property. It is considered a nuisance the way loud noise late at night is.

Almost all of us have experienced the frustrating glare of neighbors’ lights shining in our windows. Light travels long distances—I am personally beleaguered by 5 non-compliant driveway fixtures that are over ½ mile away but shine directly into my windows!

Monterey’s codes have been developed to reduce light trespass and pollution, and to preserve our rural dark skies. The basic principle is to reduce light pollution by shielding the fixture to eliminate any light shining up into the sky, or out toward adjacent properties. It’s simple, fixtures where the light source is visible (to your neighbors or to the night sky) are not allowed. Floodlights must have a shield; landscape lights should be aimed

downward; and decorative fixtures should not have glass in front of the bulb (which means the light will shine directly out from the bulb.) Gates and entry fixtures must be low-wattage and illuminate only the area at the gate, not the road or your neighbors. Lights should be on a timer, so they are not on when not needed (after ten pm, for example).

When you need new outdoor lights, look for something labeled “dark sky compliant.” These fixtures are now really good looking, inexpensive, and readily available. Finally, if you have questions, contact Nikki Simon, the Del Monte Forest Architectural Review Board project manager.

We are lucky to live in the Del Monte Forest. Let’s be thoughtful neighbors and keep our night time and night sky dark. Let’s not be blinded by light. 🌌

The Monterey County Design Guidelines for Exterior Lighting has been in place since 2016 and can be found at: <https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=10737>



Since the 1980's, Monterey County has allowed in certain residential areas bed and breakfast facilities (B&Bs), a type of short-term rental in which the property owner occupies and manages the facility.

In 1997, the County adopted an ordinance separate from B&Bs for Inland Areas (Non-Coastal Zone), that regulates short-term rental of single and multiple family dwelling units, duplexes, guesthouses, caretaker units, and other structures normally occupied for residential purposes. The existing transient (short-term) use ordinance provides a discretionary permit procedure in Inland Areas to allow, or legalize existing, visitor serving opportunities. The transient use ordinance adopted by the Board of Supervisors for the Coastal Zone was not certified by the Coastal Commission and therefore never went into effect.

In recent years, Monterey County experienced an increase in the number of short-term rentals and began updating the zoning ordinances in the Inland Areas and drafting a new ordinance for specific regulation in the Coastal Zone. Depending on the nature and response to public comments received on the Vacation Rental Ordinances Draft Environmental Impact Report, a Final EIR and Draft Ordinance may reach the Planning Commission late spring/early summer. During the ordinance update, the existing ordinances remain in force.

Currently in the inland areas of the County, short-term rentals may be allowed for not fewer



than seven days and not longer than 30 days by administrative permit at a cost of approximately \$6,000. In the coastal areas of the County short-term rentals may be allowed by coastal development permit at a cost of approximately \$12,000. Administrative Permits, Coastal Administrative Permits, Use Permits and Coastal Development Permits are discretionary type permits requiring public notice, conditions of approval, and possibly a public hearing.

Short-term rentals are subject to Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT), having separate County enforcement for failure to pay. Long-term rentals (greater than 30 consecutive days) are not regulated under the Monterey County Zoning Codes, are allowed without a permit, and are not subject to TOT.

External functions such as corporate gatherings, weddings, or parties during events (e.g., AT&T, US Open, Concours d'Elegance, etc.) are viewed as events requiring a Use Permit or Coastal Development Permit separate from a short-term rental or B&B permit.

The County of Monterey Housing and Community Development Department processes permits and enforces the County's land use regulations, with progressive enforcement for continued violations.

A short-term rental complaint form is available on the County website at <https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showpublisheddocument/107422/637957173867670000>.

After completing all required information, e-mail the form to cecomplaints@co.monterey.ca.us using the submit button on the website complaint form. Or download the form and deliver or mail to: Building Services Code Compliance, 1441 Schilling Place, 2nd Floor, Salinas, CA 93901. Alternatively, the Code Compliance complaint hot line at (831) 796-3674 can be contacted with the nature and address of the complaint.

Be aware that Del Monte Forest Property Owners is not a home owners association and has no enforcement authority to address unpermitted short-term rentals in the Forest. Only the County is authorized to enforce permitting violations.

For real time noise and other disturbances associated with short-term rentals, the Monterey County Sheriff's Office 24-hour dispatch can be contacted at 831-647-7911. Pebble Beach Company Security can be contacted at 831-624-6669.

For ordinance development inquiries contact Melanie Beretti, AICP, Principal Planner, 831-755-5285, berettim@co.monterey.ca.us. To be notified of upcoming actions related to the short-term rental ordinance, join the ordinance development mailing list by emailing EstradaA@co.monterey.ca.us.



Safety Day Open House and BBQ

Sat. June 29, 10 am – 2 pm

**Pebble Beach Fire Department,
3101 Forest Lake Road, Pebble Beach**

Come for food, fun, and safety information to protect your home and family! Check out all the fun displays, activities, and information.

As always, there will be numerous exhibitors offering information, demonstrations, and services on many topics: electrical safety, CPR/first aid, native plants, fire extinguisher recharging, home security, fire safety, and more. Tour the mobile communications command center and try your hand at being an emergency dispatcher, or practice using a fire extinguisher with props that test for accuracy. *See you there!*



Free Household Hazardous Waste & Electronics Collection Event!

Saturday, September 14, 9 am to 2 pm

**PBCSD office parking lot
3101 Forest Lake Road, Pebble Beach**
(intersection of Forest Lake and Lopez Roads)



To ensure safety:
*Place your hazardous waste in a cardboard box inside your trunk.
Group similar products together and label anything not in its original container.
Remain in your vehicle at all times and District staff will unload the items for you!*





With winter storms often disrupting electrical service, more homeowners are choosing backup generators to fill in the gap until power is restored.

The increasing number of generators and the need to cycle them regularly are creating noise in previously quiet neighborhoods. Noise is measured in units of decibels (dB), with an adjustment reflecting human ear sensitivity measured as dB on the A Scale (dBA). Consider the common sounds below and their generally associated noise levels.

- 10 dB — Normal breathing
- 70 dB — Hair dryer
- 75 dB — Portable generator
- 80 dB — Police whistle
- 90 dB — Lawn mower

Monterey County Code Chapter 10.06 prohibits within the unincorporated area of the County of Monterey making any loud and unreasonable sound above 70 dB any day of the week. For nighttime non-emergency use, the sound level cannot exceed 45 to 65 dBA on average from 9:00pm to 7:00am the following morning. A loud and unreasonable sound shall include any sound that is plainly audible at a distance of fifty (50) feet in any direction from the sound source or any sound that exceeds exterior noise level standards.

If your generator needs dampening, here are a few options.

- **Sound-Absorbing Enclosure:** These protect your standby generator from the weather and keep noise down. Aftermarket enclosures are also available.
- **Acoustic Barriers:** Various versions of these barriers are available, from freestanding, movable versions to permanent solutions.
- **Exhaust Mufflers/Silencers:** A silencer performs the same noise reducing function for generators as the muffler does for engines in automobiles.
- **Isolation Mounts:** Placing the generator on an isolation mount made of rubber-type padding can help reduce sound amplifying vibrations.

Soundproofing can reduce the operational noise levels of generators by up to 20 dB, when a reduction of 5 dB is deemed significantly positive to the ears!

In addition to the regulations required by Monterey County, the installation of any proposed generator on properties located within Del Monte Forest requires review and approval from Pebble Beach Company's Architectural Review Office ("ARO"). All proposed generators shall be soundproofed, installed away from neighboring properties, shall not be installed within the property's Setbacks, as defined by Monterey County, and shall be enclosed with fencing or similar housing for screening. Please contact Nikki Simon at (831) 625-8455 with questions concerning the ARO's review and approval process.

Warning: Improper installation of natural gas-fired generators venting in basements has led to carbon monoxide poisoning of residents. Use of an extension cord from a generator to a house electrical outlet could dangerously energize the dwelling. The possibility exists that current may feed through the house lines out to power distribution lines and be potentially fatal to line workers responding to area outages.

Something wondrous happens with the first rains. Take a walk in the Forest and you will see all kinds of small and interesting organism appear seemingly overnight. No, they are not flowers, something quite different which belong to their very own scientific classification, or kingdom. Mushrooms!

Today all living entities are classified into one of six kingdoms: Archaeobacteria, Eubacteria, Protista, Fungi, Plantae, and Animalia. This classification has changed over time, until about 1960 fungi were listed as plants.



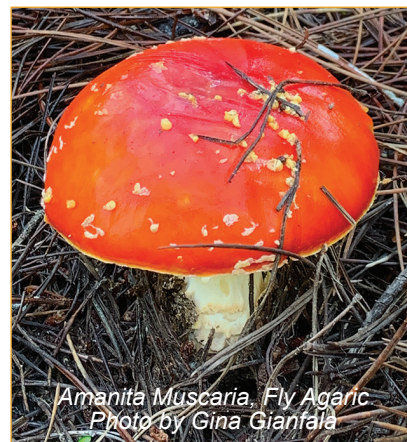
What are fungi vs mushrooms? Fungi are a very diverse group of about 1.5 million species, with more being discovered. Only a small fraction of fungi produce mushrooms. What we see above ground is a tiny part of a much larger organism. The mushroom is the part of the fungus that enables reproduction and has a short life cycle. It propagates by releasing spores into the air that germinate where they land. Mushrooms come in all shapes and sizes, some colorful and some plain, some edible and some poisonous. They are specialized, there are a limited number of plant species with which any particular mushroom will form a symbiosis.

Fungi are fascinating, they grow in all kind of places, even at the bottom of the ocean. They can be very tiny as well as enormous, short lived and very long lived. The entire collection of a fungus is called the mycelium. The mycelium can run for hundreds of miles. The oldest and largest fungi lives in Oregon and comprises over 3.5 square miles of forest.

Fungi do not photosynthesize, they do not get energy from the sun like plants, nor do they consume other organisms like animals. Instead, they rely on external sources of food. Fungi perform a key function, they are decomposers: they get nutrients by breaking down plants and other matter via powerful enzymes which are then absorbed. Fungi perform the critical function of releasing carbon and nitrogen back into the environment. Without fungi, habitats would soon collapse.

California has a high diversity of mushrooms. According to the Bay Area Mycological Society over 3,000 species have been identified as of 2014.

Because of the key role of mushrooms, in January 2024 California recognized the California Golden Chanterelle as the State mushroom. This highlights its important role and significance in the health of our forests and grasslands. The bill's text explains "Mushrooms decompose dead wood, improve groundwater quality and quantity, store carbon



in the soil, and play a critical role in climate resilience and healthy soils."

If you enjoy picking mushrooms, use an open basket that allows spores to spread. Recreate responsibly, do not go off trail where so posted as this can profoundly impact the soil.

Enjoy the journey of discovery! 



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3101 Forest Lake Road, Pebble Beach, CA 93953

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
PERMIT 164
SALINAS, CA



Goats are one of the crucial tools for reducing fire fuel in Pebble Beach. Look for them beginning in May along Pescadero Canyon.

If your contact information has changed, or you have sold a Pebble Beach property, please let us know - go to DMFPO.org and click on Contact Information Update



Del Monte Forest Property Owners



Semiannual Meeting

Sunday, May 19, 2024

2:00 to 4:00 pm

Main Ballroom

The Inn at Spanish Bay



Will Bullas

Local Celebrity, Artist, and Humorist

A master of one-liners, Will Bullas combines award winning artistic skills with a hilarious point of view, creating a refreshing and unexpected new way to enjoy fine art.

All 2024 DMFPO Members Are Invited • Enjoy Refreshments & Hors d'oeuvre