

**Subject:**Update from Lowell - January 6, 2020  
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**To:**[localgroup@lowell.edu](mailto:localgroup@lowell.edu)

Good morning everyone, and happy New Year.

Reminder: see <http://www.lowell.edu/local-updates> for the latest documents as well as the text of previous biweekly updates.

The update took a holiday break on December 23, but at that time, as is also the case today, little has changed from our last message and there is not much to report.

### **Section 17**

- No change. We plan to re-introduce the Section 17 bill in the new Congress, but the members are still rather preoccupied (especially today!). I will keep you posted in future updates on exactly what's going on.

### **Astronomy Discovery Center**

- No change from the last update. We continue to work with the Flagstaff Mesa HOA on the emergency-only egress to their road, as well as to plan content and themes for the ADC itself. And of course, we continue to fundraise as best we can within the confines of Zoom grids.

### **Lowell operational status**

- With Arizona's presently having the distinction of the highest per capita infection rate in the world, we are remaining closed except for our small, outdoor telescope viewing programs. We do not plan any increase in activity until we reach CDC Phase 2.
- Things were a little crazy at the Mars Hill overlook on New Year's Day and evening, but not to the point that I felt help from FPD was needed. Otherwise I've observed little craziness down there. I'd expect this to continue during the present (sort of) cold weather season.

I've been heartened to see news of vaccines now being administered out at Fort Tuthill. I'm toward the end of the priority line, but I'm more than fine with that: it's great to see our at-risk citizens and dedicated health care providers getting the protection they need. Hopefully by spring many more of us will be immunized and the present infection wave will be the last big one.

A quick astronomy note: as of today, January 6, sunrise starts to creep earlier from its present latest time here in Flag of 7:35 AM. Sunset has been getting later for a month and is now moving out by about a minute per day. Longer, brighter days are on the way!

Best regards,

Jeff Hall  
Director  
Lowell Observatory