

Update for the massive effort to record the February 3-4 Polymele occultation

The Southwest Research Institute's (SwRI's) Marc Buie wrote on Jan. 17th:

"Recruiting has gone well. There are some slots still available but we have met the minimum requirements. At some point soon we will need to close down the signups. I don't know exactly when that will be but it really can't extend past this week (ends Jan. 20). Surprisingly to me, we don't have all the IOTA contributors I hoped for (my working quota is 10 and we only have 6). These are people with their own gear that intend to follow along with the main group as part of the tightly coordinated group."

If you can travel with your own telescope and occultation-recording equipment to the Boulder, Colorado area by mid-day, Jan. 31, to participate in this week-long effort, please contact Brian Keeney at bkeeney@gmail.com SOON so you might be added to the effort. All communication for the campaign is via lucyoccs.slack.com; Brian Keeney can give you the necessary invitation to join it. SwRI can support the travel costs for eligible applicants, but the arrangements need to be made soon; see more in my Jan. 7th message copied below. The whole group will travel to wherever the clearest sky along the path will occur, which could be anywhere from New Mexico to Michigan. They prefer to observe from southwestern Kansas, if clear skies are forecast there, but the whole effort plans to be mobile and flexible, to be able to respond to the situation as it develops.

Marc Buie, on Jan. 20, says more about meeting on Jan. 31: The center of operations in Colorado is in Mead near the intersection of Hwy 66 and I-25. The hotels we are recommending are intended to be close to there, certainly within 15 minutes. The hotels in Firestone at Hwy 119 and I-25 are just two miles away (one stop on I-25). Yesterday was a really productive day at the warehouse. We made a huge amount of progress on getting the equipment ready thanks to the help from [@Robbie Morefield](#), [@Julia Johnston](#), and [@Dawson Stremme](#). Brian spent a lot of time working on getting the entire flight booking process moving along. This is the most critical step right now but as it comes under control, we'll be shifting our attention to lodging. It's a complicated situation due to the weather flexibility we need. Brian will send out guidance on what to do next. Thank you all for your patience.

David

On Jan. 7, I wrote to IOTAoccultations about the February 3-4 Polymele occultation

This event is important because the Southwest Research Institute (SwRI) plans their largest effort ever to record the Feb. 4th occultation by Polymele [Trojan asteroid and a target of NASA's Lucy mission], and the space around the asteroid, from over 100 stations. **THEY NEED HELP FROM IOTA OBSERVERS FOR THIS EFFORT, AND WILL EVEN PAY FOR TRANSPORTATION AND ACCOMMODATIONS FOR MOST WHO TRY IT.** They want everyone to converge on the Boulder, Colorado area by 1pm on Jan. 31, for training, preparations, and travel to wherever it will be clear for the occultation. If you don't have your own equipment suitable for recording and accurate timing, they will assign you to one of their 90 systems, consisting of 8-in and 16-in SkyWatcher Go-To Dobsonians and 11-in SCT scopes, all

or most with QHY 174M GPS cameras. If you might be interested in this, contact Brian Keeney at bkeeney@gmail.com so he can add you to their slack channel, which will be used for all communication about the effort. Everyone interested needs to complete a participation form available at <https://forms.gle/BhhJghhdpJQ5K6zs8> whether you plan to use your own equipment, or use SwRI's equipment; most important is your experience with recording asteroidal occultations.

The target star is 13.3-mag. UCAC4 631-037227 in Auriga at J2000 RA: 06h 38m 54.65s, DEC: +36dg 01' 27.2". Steve Preston has finder charts of different scales on his page for the event at https://www.asteroidoccultation.com/2023_02/0204_15094_83606.htm . The SwRI prediction for this event is given in a zoomable Google map at <http://lucy.swri.edu/occ/20230204Polymele.html> .