A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE “HALF EARTH,”“30 X 30,” AND “AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL” PROGRAMS AND SUPPORTING CONTINUED PRIVATE OWNERSHIP OF LAND

**Whereas**,

1. For some years, on an international level, there have been environmentalist proposals similar to a leading one called “Half Earth.”[[1]](#endnote-3)
2. Half Earth refers to permanently locking up half of the earth’s land and water againsany use by human beings by 2050.
3. The theory of Half Earth is that permanently locking up half of the earth is necessary as a last-minute desperate measure to avoid climate change catastrophe, to save millions of species from extinction, and thereby save ourselves. The Half-Earth Project says, “The extinction rate is 1,000 times higher than before the global spread of humanity. As human impact on the environment grows, associated species loss compromises the stability of our planet.”[[2]](#endnote-4)
4. For some years, on an international level, there have been intermediate proposals similar to a leading one called “30 x 30.”
5. 30 x 30 refers to permanently locking up 30 percent of the earth’s land and water by 2030 as an interim goal toward permanently locking up 50 percent.[[3]](#endnote-5)
6. The theory of 30 x 30 is that permanently locking up the earth to the scale of 30 percent on the time frame of less than 10 years by 2030 is necessary to barely avoid the immediate environmental crisis.[[4]](#endnote-6)
7. In 2019 the Center for American Progress published a report supporting 30 x 30 titled “How Much Nature Should America Keep.” The overview provided with the press announcement of the report said, “A good answer to this question starts with a commitment to protecting 30 percent of U.S. lands and oceans by 2030.”[[5]](#endnote-7) The Center’s webpage announcing the publication of the report quotes ecologist Edward O. Wilson, author the book *Half-Earth: Our Planet's Fight for Life*, as saying the Half Earth prescription is “the only way to save upward of 90 percent of the rest of life.”[[6]](#endnote-8)
8. Following publication of that report, measures were introduced in the United States Congress calling for 30 x 30. In the Senate, one of the co-sponsors was then-Senator Kamala Harris. In the House of Representatives, one of the co-sponsors was then-Representative Debra Haaland. President Joseph R. Biden selected Senator Harris as his running mate for Vice President and President of the Senate, and he selected Representative Haaland as Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior, a key department for 30 x 30.
9. On January 27, 2021, President Biden signed Executive Order 14008 titled “Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad” which, among other things, adopts 30 x 30.[[7]](#endnote-9)
10. The Executive Order directed the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality, and the heads of other relevant agencies to submit a report within 90 days of the order recommending steps that the United States should take to achieve the goal of “conserving” at least 30 percent of U. S. lands and waters by 2030.[[8]](#endnote-10)
11. The Executive Order is silent about what “conservation” means.
12. The Executive Order is silent about where the Administration plans to get the 30 percent of American land to lock up.
13. The report submitted in obedience to the Executive Order does not answer either of those questions, and Administration officials now say it is too difficult to define “conservation,”[[9]](#endnote-11) but they plan to do it, whatever it is.
14. The Administration has not answered questions from state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, farmers, ranchers, forest landowners, fishermen, and other stakeholders. For some examples,
15. They have not provided a scientific basis for a claim that unless we permanently lock up 30 percent of America in 8 years, more than one million species will become extinct.
16. They have not provided an explanation of why, if the land that would be lost to development by 2030 would be 11 million acres, we must dictate the permanent lockup of 681 million more acres beyond the 274 million acres already deemed permanently protected. The gap between the 11 million acre loss and the 681 million acre lockup is well beyond fuzzy math.
17. They have not provided a scientific explanation of how locking up 30 percent of American’s land in 8 years will cure the immediate climate crisis.
18. They have not answered questions 15 Governors asked President Biden in their letter to him in April 2021. The letter noted that very little information is being shared with states.[[10]](#endnote-12)
19. In response to a letter dated March 16, 2021 from 62 members of the U. S. House and Senate requesting that the White House provide a briefing to Congress, the White House staff on April 14, 2021 provided a ten-minute presentation and a round of questions, during which they said that what the President means by “conservation” of land in his Executive Order is too difficult to define.
20. The so-called “science” that has been offered to justify 30-percent lockup of America as an interim goal toward a 50-percent lockup is not standard science based on such procedures as hypothesis testing, empirical observation, and repeatable experimental results. It is “models” that foreordain the conclusions by presupposing the assumptions fed into them. Most of the citations to supposed “science” are to press releases and opinion papers by environmentalist groups. The few references to actual scientific papers do not prove the core claim of 30 x 30 that human use of land threatens millions of species or that locking up 30 percent of America in 8 years will cure the climate crisis.
21. The Administration has promised environmentalists that they will use “every tool in the toolbox” to lock up 30 percent of America’s land including not only removing federal lands from human use, but new measures in conservation programs, new federal land acquisitions, and an array of other tools.
22. The Executive Order cites no constitutional, statutory, or other lawful authority for the President to dictate 30 x 30.
23. The Administration has provided no answers to questions about the lawfulness of the President’s dictate.
24. A groundswell of grassroots local opposition to 30 x 30 has arisen beginning in the center of the country and spreading outward.
25. Already as early as April 8, 2021, the Nebraska and Kansas State Attorneys General co-signed a letter to the Secretary of the Interior putting the Administration on notice that they are prepared to defend their states’ and landowners’ property rights against 30 x 30.
26. Already as early as April 21, 2021, 15 Governors had signed a joint letter to the President that Section 216 of the Executive order “infringes on the sovereignty of states and rights of the citizens.”[[11]](#endnote-13)

22. On May 12, 2022, 21 Senators signed a joint letter to Chairman Mallory of the Council on Environmental Quality to Prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Study for the 30x30 Program.

23. U. S. Senators from the following states have announced their opposition to 30 x 30: Montana, Kansas, North Dakota, Wyoming, Nebraska, Tennessee, Georgia, Idaho, Utah, West Virginia, Louisiana, South Dakota and Alaska.

24. U. S. Representatives from the following states have announced their opposition to 30 x 30: Montana, Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, Arizona, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, Virginia, and Alaska.

25. On February 16, 2021, the County Commissioners of Garfield County, Colorado became the first county to pass a resolution opposing 30 x 30.

26. Since that first county resolution, more counties, soil conservation districts, water conservation districts, and regional governmental associations have adopted resolutions opposing 30 x 30. One hundred and fifty eight county resolutions have been adopted and more are in the resolution-making process.

27. In response to widespread and growing opposition to 30 x 30 across the country, the Administration has rebranded and begun re-marketing it as the “America the Beautiful Initiative.” This is an appeal for political support in urban areas from people who have no skin in the game. They own none of the land that the Presidential dictate would permanently lock up.

28. In the rebranding, America the Beautiful claims:

A. 30 x 30 is a local initiative.

B. Permanently locking up land or water is voluntary.

29. 30 x 30 is not a local initiative. It originated as an interim goal of the global environmentalist Half Earth proposal. The current administration unilaterally repealed a former provision that local governments could veto major federal land acquisitions in their jurisdictions. This repeal removed local government control of permanently locking up land and water.[[12]](#endnote-14)

30. Viewing 30 x 30 in the full context of the Administration’s other policies, it becomes clear that just as the meaning of words like “conservation” is kept mushy, the meaning of “voluntary” comes into question. For example, the Administration’s policy of eliminating stepped-up basis for tax purposes on the event of death would force farmers, ranchers, and others to sell parts or all of their land to pay hugely increased taxes. Selling the farm to be permanently locked up because of a tax gun-to-the-head is not voluntary. That is a land grab.

31. 30 x 30 is contrary to the rights, interests, history, heritage, way of life, children, and grandchildren of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ citizens.

32. Another feature of the rebranding is that instead of submitting 30 x 30 to Congress in a single bill identified as such, the Administration will follow a different tactic of implementing “death by a thousand small cuts.” It will endorse apparently scattered and separate bills, issue executive orders, issue secretarial orders, shift enforcement approaches on things like conservation contracts, and many other separately small tactics, like an army in a thousand uniforms marching under a thousand flags. This is done so that no piece is recognized as or called 30 x 30, and therefore individual pieces are not opposed based on the unpopularity of 30 x 30.

33. Regarding habitat and welfare of species, the better managed land in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is privately owned land, and the land most poorly managed is under management by federal agencies and environmentalist elites. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ private landowners have provided the best habitat while producing the necessary food, fiber, minerals, and energy to support life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

34. 30 x 30 is an accusation that the landowners of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are unable or unwilling to care properly for the land, which we find to be simply not true.

Now, THEREFORE BE IT BE HEREBY RESOLVED by the state of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ this \_\_\_day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 2023, that:

1. **Opposition to 30 x 30.** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ opposes the 30 x 30 program, every other similar program by any name, all separate parts or pieces of such programs, and Executive Order 14008.

2. **Private Property Rights.** We support continued private ownership of land in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the private use of land in support of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” in accordance with the principles of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, the Enabling Act,[[13]](#endnote-15) and the Constitution of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

1. See e.g., Edward O. Wilson, *Half-Earth: Our Planet's Fight for Life* (New York: Liveright Publising Corporation, 2016), ISBN 978-1-63149-082-8 paperback. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
2. “Scientists for a Half-Earth Future,” Half-Earth Project, https://www.half-earthproject.org/scientists/ (accessed June 4, 2021). [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
3. “Thirty by Thirty--an interim goal toward protecting Half of Nature,”*Words of the Wild*, Newsletter of the Sierra Club’s California/Nevada Wilderness Committee, Vol. XXII, No. 3, December 2019, https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/www.sierraclub.org/files/WOW-December-2019.pdf (accessed June 3, 2021). [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
4. "How Much Nature Should America Keep?," Center for American Progress, August 6, 2019, https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/green/reports/2019/08/06/473242/much-nature-america-keep/ (accessed 6-3-2021). [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
5. “How Much Nature Should America Keep?”, https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/green/reports/2019/  
   08/06/473242/much-nature-america-keep/ (accessed June 3, 2021). [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
6. "How Much Nature Should America Keep?," Center for American Progress, August 6, 2019, https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/green/reports/2019/08/06/473242/much-nature-america-keep/ (accessed 6-3-2021)(citing Edward O. Wilson, “The Global Solution to Extinction,” *The New York Times*, March 12, 2016, available at https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/13/opinion/sunday/the-global-solution-to-extinction.html). [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
7. 86 Fed. Reg. 7,619 (Vol. 86, No. 19, Monday, February 1, 2021). [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
8. § 216(a). [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
9. White House staff response to letter dated March 16, 2021 by 62 members of the U. S. House and Senate asking for a briefing. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
10. “Fifteen State Governors Respond to President Biden's Aggressive 30 by 30 Plan,” Protect the Harvest, provides full text and a PDF file of the letter, https://protecttheharvest.com/news/open-letter-to-president-biden-about-30-by-30/ (accessed June 3, 2021). [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
11. “Fifteen State Governors Respond to President Biden's Aggressive 30 by 30 Plan,” Protect the Harvest, provides full text and a PDF file of the letter, https://protecttheharvest.com/news/open-letter-to-president-biden-about-30-by-30/ (accessed June 3, 2021). [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
12. Rescission of Department of Interior Secretarial Order 3388. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
13. The Enabling Act by which Congress enabled Montana to be a state in the Union requires that Montana’s “constitution . . . not be repugnant to the Constitution of the United States and the principles of the Declaration of Independence.”Act of February 22, 1889, Ch. 180, 25 Statutes at Large 676, Section 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)