**A RESOLUTION OF THE BERNALILLO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF NM SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO PROTECT AT MINIMUM 30 PERCENT OF U.S. LANDS AND WATERS BY 2030**

**WHEREAS,** the United States is facing a conservation and climate crisis as human-created greenhouse gas emissions lead to a declining natural world; and

**WHEREAS**, [science shows us that worldwide biodiversity is deteriorating at a faster rate than at any time in human history](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/article/partner-content-nature-needs-us-to-act-now); and

**WHEREAS,** [from 2001 to 2017, more than 24 million acres of land were lost to human development in the lower 48 United States](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/green/reports/2019/08/06/473242/much-nature-america-keep/), which equals the loss of one football field-sized patch of land every 30 seconds; and

**WHEREAS**, scientists caution that the loss of biodiversity, the increasing number of extreme weather events, and human encroachment upon wildlife habitat may [increase the risk of the transmission of infectious diseases such as COVID-19 and SARS](https://www.who.int/globalchange/climate/en/chapter6.pdf).

**WHEREAS,** [scientists](https://www.ipbes.net/news/Media-Release-Global-Assessment) warn [we must conserve and restore at least 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030 if we hope to preserve biodiversity and ecosystems as well as mitigate the impacts of climate change](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2019/05/nature-decline-unprecedented-report/); and

**WHEREAS,** on January 27, 2021, President Joe Biden signed Executive Order 14008, *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad,* challenging our country to conserve at least 30 percent of our lands and waters by the year 2030; and

**WHEREAS,** work towards 30x30 must honor the sovereignty of Tribal nations and be done in relationship with Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities, elders, and youth in a way that respects the languages in which they express their connection to land and place; and

**WHEREAS,** work towards 30x30 relies on efforts by federal, state, local, and Tribal governments; agricultural and forest landowners; fishermen, hunters, anglers, outdoor recreation users and many other stakeholders to identify and implement collaborative strategies that are guided by science and traditional knowledge; and

**WHEREAS,** wilderness, wildlife refuges, national conservation lands, monuments, and other protected areas drive our local economies and protected places provide access for hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, camping, and other outdoor recreation pursuits; and

**WHEREAS,** conserved private lands, including working forests, farms and ranches protect open spaces, preserve threatened wildlife, and help maintain our community’s way of life; and

**WHEREAS,** in the work towards protecting cultural and historic places; water systems such as acequias, rivers, and lakes; mountains and natural landscapes, and parks and open spaces; sacrifice zones are not being intentionally or unintentionally created; and

**WHEREAS,** a balance must be created between conservation efforts and supporting access to protected places that honor and respect traditional ceremonies and practices, and which allow for the education of current and future generations; and

**WHEREAS,** environmental racism has resulted in Black, Indigenous, and people of color being disproportionately exposed to toxic environments across generations and so the places where our residents live, work, pray, learn and play are also worth protecting along with the parks and open spaces that are found within our neighborhoods; and

**WHEREAS,** our natural places help to provide food security and access to medicine and other resources, clean air to breathe, and clean water to drink, while offering us a wide range of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health benefits; and

**WHEREAS**, over 100 [economists and scientists have found that the global economy would benefit from the creation of far more protected areas on land and at sea than we have today](https://www.campaignfornature.org/protecting-30-of-the-planet-for-nature-economic-analysis); and

**WHEREAS,** protected public lands are the backbone of New Mexico’s outdoor recreation industry, which generate [$1.9 billion in consumer spending and support 25,916](https://www.bea.gov/data/special-topics/outdoor-recreation) jobs in the state; and

**WHEREAS**, [77 percent​ of voters in](https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/stateoftherockies/conservationinthewest/2021/index.html) New Mexico support setting a national goal of conserving 30 percent of land and waters in the United States by 2030, and 58 percent of voters are concerned about the future of land, water, air, and wildlife.

**WHEREAS**, the [New Mexico 2022 wildfire season is already the largest in 30 years](https://www.cnn.com/2022/06/09/weather/historic-simultaneous-new-mexico-wildfires-weekend/index.html), with the Hermit’s Peak/Calf Canyon Fire being the largest fire in New Mexico history at over 318,000 acres burned, and the Black Fire being the second-largest fire in New Mexico history, at over 298,440 acres burned; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the US Geological Survey Gap Analysis Project, just [6% of the state](https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-green-squeeze/) is currently protected through state and federal designations and conservation easements; and

 **WHEREAS**, on August 25, 2021, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham signed [Executive Order](https://www.governor.state.nm.us/2021/08/25/gov-lujan-grisham-sets-2030-preservation-goal-protecting-n-m-land-watersheds-wildlife-and-heritage/) 2021-052 to conserve at least 30 percent of all lands in New Mexico by 2030, complementing nationwide efforts to protect the nation’s lands and waters while honoring New Mexico’s traditional land uses and promoting biodiversity, encouraging recreation opportunities and protecting watersheds.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the Bernalillo County Commission hereby:

1. Support the 30x30 initiative and science-based coupled with traditional knowledge, locally-led efforts to protect and restore at least 30 percent of lands and waters by 2030;
2. Support goals laid out by President Biden’s Executive Order 14008 and Governor Lujan Grisham’s 2021-052 Executive Order;
3. Call upon Congress to advance its own initiatives as well as support and assist state and local efforts to achieve 30x30 goals

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that we call on the U.S. government, Congress, and state and local leaders to significantly increase the tools and resources available to achieve locally-driven conservation projects, and to facilitate collaboration and good-faith conversations among all people living in the state as we work together to address our biodiversity and climate crises.