

**RESOLUTION NO. 2021-12**

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S "30 X 30" LAND PRESERVATION GOAL**

WHEREAS, Jefferson County, Nebraska is a legal and political subdivision of the State of Nebraska for which the Board of County Commissioners ("Board") is authorized to act; and

WHEREAS, Jefferson County contains about 368,640 acres of land situated in Southeast Nebraska; and

WHEREAS, designating lands as wilderness does not assure its preservation. Left in an undisturbed or natural state, these lands are highly susceptible to wildfires, insect infestation and disease, invasive weeds and disease, all of which degrades the natural and human environment; and

WHEREAS, many of Jefferson County's businesses and its citizens are involved in or otherwise depend on industries that utilize lands and their resources, including crop production, livestock production, recreational industries, hunting and other outdoor recreation; and

WHEREAS, these industries are important components of the Nebraska economy, and are major contributors to the economic and social wellbeing of Jefferson County and its citizens; and

WHEREAS, on January 27, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., issued Executive Order 14008 entitled Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad (86 Fed. Reg. 7,619); and

WHEREAS, in Section 216 of Executive Order 14008, President Biden directed the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture and other senior officials, to develop a program to conserve at least 30 percent of the lands and waters in the United States by 2030, which is called the "30 x 30" program; and

WHEREAS, under the 30 x 30 program, some 680 million acres of our Nation's lands would be set aside and permanently preserved in its natural state, preventing the productive use of these lands and their resources; and

WHEREAS, there is no constitutional or statutory authority for the President, the Department of the Interior, the Department of Agriculture, or any other federal agency to set aside and permanently preserve 30 percent of all land and water in the United States, and no such authority is referenced in Executive Order 14008; and

WHEREAS, the 30 x 30 program, if implemented, is likely to cause significant harm to the economy of Jefferson County, and injure the County's businesses and its citizens by depriving them of access to these lands and preventing the productive use of these lands' resources; and

WHEREAS, the withdrawal of some 680 million acres of federal lands from multiple use and placement of such lands in permanent conservation status will cause dramatic and irreversible harm to the economies of many states, including Nebraska, and in particular rural counties such as Jefferson County whose citizens depend on access to lands for their livelihoods; and

WHEREAS, the 30 x 30 program, if implemented, will conflict with the plans, policies

and programs of the Jefferson County comprehensive plan as expressed in the Jefferson County planning and zoning regulation; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 14008 at 216(a) directs the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with other relevant federal agencies to "submit a report to the Task Force within 90 days of the date of this order recommending steps that the United States should take, working with State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments, agricultural and forest landowners, fishermen, and other key stakeholders, to achieve the goal of conserving at least 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Jefferson County, Nebraska, as follows:

1. The Board opposes the 30 x 30 program, including its objective of permanently preserving 30 percent of the Nation's lands in its natural state by 2030, or any similar program that will set aside and prevent the productive use of millions of acres of our lands.
2. The Board further opposes the designation of any lands in Jefferson County as wilderness, wilderness study areas, wildlife preserves, open space, or other conservation land, thereby restricting public access to such lands and preventing the development and productive use of the resources on or within such lands.
3. The Board supports the continued management of all lands under principles of multiple use and sustained yield, recognizing the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, energy, timber, food, and fiber, and in careful coordination with Jefferson County to ensure consistency with County land use plans and land management policies, as required by law.
4. The Board supports maintaining and enhancing public access to public lands and national forests and opposes road closures, road decommissioning, moratoria on road construction, and other limitations on public access for the purpose of fulfilling the 30 x 30 program's objectives.
5. The Board recognizes and supports the State of Nebraska water rights system, and other state laws and programs governing water rights and water use, and opposes any federal designation of waters and watercourses within the County that would impair or restrict water diversions and uses authorized under Nebraska law.
6. The Board maintains that the designation of any lands and national forest lands as wilderness, wilderness study areas, wildlife preserves, open space, or other conservation land to fulfill the 30 x 30 program's objectives may lawfully occur, if at all, only through the planning process mandated by the Federal Land Management and Policy Act (for public lands) or the National Forest Management Act (for national forest lands) and in compliance with the Jefferson County planning and zoning regulation, including public notice and an opportunity to comment, analysis and disclosure of the impacts of such land acquisitions on the well-being, health, safety, welfare, economy, and culture of Jefferson County, its businesses, and its citizens, and careful coordination with Jefferson County to ensure consistency with County land use plans and land management policies.
7. The Board also maintains that any non-federal lands or other rights that are

acquired to fulfill the 30 x 30 program's objectives should be acquired only from willing landowners and for the payment full and fair market value for all rights and interests acquired, and not through regulatory compulsion, and only after analyzing and considering the impacts of such land acquisitions on the well-being, health, safety, welfare, economy, and culture of Jefferson County, its businesses, and its citizens.

8. The Board shall send a copy of this Resolution to the Department of Interior, Department of Agriculture, all other relevant Federal and State agencies, and Jefferson County's state and federal elected representatives.

Approved this day,

May 4, 2021

Board of Commissioners  
Jefferson County Nebraska

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Michael Dux

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Gale Pohlmann

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Mark Schoenrock

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Kristina Riggle  
Jefferson County Clerk