

STATE OF WYOMING,
COUNTY OF WASHAKIE,

SPECIAL DISTRICT WASHAKIE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

At a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors for Washakie County Conservation District, held at the Ten Sleep Town Hall on March 21, 2022, the following Supervisors were present:

Dan Rice Vance Lungren Susan Pennington Charley Orchard

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

WHEREAS, Washakie County Conservation District ("District") is a legal subdivision of the State of Wyoming for which the Board of Supervisors ("Board") is authorized to act; and

WHEREAS, Washakie County Conservation District is a special district which contains 1.4 million acres of land situated in Washakie County, Wyoming; and

WHEREAS, the Federal government owns 67% (959,424 acres) of the land within the District of which the Forest Service manages 4%, and of which the BLM manages 96% as illustrated in *Exhibit A*, attached hereto; and

WHEREAS, the State owns 7% (103,680 acres) of the land within the District, of which most is state trust land, with 448 acres managed by Wyoming Game & Fish Department; and

WHEREAS, the Local government owns .2% (2,368 acres) of the land within the District; and

WHEREAS, the Private land ownership represents only 25% (365,376 acres) of the land within the District; and

WHEREAS, the Wyoming Department of Revenue information on acres taxed as agricultural land indicates that 96% (351,906 acres) of the Private land in the District is in agricultural use, of which 87% (305,176 acres) of this is classified as rangeland, less than 1% (2,931 acres) is classified as dry cropland, and 12% (43,799 acres) is classified as irrigated cropland; and

WHEREAS, 7% of Federal lands are designated as restricted, and 93% of Federal lands are designated for general use; and

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

WHEREAS, because of the predominance of federal land in the District, the well-being, health, safety, welfare, economic condition, and culture of the District, its businesses, and its citizens depend on the way these lands and their resources are used and access to these lands; and

WHEREAS, many of the businesses and its citizens within the District, are involved in or otherwise depend on industries that utilize federal lands and their resources, including the forest products industry, livestock grazing, oil and gas exploration and production, mining and mineral development, recreational industries, hunting and other outdoor recreation; and

WHEREAS, these industries are important components of the Wyoming state economy, and are major contributors to the economic and social wellbeing of Washakie County, the District, and its citizens; and

WHEREAS, governments are instituted among people, deriving their powers from the consent of the governed to secure their inherent and inalienable rights, and for the protection of their property; and

WHEREAS, private property rights are guaranteed full protection under the Constitution of Wyoming, as well as, the Constitution of the United States, which prohibit the erosion of these rights for a public purpose; and

WHEREAS, on January 27, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., issued Executive Order 14008 entitled Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Aboard (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 "30x30" program; and

WHEREAS, in this Executive Order, there has been no clear definition of the terms preserve or conserve; and

WHEREAS, under the "30x30" 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 goal of conserving at least 30 percent of the land and water in the United States is a public purpose, not voted on or consented to by the people, Congress, or the Wyoming Legislature; and

WHEREAS, the “30x30” program seeks to replace the decision-making of independent Landowners who have been caring for these lands for generations with federal mandates and restrictions; and

WHEREAS, the Biden Administration has stated they will be using all the tools in existing law to reach their 30 percent target by 2030, including conservation easements in perpetuity, federal conservation programs, National Heritage Areas, Wildlife Corridors, Endangered Species listings and critical habitat designations, and all other similar programs; and

WHEREAS, placing private lands into permanent conservation status will cause dramatic and irreversible harm to the economy of Wyoming, and counties, such as Washakie County, the District, whose citizens depend on private lands for their security and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, lands placed under permanent conservation easements reduce the value of that parcel of land while increasing the tax burden on other private landowners and industries to make up the property valuation difference; and

WHEREAS, federal conservation programs artificially drive up the cost of, and directly compete with, the working landowners who depend on the ability to lease or purchase those lands for the production of the food, fiber, energy and minerals our nation requires; and

WHEREAS, the “30x30” program, if implemented, is likely to cause significant harm to the economy within the District, and of Washakie County, and injure the County’s businesses and its citizens by depriving them of access to public lands and national forest system lands and preventing the productive use of these lands’ resources; and

WHEREAS, the withdrawal of approximately 700 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 western states, including Wyoming, and in particular rural counties such as Washakie County whose citizens depend on access to federal lands for their livelihoods; and

WHEREAS, the “30x30” program, if implemented, will conflict with the plans, policies and programs of the District as expressed in the Washakie County Conservation District Long Range Natural Resource Plan, adopted December 20, 2021 which obligates the federal government to coordinate its policy development with the District as also required by the Federal Land Management and Policy Act (FLPMA) and the National Forest Management Act (NFMA); and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Washakie County Conservation District, in Washakie County, Wyoming, as follows:

1. The Board opposes the “30x30” 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 public lands and national forests in Washakie County Conservation District 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 the public lands and the national forests 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 Washakie County Conservation District to ensure consistency with local and State 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 "30x30" program's objectives.

5. The Board recognizes and supports the State of Wyoming's water rights system, including the doctrine of prior appropriation and other state laws and programs governing water rights and water use, and opposes any federal designation of waters and watercourses within the District that would impair or restrict water diversions and uses authorized under Wyoming law.

6. The Board supports reasonable national, regional, and global greenhouse gas emissions policies and goals that are comprehensive, practical, cost-effective, and do not unnecessarily single out specific industries or activities, but opposes using any public purpose, including global climate change, to set aside large tracts of land as preserves or open space to fulfill the "30x30" program's objectives.

7. The Board maintains that the designation of public lands and national forest lands as wilderness, wilderness study areas, wildlife preserves, open space, or other conservation land to fulfill the "30x30" 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), 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 the District, Washakie County, its businesses, and its citizens, and careful coordination with Washakie County Conservation District to ensure consistency with Conservation District land use plans and land management policies.


8. The Board also maintains that any non-federal lands or other rights that are acquired to fulfill the "30x30" 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 the District, Washakie County, its businesses, and its citizens.

9. The Board shall send a copy of this Resolution to the U.S. Departments of Interior and Agriculture, the Wyoming Department of Agriculture, Wyoming Attorney General, Governor

Mark Gordan, National Association of Conservation Districts and Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts and all other relevant Federal, State and Local agencies.

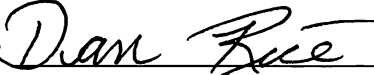
DATED this 22nd day of March, 2022.

ATTEST:



Amanda O'Keefe
Director of the Board

WASHAKIE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF
WASHAKIE COUNTY, STATE OF WYOMING

By  _____ [Name], Chairman

Upon motion duly made and seconded the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the following vote:

Supervisors:

[List Supervisors and vote]

Dan Rice, Yea
Susan Pennington, Yea
Vance Lungren, Yea
Charley Orchard, Yea