

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
COUNTY OF MONTEZUMA
STATE OF COLORADO**

At a regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of Montezuma County, Colorado, duly convened and held the 18th day of May, 2021, with the following persons in attendance:

Commissioners Present: Jim Candelaria, Kent Lindsay, Joel Stevenson
Commissioners Absent:
County Administrator: Shak Powers
County Attorney: John Baxter
Clerk and Recorder: Kim Percell

the following proceedings, among others, were taken:

¹³
**Resolution # -2021
Resolution Opposing
The Federal Government's "30 X 30" Land Preservation Goal**

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

WHEREAS, Montezuma County containing about [number] acres of land situated in the southwest corner of Colorado; and

WHEREAS, the federal government owns 72% of the land within the County, and the National Park Service, United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Bureau of Indian Affairs are responsible for managing over 948,825 acres of these federal lands; and

WHEREAS, approximately 23,109 acres (nearly 7 %) of privately owned land in Montezuma County are also already protected with perpetual conservation easements; and

WHEREAS, The National Park Service, the United States Fores Service, Burea of Land Managment, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Bureaue of Reclamation, Burea of Indian Affairs make up over 72% of Montezuma County, and already are in proected status; 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 Montezuma County, the well- being, health, safety, welfare, economic condition, and culture of the County, its businesses, and its citizens depend on the manner in which these lands and their resources are used and access to these lands; and

WHEREAS, many of Montezuma County's businesses and its citizens 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 Colorado economy, and are major contributors to the economic and social wellbeing of Montezuma 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 Montezuma 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 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 western states, including Colorado, and in particular rural counties such as Montezuma County whose citizens depend on access to federal lands for their livelihoods; and

WHEREAS, the 30 x 30 program, if implemented, will conflict with the plans, policies and programs of Montezuma County as expressed in the Montezuma County Comprehensive Land Use Plan, adopted January 6, 1997, which obligates the federal government to coordinate its policy development with Montezuma County as also required by the Federal Land Management and Policy Act (FLPMA) and the National Forest Management Act (NFMA); and

WHEREAS, the 30 x 30 program, cannot reach its stated goal of 30% of the lands and waters of the United States and its territories without acquiring or controlling additional private lands thereby expanding the federal land base.

WHEREAS, the United States Government in FY2018, the most recent year for which estimates are available, the four agencies had combined deferred maintenance estimated at \$19.38 billion. This figure includes \$11.92 billion (62%) in deferred maintenance for NPS, \$5.20 billion (27%) for FS, \$1.30 billion (7%) for FWS, and \$0.96 billion (5%) for BLM; and

WHEREAS, the current deferred maintenance numbers illustrates that the United States Government cannot properly maintain the lands it already manages and increasing the federal land base will further add to the maintenance backlog, and

WHEREAS, conservation easements are one tool proponents have stated they will use to reach the 30 X 30 goal; and

WHEREAS, proliferation of conservation easements will result in less land available for residential uses, less land available for residential uses will drive the cost up on remaining lands thereby increasing the rate of gentrification in rural areas; and

WHEREAS, Millions of people across the country, especially those living in communities of color and low-income neighborhoods, face barriers to attainable housing, higher land cost will disproportionately affect those communities; and

WHEREAS, the 30 X 30 initiative has revealed no strategic plan for property acquisitions or conservation easements east of the Mississippi River, where there is a public lands deficit, it appears that reaching the 30 x 30 goal will disproportionately affect the western states.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Montezuma County, Colorado, 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 acquisition and designation of public lands and national forests in Montezuma County as National Parks, National Monuments, wilderness, wilderness study areas, wildlife preserves, open space, or other conservation land designations, 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 Montezuma 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 Colorado'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 County that would impair or restrict water diversions and uses authorized under Colorado 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 the use of global climate change as an excuse to set aside large tracts of land as preserves or open space to fulfill the 30 x 30 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 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), 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 Montezuma County, its businesses, and its citizens, and careful coordination with Montezuma County to ensure consistency with County 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 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 Montezuma County, its businesses, and its citizens.

9. The Board shall send a copy of this Resolution to the Department of Interior, Department of Agriculture and all other relevant Federal and State agencies; and

DATED this 14th day of September, 2021.

ATTEST:

Kim Percell Kim Percell
Clerk of the Board

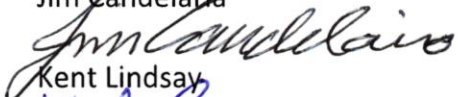
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MONTEZUMA COUNTY, STATE OF COLORADO

By: Jim Candelaria Jim Candelaria

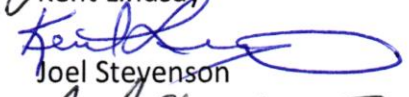
Upon motion duly made and seconded the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the following vote:

Commissioners:

Jim Candelaria



Kent Lindsay



Joel Steyenson

