

# *Las Animas County*



## *Board of County Commissioners*

Luis Lopez II  
Commissioner

Tony Hass  
Commissioner

Felix Lopez  
Commissioner

### **A Resolution of the Board of County Commissioners of Las Animas County, Colorado Opposing Presidential Executive Order 14008 30 x 30**

#### **Resolution 21-015**

- WHEREAS:** Las Animas County is a legal and political subdivision of the State of Colorado for which the Board of County Commissioners ("Board") is authorized to act;
- WHEREAS:** Las Animas County contains about 3,056,000 acres of land situated in Southern Colorado;
- WHEREAS:** the Federal Government owns approximately 16.6% of the land within the County, and the Bureau of Land Management, United State Forest Service, and Department of Defense are responsible for managing over 507,700 acres of these federal lands as illustrated in *Exhibit A*, attached hereto;
- WHEREAS:** conserving lands 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 environments;
- WHEREAS:** the wellbeing, health, safety, welfare, economic condition, and culture of the County, its businesses, and its citizens depend on private land ownership and the use of these lands;
- WHEREAS:** many of Las Animas County's businesses and citizens are involved in or otherwise depend on commerce that utilizes private lands and their resources, including crop production, livestock grazing, natural gas production, mining, and mineral development, royalty payments property owners receive from this production, outdoor activities including hiking, biking, hunting, fishing, boating, gardening and other outdoor recreation;
- WHEREAS:** this commerce is an important component of the Colorado economy, and is a major contributor to the economic and social wellbeing of Las Animas County and its citizens;
- 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);

- 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;
- WHEREAS:** under the 30 x 30 program, some 680 million acres of our Nation's lands will be set aside through conservation, preventing the productive use of these lands and their resources;
- WHEREAS:** the Federal Government can potentially acquire an additional 13.4% or 409,830 acres of privately held property in Las Animas County at a potential property tax loss of \$629,638 impacting the Trinidad-Primero-Aguilar-Hoehne-Branson and/or Kim School Districts, Stonewall-Spanish Peaks-Fishers Peak and/or Hoehne Fire Districts, the City of Trinidad and Towns of Aguilar-Branson-Cokedale-Kim and/or Starkville, Las Animas County and its Department of Human Services, Trinidad Ambulance District and other special Districts;
- WHEREAS:** there is no constitutional or statutory authority afforded to any President, the Department of the Interior, the Department of Agriculture, or any other federal agency to set aside and permanently conserve 30 percent of all land and water in the United States, and no such authority is referenced in Executive Order 14008;
- WHEREAS:** placing private lands into permanent conservation status will cause a dramatic and irreversible harm to the economies of many states, including Colorado, and in particular rural counties such as Las Animas County whose citizens depend on private lands for their livelihoods and recreation; 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 Las Animas County, Colorado, that:**

1. The Board opposes the 30 x 30 program, including its objective of permanently conserving 30 percent of the Nation's lands and waters 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 confiscated private lands in Las Animas County as Federal wilderness, Federal wilderness study areas, Federal wildlife preserves, Federal open space, or other Federally titled lands, thereby restricting public access to such lands and preventing the development and productive use of the resources on or within such lands; and
3. The Board supports the continued private ownership of land in the County, recognizing the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, energy, timber, food, fiber, and recreation;

4. The Board recognizes and supports the State of Colorado's and private water rights system, including the State of Colorado's Statutes and regulations and programs governing water rights and water use, and opposes any Federal designation of waters and watercourses within the State and County;
5. The Board supports reasonable national, regional, and global greenhouse gas emissions policies and goals that are comprehensive, practical, cost-effective, non-draconian, and do not unnecessarily single out specific industries or activities, but opposes the use of global climate change as a reason to set aside large tracts of land as conservation lands to fulfill the 30 x 30 program's objectives;
6. The Board also maintains that any lands or other rights that are acquired to fulfill the 30 x30 program's objectives be acquired only from willing landowners and for the payment of full and fair market value for all rights and interests acquired, and not through eminent domain or any other 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 Las Animas County, its businesses, and its citizens; and
7. The Board shall send a copy of this Resolution to the Department of Interior and all other relevant Federal and State agencies.

Upon motion made and seconded and an affirmative vote, this Resolution was adopted this 6<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2021.

**By the Order of the Board of County Commissioners of Las Animas County, Colorado**

  
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Luis Lopez II, Commissioner  
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Tony C. Hass, Commissioner  
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Felix M. Lopez, Commissioner

**ATTEST:**



Patricia M. Vigil, Las Animas County Clerk and Recorder

Exhibit A

## Federal Land within Las Animas County

