

AGENDA ITEM: _____

Resolution R-21-023 A Resolution
Opposing the Federal Government's 30
x 30 Land Preservation Goal

MEETING DATE: May 20, 2021

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT

ACTION REQUESTED BY: William B Williams, County Manager

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve Resolution

ITEM SUMMARY:

This Resolution sets forth Chaves County's opposition to the Federal Government's 30 x 30 Land Preservation Goal. Chaves County already has 34% of the land within the County under Federal control. This plan would have a negative affect on the economy of the State of New Mexico and Chaves County.

Staff recommends approval.

SUPPORT DOCUMENTS: Resolution R-21-023

SUMMARY BY: William B Williams

TITLE: County Manager



RESOLUTION R-21-023
A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S 30 x 30 LAND
PRESERVATION GOAL

WHEREAS, Chaves County is a political subdivision of the State of New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, Chaves County contains approximately 3,881,600 acres of land, the fourth largest county in the State of New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the federal government owns 34% of the land within the County, and the Bureau of Land Management and other federal agencies are responsible for managing over 1,303,439 acres of lands; and

WHEREAS, State Trust Lands make up approximately 26% or an additional 1,019,653 acres within Chaves County; 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 large quantities of government owned lands in Chaves 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 as well as the public right of access to these lands; and

WHEREAS, many of Chaves County's businesses and its citizens are involved in or otherwise depend on industries that utilize Federal lands and their resources, including the oil and gas industry, livestock grazing, mining and mineral development, recreational industries, hunting and other outdoor recreation; and

WHEREAS, these industries are important components of the New Mexico economy, and are major contributors to the economic and social wellbeing of Chaves 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 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 "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, creating additional federal lands by placing private lands into permanent conservation status will cause dramatic and irreversible harm to the economies of many states, including New Mexico, and in particular rural counties such as Chaves County whose citizens depend on private lands for their livelihoods; and

WHEREAS, the 30 x 30 program, if implemented, will conflict with the plans, policies and programs of Chaves County as specified in Chaves County's Comprehensive Plan; 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 Chaves County, New Mexico, 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 lands whether private lands or government lands, in Chaves 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 private ownership of land in the County, recognizing the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, energy, timber, food, and fiber.
4. The Board recognizes and supports the State of New Mexico's 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 New Mexico law.
5. 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.
6. The Board also maintains that any 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 Chaves County, its businesses, and its citizens.

LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the Board shall send a copy of this Resolution to the Department of Interior and all other relevant Federal and State agencies.

DONE THIS 20th day of May 2021, at Roswell, Chaves County, New Mexico.

BOARD OF CHAVES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

William E. Cavin, Chairman

Jeff Bilberry, Vice-Chairman

ATTEST:

Dara Dana, Member

T. Calder Ezzell Jr, Member

Cindy Fuller
County Clerk

Richard Taylor, Member