

Governor signs '30 x 30'

Written by Staff Reports

Friday, 03 September 2021 04:46



Executive order calls for state to conserve at least 30 percent of land by 2030

Complementing a nationwide effort to protect U. S. land and water, Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham signed an order Aug. 25 to support New Mexico's "30 x 30" framework, which would conserve at least 30 percent of all lands in the state by 2030.

The executive order directs the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, New Mexico Environment Department, Office of the State Engineer, Department of Agriculture, Indian Affairs Department and the director of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and Outdoor Recreation Division to use their existing authorities to support and implement programs that conserve, protect and enhance our lands and natural environments. This framework will leverage available funding and programs, allowing the state to move more quickly to protect and conserve New Mexico's unique landscapes.

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The executive order specifically:

Directs the agencies to use existing programs across all land types, leverage state and federal funding to the fullest extent, engage with federal land management agencies in planning, and coordinate with stakeholders.

The agencies will meet quarterly to assess the state's progress toward the goals set by the executive order and provide an annual report to the governor on progress.

The agencies are instructed to use the best available science, take a broad view of conservation including contributions from working lands and demonstrate a commitment to equity, including respect for and consideration of tribal sovereignty and self-determination.

"Today we promote a broad view of conservation that reflects the importance of traditional resource protection, access for outdoor recreation, contributions of working lands, and tribal sovereignty and self-determination," Lujan Grisham said. "We have set the wheels in motion to conserve our state's incredible natural resources and ensure that New Mexico remains, forever, the Land of Enchantment."

New Mexico Wilderness Society State Director Michael Casaus offered his support for the framework with the following statement:

"Wildfires, drought, a declining wildlife population, and the threats posed by climate change are of great concern to the future of New Mexico and our livelihoods here. We thank Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham for taking action to ensure that we are developing locally-driven strategies that will create more opportunities for people to protect the nature closest to their communities, whether in downtown Albuquerque or in the middle of rural New Mexico.

New Mexico is in a position to be a national leader in 30x30 and to develop a plan for the future that sets bold and equitable goals that include Indigenous traditional knowledge as well as the conservation and restoration of state, private, federal, and Tribal lands in these efforts. Now we must get to work across the state to meet these goals and identify community-led opportunities

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to protect those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and pressures on our open spaces and public lands.”