

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-21

**A RESOLUTION OF THE KNOX COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OPPOSING
THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S "30 X 30" LAND PRESERVATION GOAL**

WHEREAS, the County of Knox is a legal and political subdivision of the State of Nebraska for which the Board of Supervisors ("Board") is authorized to act; and

WHEREAS, the County of Knox contains about 729,600 total acres of land situated in Northeast Nebraska; and

WHEREAS, the County of Knox contains about 11,243.66 acres of WRP land, 2,059.65 acres of State Park, 329 acres of Conservation Easement Acres, 26,905 acres of CRP, as well as 25,350.31 acres of tribal, state rec and take land; 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, the well-being, health, safety, welfare, economic condition, and culture of the County, its business and its citizens depend on private land ownership and the use of these resources; and

WHEREAS, many of Knox County's businesses and its citizens are involved in or otherwise depend on industries that utilize private lands and their resources, including livestock grazing, crop production, recreational industries, hunting and other outdoor recreation; and

WHEREAS, these industries are important components of the Nebraska economy, and are major contributors to the economic and social wellbeing of Knox 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 reference in Executive Order 14008; and

WHEREAS, placing private lands into permanent conservation status will cause dramatic and irreversible harm to the economies of many states, including Nebraska, and in particular rural counties, such as Knox County, whose citizens depend on private lands for their livelihoods; 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, fisherman and other key stakeholders, to achieve the goal of conserving at least 30 percent of our land and waters by 2030."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Knox County, Nebraska, 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 in Knox 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 Nebraska'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 Nebraska 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 spaces to fulfill that 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 of 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 Knox County, its businesses, and its citizens. The Board also maintains that any lands put under conservation easement will make payments to Knox County equal to what the property taxes would be if this land was still in private ownership and management, considering the highest land use.

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



ATTEST:

Joann M. Fischer
County Clerk

COUNTY OF KNOX

Kevin D Mackoprang
Supervisor

The foregoing Resolution was presented and after discussion, it was moved by *Supr. O'Connor* and seconded by *Supr. Bergmann* that said Resolution be adopted, and upon roll call vote, the County Board voted as follows:

Ayes all Districts (#1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6 + #7)

Nays none.

Motion carried.

The Chairman then declared said motion duly carried and said Resolution adopted this day of July, 2021.