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Local Elected Officials in the Mountain West Celebrate Biden’s “America the Beautiful” Initiative

Biden’s Vision Will Bring Together Diverse Stakeholders to Protect Our Lands and Waters and Invest in America’s Outdoors and Climate Future

Durango, COLORADO -- Moments ago, the Biden-Harris administration outlined a vision for how the United States can work collaboratively to conserve and restore the lands, waters, and wildlife that support and sustain the nation. The recommendations are contained in a [report released today](#), outlining a locally led and voluntary nationwide conservation goal to conserve 30 percent of U.S. lands and waters by 2030.

These efforts include participation and input from rural communities, Tribal Nations, private landowners, and many others on the frontlines of conserving, stewarding, restoring, and enjoying nature.

[Over 140 western local elected officials](#) asked the Biden administration to move forward with this initiative earlier this year and many city, town, and county councils or commissioners have passed resolutions supporting the 30x30 initiative. In celebration of this announcement, The Mountain Pact network of western local elected officials released the following statements:

Anna Peterson, Executive Director of [The Mountain Pact](#), explained, *“President Biden’s ambitious goal to expand conservation and protect even more of America’s lands and waters is a critical step to conserve nature and buffer the United States’ Western mountain communities from the worst impacts of climate change. We celebrate that this remarkable vision also works towards a more inclusive and equitable vision of nature conservation that better reflects our country’s values and expands access to the outdoors for all. By uniting local governments, private landowners, and Tribal stakeholders this plan will bring us all together towards a shared vision of a better America.”*

Pitkin County, Colorado County Commissioner Francie Jacober said, *“I feel like I’ve been holding my breath for something like this since the 1970s. I’m so happy with what the Biden administration is doing. Across the country, nature is in a state of collapse. We’re facing a mass extinction of plants and animals which impacts how clean our air is, how pure our water is, and how plentiful our food supplies are. If we don’t act quickly, the problem will only get worse. Every 30 seconds, a [football field worth](#) of America’s natural areas disappears to roads, houses, pipelines, and other development. That’s why President Biden’s plan is so critical. It’s really gutsy and as a county commissioner, I’m happy to officially endorse 30x30.”*

Clark County, Nevada Commissioner Justin Jones said, *“For too long, the costs and impacts of nature loss have fallen disproportionately on low-income communities and communities of color in the U.S. 74 percent of communities of color and 70 percent of low-income communities in the contiguous United States live in [nature-deprived areas](#). This critically needed proposal focuses on improving access to outdoor spaces close-to-home and restoring degraded lands, coastlines, and waters across this country.”*

Summit County, Utah Council Chair Glenn Wright said, *“Farmers, anglers, ranchers, and private landowners are some of America’s most effective conservationists. We are grateful President Biden’s ambitious plan supports private landowners committed to protecting their property by providing the tools, financial resources, and incentives for landowners and the private sector to restore degraded natural areas and manage their resources sustainably. Locally-led conservation efforts*

can provide a sustainable economic base for rural communities while preserving important traditions and safeguarding nature.”

City of Taos, New Mexico Council Member Darien Fernandez said, *With this ambitious plan, President Biden is overseeing a much-needed course correction after four years of failed leadership by the previous administration, who rolled back common-sense safeguards protecting the environment and undermined conserved areas across the nation. For more than a century, the United States has risen to meet major environmental challenges facing our nation. With this plan, we can and will again.”*

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