



April 7, 2021

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
US Department of Agriculture

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of forestry and wildlife professionals from across the country, the undersigned professional organizations write to express our commitment to help President Biden achieve the goal of conserving at least 30 percent of the nation's lands and waters by 2030 (30x30), as described in the Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad. We applaud this ambitious goal and the attention it brings to the power of nature-based climate solutions. Natural resource professionals are key allies in tackling climate change and improving the overall health and resilience of ecosystems across public and private lands. Accordingly, we urge you to consider the ongoing role our members will play in the ultimate success of the 30x30 initiative.

Collectively, our members are responsible for the stewardship of our nation's public and private lands and the fish and wildlife populations and habitats that are integral to these ecosystems. Working with and through private landowners, federal and state agencies, tribes, nonprofits, and local communities, our members provide a direct connection to science-based solutions to complex natural resource challenges across the landscape.

Through science-based, professional management, we can restore and enhance our nation's lands and waters to better meet changing environmental, social, and economic needs. Keeping forests as forests and ensuring that they maintain quality habitat for fish and wildlife requires a holistic, all-lands approach to ecosystem health and resilience. One-size-fits-all approaches that do not reflect the unique needs and challenges across different landscapes and ownerships will not provide long-term solutions.

Measuring progress will be key to reaching the goals of the initiative and understanding what success look like on the ground. To effectively achieve the 30x30 goals, we urge you to view conservation as a continuum of preserved lands to managed and working lands. This concept gives value to all lands contributing to the sustainability of forests for habitat and local economies.

Forestry and wildlife professionals should continue to play a key role in decisions about the future of our nation's forests and waters. As you continue to finetune this initiative, we encourage you to support policies that foster the ability of these scientists and practitioners to create and implement management plans and activities that can adapt to changing conditions and needs.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide input on the 30x30 initiative. We look forward to working together on this and other Biden Administration efforts that embrace the invaluable expertise of forestry and wildlife professionals. Please consider our organizations as resources and allies moving forward.

Sincerely,

Association of Consulting Foresters

Society of American Foresters

The Wildlife Society