

Originating Committee: Public/Private Lands

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Intended Recipients: Missouri Congressional Delegation

Support the America the Beautiful Initiative

WHEREAS, the mission of the Conservation Federation of Missouri is to ensure conservation of Missouri's wildlife and natural resources, and preservation of Missouri's rich outdoor heritage through advocacy, education, and partnerships; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, an article in the journal Science reported a net loss of 2.9 billion, or 29% of North American birds since 1970; and

WHEREAS, in 2021 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed removing 23 species of plants and animals from protection of the Endangered Species Act because they had gone extinct; and

WHEREAS, biologists are recommending an interim goal of protecting 30% of the world's lands and waters by 2030 ("30x30 plan"); and

WHEREAS, roughly 190 nations meeting in Montreal, Canada, in December, 2022, approved the United Nations' Global Biodiversity Framework, an agreement to protect 30% of the earth's lands and oceans by 2030; and

WHEREAS, the Campaign for Nature commissioned a report conducted by a group of 113 independent economists and scientists who found that the benefits of the 30x30 plan outweigh the costs by at least 5-to-1, since the conservation sector drives economic growth; and

WHEREAS, scientists, including Peter Raven of the Missouri Botanical Garden, tell us that half of the earth's lands and waters need to be protected to avoid a catastrophic biodiversity collapse; and

WHEREAS, in 2021 President Biden issued a call to action, the America the Beautiful initiative, to address the biodiversity crisis; and

WHEREAS, in January 2021, President Biden signed Executive Order 14008, "[t]ackling the climate crisis at home and abroad", which charged the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, and the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality, to recommend how the United States can achieve the goal of conserving at least 30% of our lands and water by 2030; and

WHEREAS, the America the Beautiful initiative will increase access for outdoor recreation, and will benefit rural economies; and

WHEREAS, the America the Beautiful initiative will reward voluntary conservation efforts of anglers, ranchers, farmers, and forest owners; and

WHEREAS, Missourians support land conservation, from the 1936 initiative petition that created the Missouri Department of Conservation, and the 1976 “Design for Conservation” initiative that raised funds to acquire conservation lands, to the Parks, Soils, and Water sales tax that passed originally in 1984 and four times since then, most recently in 2016; and

WHEREAS, Missouri, with its Department of Conservation, is a leader in science-based conservation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Conservation Federation of Missouri assembled in Osage Beach, Missouri, this 25th day of February, 2023, urges the Missouri Congressional Delegation to support the America the Beautiful initiative.

Searchable Keywords: biodiversity, America, beautiful, 30x30, conservation, initiative, birds, USFWS, fish, forest, farm, protect, land, water, recreation, agriculture, commerce, interior, economic, growth.

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