

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-05

A Declaratory Resolution Opposing the Federal Government's "30X30" Land Preservation Goal

WHEREAS, Elk County is a legal and political subdivision of the State of Kansas for which the Board of County Commissioners ("Board") is authorized to act; and

WHEREAS, Elk County contains 416,000 acres of land situated in Flint Hills, Chatauqua Hills and Osage Cuestas Region;

WHEREAS, some privately owned land in Elk County is also already protected with perpetual conservation easements; 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 businesses, and its citizens depend on private land ownership and the use of these resources; and

WHEREAS, many of Elk County's businesses and its citizens are involved in or otherwise depend on industries that utilizes private lands and their resources, including livestock grazing, oil and gas exploration, wind energy, solar energy, and recreational industries, hunting and other outdoor recreation; and

WHEREAS, these industries are important components of the Kansas economy, and are major contributors to the economic and social wellbeing of Elk 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 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 "30X30" program; and

WHEREAS, under the 30X30 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 referenced 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 Kansas, and in particular rural counties such as Elk 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, fishermen, and other key stakeholders, to achieve the goal of conserving at least 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030.”

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DECLARED by the Board of County Commissioners of Elk County, Kanas, as follows:

1. The Board opposes the 30X30 program, including its objective of permanently preserving 30 percent of the Nation’s land 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 Elk 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 Kansas’ 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 Kansas law.

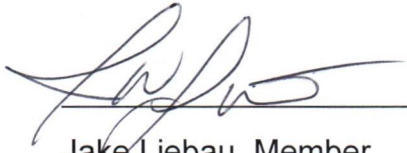
5. The Board opposes the use of global climate change as an excuse to set aside large tracts of land as preserves or open space to fulfill the 30X30 program’s objectives.

6. The Board also maintains that any lands or other rights that are acquired to fulfill the 30X30 program’s objectives should be acquired only from willing landowners and for the payment 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 Elk County, its businesses, and its citizens.


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

DATED this 28th day of March, 2022.

Board of County Commissioners, Elk County, Kansas



Jake Liebau, Member

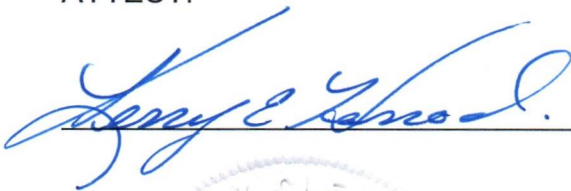


Doug Hendricks, Chairman



Shari Kaminska, Chairman

ATTEST:



County Clerk

