

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Advocates Encouraged by California's Pathways to 30x30 Draft Report

*Report charts ambitious path to protect California land and waters;
advocates hope to see implementation details and funding commitments addressed in the final
version*

As part of Gov. Newsom's Executive Order N-82-20, the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) has released the "Draft Pathways to 30x30 Report." The Executive Order calls on California to protect 30 percent of its land and waters by 2030 to counter catastrophic biodiversity loss and mitigate the impacts of climate change. The final Pathways Report will chart the course of action needed to meet the 30x30 goal.

As a statewide coalition to advance the goals of 30x30, which includes Tribes as well as conservation advocates and organizations, scientists, equity groups and land trusts, we strongly support the Governor's Executive Order and CNRA's effort to engage with stakeholders in drafting the report. We applaud the Draft Report for presenting an ambitious vision with a strong focus on biodiversity, climate, equity and outdoor access, while supporting Tribal knowledge and leadership. The Draft Report reflects the [ten priorities for a successful 30x30 effort](#) that our coalition has championed throughout CNRA's process, and we appreciate CNRA staff's due diligence.

The 30x30 initiative is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reverse the biodiversity crisis, invest in equity, build climate resilience, and enhance access to California's natural spaces. The opportunity for the public to inform it should reflect the magnitude of the opportunity at hand and the scale of the crisis 30x30 intends to address. We call on CNRA to extend the comment period to at least 60 days and hold public meetings to ensure the agency fulfills its stated commitment to a bottom-up approach that drives the 30x30 process. Local communities bring a deep understanding of our conservation needs and challenges, and they are the state's greatest resource and allies in ensuring the 30x30 goal is achieved.

As part of this public engagement process, we look forward to working with CNRA and agency staff to address some critical gaps that remain in the current draft. The Draft Report holds a lot of promise, but it will need more concrete implementation details; long-term funding commitments on a scale commensurate with 30x30 goals, including funding to ensure Tribes, government agencies, land trusts and community organizations have the capacity to move the work forward; a greater emphasis on protecting our state's imperiled freshwater ecosystems; and a more rigorous review and analysis of the regional land and seascapes being considered for conservation.

Our challenge is clear: we have just eight years to achieve the ambitious 30 percent goal. Climate change adds additional urgency, tightening our window of opportunity to protect our most treasured waters and landscapes while drought, wildfires, flooding, and other disasters threaten all of us, but especially Tribes, people of color and low-income communities who not only bear a disproportionate impact of climate change, but also face deep inequities when it comes to accessing the benefits of nature.

Our coalition stands committed to supporting the state's efforts to achieve 30x30. We are invested in ensuring the final Pathways to 30x30 Report due in February 2022 reflects the ambitious vision laid forth by CNRA.

Coalition members made the following comments:

“Meaningful and real community outreach means that everyone needs to be given the chance to give feedback on the Pathways 30x30 report. Keeping the holidays in mind, we ask that CNRA allow for an extended time of 60 or more days for the comment period so we can review and not be rushed.”

— Kimberly McCoy, Project Director, Fresno Building Healthy Communities

“Access to nature should not be the exclusive benefit of a privileged few. As climate change harms the health of people of color and immigrant families, already living among the most polluted parts of California, 30x30 must advance equity and create better access to nature for all. Whether creating open spaces in urban neighborhoods or bus routes to the nearest state beach, we must center working-class communities and communities of color as we implement 30x30, extending nature's benefits to all Californians.”

— Juan Altamirano, Associate Director of Policy, Audubon California

“30x30 should center on truly listening to Native Californians and respecting Tribal sovereignty. Tribal People's experience managing these landscapes dates back to the beginning of time, reflecting ecological knowledge, cultural practices, and spiritual connections to the land and water. Now is the time to replace harmful place names with Native ones, to protect and co-manage public lands such as the Six Rivers National Forest, and to support the return of key state lands and ecologically and culturally-rich private lands to the environmental stewardship of Tribes and tribal lands trusts, with sustained funding for staffing and on-the ground management.”

— Bill Tripp, Director of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy, Karuk Tribe

“The Sierra Nevada has been devastated by mega-wildfires over the last several years, and it's critical that 30x30 provide sustained funding to acquire, manage, and restore degraded lands. Now is the time to bring our precious forests, waters, and soils back to health with careful planning and foresight. We need to put nature first, which is what the 30x30 initiative inspires us to do: replanting species not for economic gain but for ecological integrity, connecting landscapes so wildlife can move, protecting critical drinking water sources like the Feather

River, employing the traditional ecological knowledge of Tribal communities, and rewilding lands damaged by 150 years of mining, timber harvest, road building, and development. It's time to be visionary, devoted, and hard-working for the future of our Range of Light."

— Darla De Ruiter, Executive Director, Friends of Plumas Wilderness

"California's trout and salmon are on the front lines in the battle against the warming climate. Increasingly frequent and more severe drought and wildfire associated with climate change are not only reducing fish habitat – they're diminishing water quality and supply for people, too. The 30x30 initiative provides a vital opportunity to address these challenges. Some essential actions are already teed up, such as removing four old dams on the Klamath River. And California, through the State Water Board, can better use its authority under the Clean Water Act to prevent pollution and diversion of sources of clean, cold water that Tribes, anglers and fish depend on. Water is life. Like trout to a mayfly hatch, we must rise to the challenge."

— Trevor Fagerkog, Chair, California Council of Trout Unlimited

"Outdoor Alliance and its member organizations are thrilled with California Natural Resource Agency leadership in advancing Governor Newsom's Executive Order of conserving 30 percent of California's lands and coastal waters by 2030. Protecting California public lands and waters is a win-win at a time when we need it. Elevating the role of natural and working lands in the fight against climate change, advancing conservation, and improving equitable outdoor recreation access will ensure that these important landscapes will be accessible for future generations."

— Katie Hawkins, California Program Manager, Outdoor Alliance

"We have to lean into the powerful solutions that nature provides and protect 30% of our land and water by 2030 if we are going to combat the climate crisis. As the 30x30 planning process moves forward, we urge the Newsom administration to make investments in places where Black, Latino, Indigenous and communities of color live so that there is more equitable access to nature in our state. We hope the final Pathways to 30x30 report will include specificity around these investments and also that the public will have adequate time to weigh in on this process."

— Mary Creasman, CEO, California Environmental Voters

"We need to make sure that the draft Pathways Report includes elements that address the needs of climate vulnerable communities, including farmworkers and residents of disadvantaged communities that have been disproportionately affected by climate change and the extractive industries responsible for this climate crisis. In the Central Valley, where we have been working for 21 years promoting environmental justice and health equity, we have seen that oftentimes the state does not prioritize the needs of residents currently impacted by the drought, pesticides, oil extraction, and air pollution. Full participation of these residents is key to ensure that their voices are heard and their needs considered, however, the current timeline to submit public comments is not conducive to the participation of climate vulnerable communities."

— Nayamin Martinez, Executive Director, Central California Environmental Justice Network

"As impacts from the converging climate and biodiversity crises increase, California must be honest about the source of both: the practices of the fossil fuel, mining, logging, and other

extractive and exploitative industries that continue to harm our lands, rivers, ecosystems, and communities - largely BIPOC and underserved communities. Although the draft 30x30 Pathways document is ambitious and aspirational in meeting the necessary goal of 30x30, the document makes no mention as to how the state plans to halt and discontinue the damage that this movement is responding to. We look forward to working with the state on addressing and rectifying this omission in the coming months.”

— Brandon Dawson, Director, Sierra Club California

“California leads the nation in efforts to protect 30 percent of our wildlands, coastal and inland waters, and open spaces. The draft report identifies key strategies needed to continue this essential conservation work—it's a good start. Moving forward, this bold effort must help species thrive, combat the effects of climate change, and increase access to nature for all. Tribal nations and marginalized communities have so often been left out of important conservation efforts such as this. For the final draft of this report to be successful, it must reflect specific actions, investments, timelines, and the insights of all Californians.”

– Helen O’Shea, Senior Policy Analyst, NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council)

Signed by:



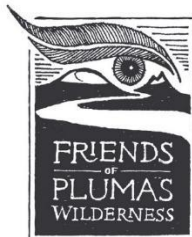
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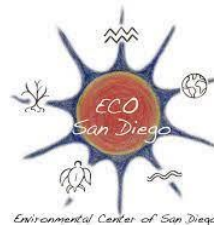
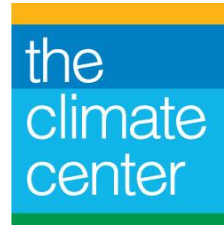
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