

To: Governor Brown  
Cc: Oregon Congressional Delegation  
Re: Oregon's Goal to Protect 30 Percent of Lands and 30 Percent of Waters by 2030  
Date: October 27th, 2021

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Dear Governor Brown,

Oregon is known for its wild forests, rivers, estuaries, mountains, and deserts that stretch across the state. These landscapes purify the air we breathe, filter the water we drink, and support the salmon and other wildlife that are intrinsic to our region's identity. They also provide the foundation of our booming outdoor recreation industry. But Oregon's communities and wildlife have faced unprecedented environmental challenges in recent months, including wildfires and this summer's extreme heatwaves. Given how essential our wildlands are to our state and how severe these climate impacts are becoming, the need to conserve the natural world for people and wildlife has become even more apparent.

We respectfully request that you take action to identify 30 percent of the state's land and 30 percent of Oregon's waters to prioritize for conservation by 2030. In addition, we ask that you identify actions at the state and federal level that can help Oregon reach this 30 by 30 target. These state objectives would align with President Biden's national 30 by 30 goal. Other states, including California, Nevada, Michigan, New York, South Carolina, Virginia, Maine, and Hawaii have taken legislative or administrative actions to identify lands and waters that can be part of an effort to protect 30 percent of lands and waters in their respective states. It is time for Oregon to do the same.

To meet the goal of protecting 30 percent of lands and waters, conservation objectives must encompass both public and private lands. On private lands, a voluntary, incentives-based approach to conservation such as utilizing land trusts and conservation easements will be appropriate for interested landowners. The recent *Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful Report*<sup>1</sup> released by the Department of Interior lays out a useful 30 by 30 framework for private lands. We support the goals of this framework, and encourage State leaders and agencies to use it to address the need to conserve land on this portion of Oregon's landscape. However, our vision for the 30 by 30 initiative offered here is focused on an appropriate framework for conservation of public lands in our state. On public lands, GAP 1 and GAP 2 level protections, as defined by USGS,<sup>2</sup> are proven and effective metrics, and there may be additional

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<sup>1</sup> *Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful*, 2021. <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/report-conserving-and-restoring-america-the-beautiful-2021.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Overview of USGS Gap Analysis Program: <https://www.usgs.gov/news/new-protected-area-database-pad-us-released>

designations that effectively advance conservation if they are subject to consistent monitoring and verification.

We recognize tribal sovereignty and the rights of indigenous people to govern their own lands and access important cultural resources on public lands, and we strongly encourage you to work with tribes in developing a 30 by 30 vision for Oregon that helps ensure the long-term sustainability and resilience of our wildlife and wild places. The state of Oregon should also partner with the federal government to ensure adequate funding to support tribal engagement and collaboration on 30 by 30 land and water conservation objectives.

The included list of 30 by 30 opportunities in Oregon lay out a potential roadmap for Oregon, and the United States as a whole, to begin to implement the nation's first quantifiable conservation goal. We urge you to create a bold 30 by 30 plan for Oregon's state lands and waters, and to work closely with tribes and policy makers in Washington, D.C. to achieve these goals on federal lands as well. We also urge you to establish a robust public process so that all Oregonians can contribute to this decision making process, and voice their own vision for conservation.

Establishing meaningful protections for 30 percent of Oregon's lands and waters will help us protect wildlife, store and sequester carbon, provide clean drinking water, and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Further, these lands and waters provide the backbone of Oregon's outdoor economy, and contribute to the wellbeing of all Oregonians. We hope that this letter provides a useful and comprehensive overview of how Oregon can lead on its own 30 by 30 goals, and we look to you and other decision makers to take action and lead on this initiative.

Sincerely,

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350 Eugene

Paula Hood  
Co-Director  
Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project

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350 Pregón Central Coast

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