



## RESOLUTION 2022-14

### OPPOSING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S "30 X 30" LAND PRESERVATION GOAL

**WHEREAS**, the Valencia County Board of Commissioners met upon notice of a Business Meeting, duly published, at the Valencia County Administration Building, 444 Luna Avenue, Los Lunas, New Mexico 87031 on Wednesday, February 2, 2022, at 5:00 PM as required by law; and,

**WHEREAS**, NMSA 1978, Section 4-37-1 (1995) provides that Counties have the power to, "provide for the safety, preserve the health, promote the prosperity and improve the morals, order, comfort and convenience of any county or its inhabitants"; and

**WHEREAS**, NMSA, 1978, Section 4-38-18 (1976) provides that a Board of County Commissioner has the duty and authority "[t]o represent the county and have the care of the county property and the management of the interest of the county in all cases where no other provision is made by law; and,

**WHEREAS**, Valencia County containing about 686,080 acres (1,072 square miles) of land situated in the State of New Mexico; and,

**WHEREAS**, the federal government owns 26.70% (183,424 acres) of the land within the County (including trust land) and the State of New Mexico owns 4.33.99% (29,675 acres) "as illustrated in *Exhibit A*, attached hereto"; 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**, because of federal land in Valencia County, the well- being, health, safety, welfare, economic condition, and culture of the County, its businesses, and its citizens depend on the manner in which these lands and their resources are used and access to these lands; and,

**WHEREAS**, many of Valencia County's businesses, and the businesses in surrounding counties, and its citizens are involved in or otherwise depend on industries that utilize federal lands and their resources, including the forest products industry, livestock grazing, oil and gas exploration and production, mining and mineral development, recreational industries, hunting and other outdoor recreation; and,

**WHEREAS**, these industries are important components of the New Mexico economy, and are major contributors to the economic and social wellbeing of Valencia 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 Aboard (86 Fed. Reg. 7,619); and,

**WHEREAS**, in Section 216 of Executive Order 14008, President Biden directed the Secretary of the 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 "30 x 30" program; and,

**WHEREAS**, under the 30 x 30 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**, the 30 x 30 program, if implemented, is likely to cause significant harm to the economy of Valencia County, and injure the County's businesses and its citizens by depriving them of access to public lands and national forest system lands and preventing the productive use of these lands resources; and,

**WHEREAS**, the withdrawal of some 680 million acres of federal lands from multiple use and placement of such lands in permanent conservation status will cause dramatic and irreversible harm to the economies of many western states, including New Mexico, and in particular rural counties such as Valencia County whose citizens depend on access to federal lands for their livelihoods; and,

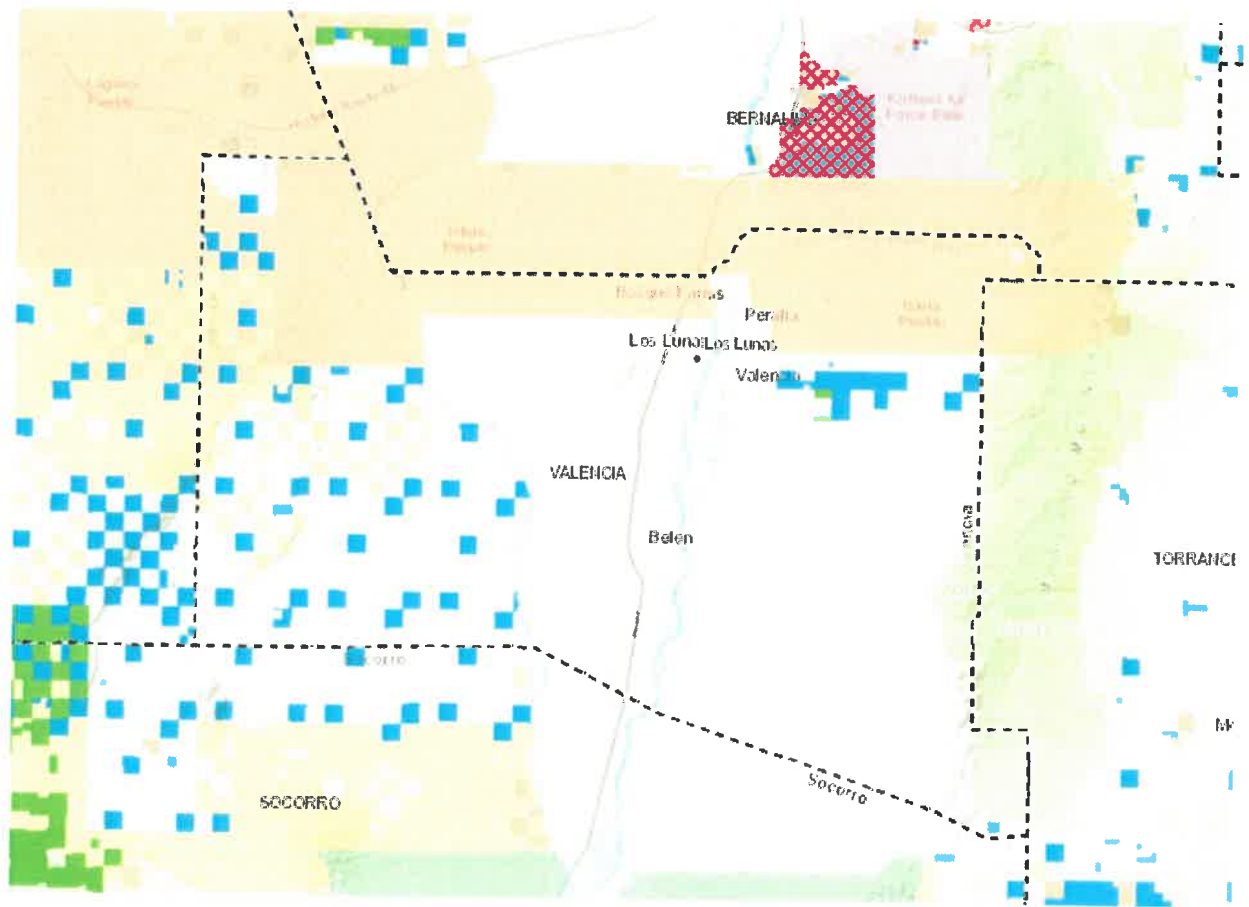
**WHEREAS**, Executive Order 14008 at 216(a) directs the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with other relevant federal agencies to "submit a report to the Task Force within 90 days of the date of this order recommending steps that the United States should take, working with State, local, Tribal, 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;" and,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of County Commissioners of Valencia County, New Mexico, as follows:

1. The Board opposes the 30 x 30 program, including its objective of permanently preserving 30 percent of the Nation's lands 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.

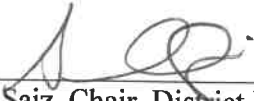
2. The Board further opposes the designation of public lands and national forests in Valencia County as wilderness, wilderness study areas, wildlife preserves, open space, or other conservation land, thereby restricting public access to such lands and preventing the development and productive use of the resources on or within such lands.
3. The Board supports the continued management of the public lands and the national forests under principles of multiple use and sustained yield, recognizing the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, energy, timber, food, and fiber, and in careful coordination with Valencia County to ensure consistency with County land use plans and land management policies, as required by law.
4. The Board supports maintaining and enhancing public access to public lands and national forests and opposes road closures, road decommissioning, moratoria on road construction, and other limitations on public access for the purpose of fulfilling the 30 x 30 program's objectives.
5. The Board recognizes and supports the State of New Mexico's water rights system, including the doctrine of prior appropriation 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 New Mexico law.
6. The Board supports reasonable national, regional, and global greenhouse gas emissions policies and goals that are comprehensive, practical, cost-effective, and do not unnecessarily single out specific industries or activities, but 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 30 x 30 program's objectives.
7. The Board maintains that the designation of public lands and national forest lands as wilderness, wilderness study areas, wildlife preserves, open space, or other conservation land to fulfill the 30 x 30 program's objectives may lawfully occur, if at all, only through the planning process mandated by the Federal Land Management and Policy Act (for public lands) or the National Forest Management Act (for national forest lands), including public notice and an opportunity to comment, analysis and disclosure of the impacts of such land acquisitions on the well-being, health, safety, welfare, economy, and culture of Valencia County, its businesses, and its citizens, and careful coordination with Valencia County to ensure consistency with County land use plans and land management policies.
8. The Board also maintains that any non-federal lands or other rights that are acquired to fulfill the 30 x 30 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 Valencia County, its businesses, and its citizens.
9. The County Manager shall send a copy of this Resolution to the Department of Interior, Department of Agriculture and all other relevant Federal and State agencies.


# Exhibit A

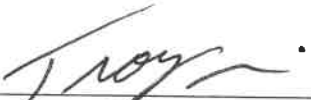


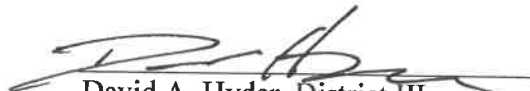
APPROVED, ADOPTED AND RESOLVED this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of February 2022.


BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

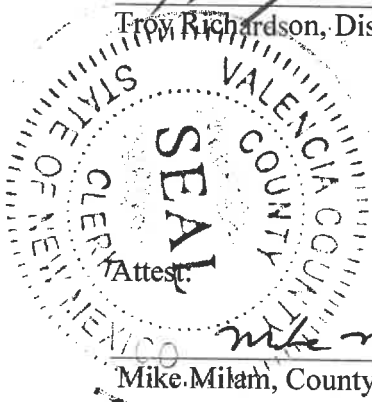
  
Gerard Saiz, Chair, District I

  
Jhonathan Aragon, Vice-Chair, District V

  
Troy Richardson, District II

  
David A. Hyder, District III

  
Joseph Bizzell, District IV



  
Mike Milam, County Clerk