THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF SANTA FE COUNTY

RESOLUTION NO. 2020 - _____

Introduced by:
Commissioner Anna Hansen and Commissioner Hank Hughes

A RESOLUTION
IN SUPPORT OF SENATE RESOLUTION 372 AND HOUSE RESOLUTION 835,
THE 30X30 CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT 30 PERCENT OF LANDS
AND OCEAN BY 2030

WHEREAS, the continental United States loses a football field's worth of natural areas every 30 seconds due to human activity; and

WHEREAS, this loss of nature – accelerated by climate change – is a threat to the nation's health and prosperity, affecting communities' clean air, water, and defenses against severe weather, floods, and wildfires; and

WHEREAS, to curb wildlife extinctions, fight climate change, reduce toxic pollution, and safeguard healthy natural systems, our nation must confront the conservation and climate crisis head-on; and

WHEREAS, the 30x30 campaign, a worldwide, science-based initiative to conserve at least 30 percent of the Earth's lands and oceans by the year 2030, was launched to address our climate crisis and reverse the destruction of our wildlife, waters, and natural places; and

WHEREAS, science-based research has found that conserving and restoring lands and waters is necessary to preserving the Earth's biodiversity and ecosystems and mitigating the impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS, biodiversity loss and human encroachment upon wildlife habitat is increasing the risk of infectious diseases such as COVID-19, Lyme disease, and SARS; and

WHEREAS, our natural places provide us with food supplies and clean drinking water, boost our economies, and offer us a wide range of health benefits; and

WHEREAS, wilderness, wildlife refuges, national conservation lands, monuments and other conserved places provide access for hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, camping, and other outdoor recreational pursuits; and

WHEREAS, permanently conserved private lands, including working ranches and farms, protect open spaces, preserve threatened wildlife, and help maintain a sustainable way of life; and

WHEREAS, every person, regardless of race, background or economic status, should have access to safe, clean and close-to-home opportunities to get outside in nature; and

WHEREAS, scientists are warning that protecting at least 30 percent of lands and water is the bare minimum we must achieve if we hope to stabilize the climate; and

WHEREAS, on October 22, 2019, U.S. Senators Tom Udall (D-N.M.) and Michael Bennet (D-Colo.) introduced Senate Resolution 372 titled "Thirty by Thirty Resolution to Save Nature" and on February 6, 2020, Representative Deb Haaland (D-N.M.) introduced companion House Resolution 835; both resolutions set a national goal of conserving at least 30 percent of the land and 30 percent of the ocean within the territory of the United States by 2030; and

WHEREAS, Santa Fe County ("County") has a total area of 1,911 square miles (1,223,040 acres), of which approximately 1,909 square miles (1,221,760 acres) is land and 1.5 square miles (960 acres) is water; and

WHEREAS, of the total County acreage, 6,610 acres of open space, trails and parks is managed and maintained by the County through planning, capital improvement projects, maintenance, and collaboration with volunteer organizations; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners ("the Board") has adopted a number of resolutions in support of protecting our nation's and County's land and water and declaring a climate crisis:

1. Resolution No. 2009-220 recognizing the urgency of stabilizing the climate as well as supporting the US Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement;

2. Resolution No. 2013-30 confirming that climate change is a real and growing threat to the well-being of present and future inhabitants;
3. Resolution Nos. 2014-66, 2015-126, 2018-104 urging full funding and permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund;
4. Resolution No. 2018-103 protecting our lives, land and water from radioactive waste risks;
5. Resolution No. 2019-92 in support of protecting wildlife corridors in the Upper Rio Grande Basin;
6. Resolution. 2019-111 endorsing the declaration of a climate emergency, joining the global climate strike, and requesting regional collaboration on an Immediate Just Transition and Emergency Mobilization Effort to Restore a Safe Climate;
7. Resolution No. 2019-144 supporting the protection of wildlife corridors in the Upper Rio Grande Basin, urging the U.S. Congress to Adopt the Wildlife Corridors Conservation Act of 2019, and expressing the support for the Santa Fe National Forest to adopt and establish the Caja del Rio Wildlife and Cultural Interpretative Management Area; Resolution No. 2020-22 to carry out and cultivate climate action for the fiftieth year anniversary of Earth Day; and

WHEREAS, the Board, on February 26, 2019, approved Resolution No. 2019-33 opposing the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' December 11, 2018 proposed Waters of the United States (WOTUS) Rule, which replaced the 2015 Clean Water Rule, and formally notified the EPA of its opposition to the December 11, 2018 proposed WOTUS Rule via letter in April 2019; and

WHEREAS, in April 2020, the EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers published a final rule, formally called "the Navigable Waters Protection Rule", which redefined the definition of the "Waters of the United States" and severely weakened the regulations protecting New Mexico's rivers and streams including the Santa Fe River and its watershed. This final rule places additional burdens on clean water infrastructure and programs including wastewater treatment facilities, storm water infrastructure, and the Buckman Direct Diversion Regional Water Treatment Facility which supplies critical drinking water and fire protection services to the residents of Santa Fe County; and

WHEREAS, the Board approved Resolution 2019-42 urging the New Mexico State Legislature to Enact the Healthy Soils Act, House Bill 204, and directing staff to explore ways to incentivize soil health improvements. The Act was signed into law in 2019 and the New Mexico Department of Agriculture launched the Healthy Soil Program whose goal is to afford grant-funded projects in support farming and ranching systems and other forms of land management that increase soil organic matter, aggregate stability, microbiology and water retention to improve the health, yield and profitability of our state's soils; and

WHEREAS, the Board passed Resolution 2020-16 recommending reform of the 1872 Mining Law to Protect Public Lands and Local Economies and Supporting the Hardrock Leasing and Reclamation Act of 2019. This reform ensured additional protections of our public lands, water resources, wildlife and fish populations, and recreational activities that support our local economics from mining activity and pollution; and included robust stipulations for consulting with local governments in the planning process of hard rock mineral leasing and extraction; and

WHEREAS, the Board passed Resolution 2017-68 committing the County to the greenhouse reduction goals of the Paris agreement, which will reduce the impacts of climate change on land and water; and

WHEREAS, the County contains a diversity of habitat types, including piñon-juniper woodlands, ponderosa pine, mixed-conifer, spruce-fir, and riparian forests, grasslands, wetlands, shrublands, and varied aquatic ecosystems. Protection of all these varied habitat types will conserve our rich biodiversity; and

WHEREAS, the County's diverse habitats support numerous species of conservation need including, but not limited to, the Black-tailed Prairie Dog (*Cynomys ludovicianus*), Boreal Chorus Frog (*Pseudacris maculata*), Chestnut-collared Longspur (*Calcarius ornatus*), Cyanic Milkvetch (*Astragalus cyaneus*), Grace's Warbler (*Setophaga graciae*), Gunnison's Prairie Dog (*Cynomys gunnisoni*), Mexican Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis lucida*), Monarch (*Danaus plexippus*), New Mexico Meadow Jumping Mouse (*Zapus hudsonius luteus*), New Mexico Stickseed (*Hackelia hirsuta*), Northern Leopard Frog (*Lithobates pipiens*), Pinyon Jay (*Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*), Rio Grande Chub (*Gila pandora*), Rio Grande Sucker (*Catostomus plebeius*), Santa Fe Cholla (*Cylindropuntia viridiflora*), Santa Fe Milkvetch

(*Astragalus feensis*), Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax trailii extimus*), Townsend's Big-Eared Bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), Tufted Sand Verbena (*Abronia begelovii*), Virginia's Warbler (*Leiothlypis virginiae*), Western Bumble Bee (*Bombus occidentalis*), and the western population of the Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*); and

WHEREAS, wildlife corridors are important for maintaining biodiversity by allowing for gene flow among wild populations that might otherwise become isolated and die out; and

WHEREAS, County staff, in accordance with our Sustainability Growth Management Plan (SGMP), Open Space Resource Management Plan (OSRMP), Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program and other initiatives, are diligently working to preserve our land and water by improving soil health, restoring wetlands and riparian areas, restoring ponderosa pine forests, planting native trees, forbs, and grasses, removing invasive species, conserving wildlife and plant species of conservation need, and reducing trail impacts on ecosystems, and mitigating the impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS, the Northern Group of the Sierra Club, Rio Grande Chapter voted to endorse the 30x30 campaign and this resolution which supports local initiatives to conserve land and water in Santa Fe County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of County Commissioners of Santa Fe County, hereby:

1. Supports the 30x30 initiative and science-based, locally led efforts to conserve and restore at least 30 percent of lands and water by 2030;
2. Supports efforts by Congress to champion this goal, such as the Thirty by Thirty Resolution to Save Nature, introduced by Senators Tom Udall and Michael Bennet, and Representatives Deb Haaland, Joe Neguse, Ted Lieu, Ruben Gallegos and Ed Case;
3. Calls upon Congress to advance its own initiatives as well as support and assist state and local efforts to achieve the goals as identified in the Thirty by Thirty Resolution to Save Nature;
4. Directs Santa Fe County staff to analyze, as part of the general strategic planning process or part of the Sustainable Growth Management Plan (SGMP) planning process, the human and other resources necessary to do or explore doing the following:

a. Continue to develop strategies for preserving varied habitats in Santa Fe County, and species of conservation need;
b. Investigate available legislative, state, local and federal grant programs and build partnerships with foundations, non-profits and conservation trusts for the future protection of land and water including the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and the County Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program;
c. Conduct an analysis of lands within the County of high conservation value that would qualify for the LWCF and/or TDR program for purchase and management taking into account areas that provide wildlife corridors and those that are of unique ecological significance;
d. Continue to prioritize healthy soils and regenerative practices in our agricultural programming and open space;
e. Continue to work with the appropriate entities and stakeholders to protect the integrity and water quality of the Rio Grande, the Santa Fe River, and local stream systems within Santa Fe County;
f. Strengthen efforts to maintain adequate river water levels for aquatic, riparian, and wetland habitats, and the species that depend upon them;
g. Continue to support and collaborate in the development of water conservation and long-term water resource management in partnership with the City of Santa Fe, the Santa Fe Watershed Association, other community groups, and local water users;
h. Make recommendations to the Board as appropriate on actions at the County level that would further the goals of this resolution.

5. The County Manager is directed to forward this Resolution to New Mexico's Senators and Representatives in Congress, the New Mexico Governor, State Senators and Representatives in the New Mexico Legislature representing Santa Fe County, New Mexico Counties' Executive Board of Directors, and other elected officials representing political subdivisions wholly or partially within the boundaries of Santa Fe County.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED ON THIS 1st DAY OF DECEMBER, 2020.

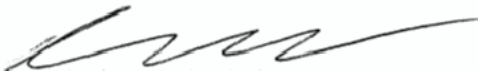
THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF SANTA FE COUNTY

_____
Henry P. Roybal, Chair

ATTEST:

_____ Date: _____
Geraldine Salazar
Santa Fe County Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

 for
Gregory S. Shaffer
Santa Fe County Attorney