



STATE *of* NEBRASKA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
LINCOLN

**EXECUTIVE ORDER No. 21-08**

**STOP 30 X 30 – PROTECT OUR LAND & WATER**

**WHEREAS**, Nebraska’s farmers and ranchers care for the land and water and are the original conservationists and good stewards; and

**WHEREAS**, President Joe Biden signed Executive Order #14008 entitled, “Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad;” and

**WHEREAS**, Executive Order #14008 sets a “goal of conserving at least 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030;” and

**WHEREAS**, private property is a fundamental tenet of the American free enterprise system, and critical to the success of Nebraska’s top industries, including agriculture and manufacturing; and

**WHEREAS**, achieving the goal of conserving 30% of the nation’s land and water by 2030 would require conserving a land area the size of Nebraska each year for nine years; and

**WHEREAS**, federal conservation mandates have no constitutional basis, and have great potential to devastate Nebraska’s economy; and

**WHEREAS**, the federal 30 percent conservation goal would interfere with the States’ constitutional and traditional power over land and water uses; and

**WHEREAS**, the people of Nebraska oppose federal overreach and want to protect our state’s land and water to continue to make them more productive;

**NOW THEREFORE**, I, Pete Ricketts, Governor of the State of Nebraska, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of Nebraska, order all code agencies to take any necessary step to resist and prevent the federal government’s attempt to usurp state authority as they implement the 30 x 30 goal.

Pursuant to this declaration, I hereby order the following:

1. The Nebraska Department of Revenue – Property Assessment Division shall host a minimum of three workshops to help county officials understand the tax consequences of conservation and preservation easements, and to advise counties of their rights in reviewing conservation easements pursuant to Nebraska Revised Statute 76-2,112.
2. The Nebraska Department of Revenue – Property Assessment Division shall work to identify existing conservation easements across the state and will hereby maintain an inventory of conservation easements to assist county assessors in accurately determining land values for the purpose of assessment and taxation.
3. The Nebraska Department of Agriculture shall maintain on its website a list of local units of government that have passed resolutions opposing the goal of conserving 30% of the nation's land and water by 2030.
4. The Nebraska Department of Agriculture shall maintain on its website a list of local units of government that have voted to endorse the goal of conserving 30% of the nation's land and water by 2030.
5. The Governor's Office shall place an 18-month hold on approving any new regulations expanding the definition of endangered species, plants, or wildlife pursuant to Nebraska Revised Statute 37-806.
6. No code agency shall provide any discretionary funding or staff support to projects involving perpetual conservation easements.
7. Exceptions to #6 may be approved by the Governor's Office for projects under multi-state water agreements, infrastructure, water management programs, and other limited purposes.
8. All code agencies shall seek Governor's Office approval to provide discretionary funding or staff resources for projects involving a conservation easement with a term of years.
9. Agencies may seek annual categorical approval under #8 for water management programs for which the code agency offers contracts for a term of years. All code agencies shall seek Governor's Office approval for such provision.
10. The Nebraska Department of Agriculture shall work to coordinate with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to ensure that the USDA is seeking proper local approvals for conservation easements related to the Agriculture Conservation Easement Program, Working Lands for Wildlife, Wetlands Reserve Program, and other federal programs.
11. The Nebraska Department of Agriculture Director is hereby designated as Nebraska's State Coordinator for the Climate Task Force recently established by the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) in Secretarial Order No. 3399 Section 4(b)(2). The Governor's Office shall notify DOI of the designation and reserves the right to change the designation at any time.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Nebraska to be affixed on this 24<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2021.



Pete Ricketts, Governor  
State of Nebraska



Attest:



Robert B. Evnen, Secretary of State  
State of Nebraska