

FARMERS' ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. OF NEW MEXICO

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S
"30 by 30" LAND PRESERVATION GOAL; and
NEW MEXICO EXECUTIVE ORDER 2021-052**

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 by 30" program; and

WHEREAS, under the 30 by 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, New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham issued Executive Order 2021-052 on August 25, 2021 endorsing the federal 30 by 30 program; and

WHEREAS, Farmers' Electric Cooperative Inc. of New Mexico (Farmers') is a customer-owned and controlled electric distribution cooperative organized and existing under the New Mexico Rural Electric Cooperative Act; and

WHEREAS, Farmers' is governed by a Board of seven Trustees, elected by its members/customers ("members"), to provide governance and leadership for the critical operating and financial performance of the Cooperative; and

WHEREAS, every customer receiving electric service from Farmers' is a member of the Cooperative; and

WHEREAS, Farmers' provides electric service to 7,100 customers (approximately 13,250 meters) in roughly 11,000 square miles of service territory including portions of the counties of Curry, De Baca, Guadalupe, Harding, Quay, Roosevelt, and San Miguel in New Mexico, and portions of Deaf Smith, Bailey, Oldham and Parmer counties in Texas; and

WHEREAS, approximately 29% of the state of New Mexico is already owned by Federal or State government; and

WHEREAS, a significant volume of private lands is already enrolled in Federal or State programs that limit commercial activity; 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, the well-being, health, safety, welfare, economic condition, and culture of Farmers' service area, its businesses, and its citizens depend on private land ownership and the use of these resources; and

WHEREAS, many of Farmers' members are involved in or otherwise depend on industries that utilize private lands and their resources, including all facets of production agriculture, dairy, livestock grazing, recreational industries, hunting and other outdoor recreation as well as the private businesses that provide goods and services to those commercial operations; and

WHEREAS, these industries are important components of the New Mexico economy, and are major contributors to the economic and social wellbeing of Farmers' service area and membership; 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, placing private lands into permanent conservation status will cause dramatic and irreversible harm to the economies of many states, including New Mexico, and in particular rural communities such as those served by Farmers' whose members depend on private lands for their livelihoods; and

WHEREAS, the 30 by 30 program, if implemented, will conflict with the plans, policies and programs of rural communities in New Mexico which obligates the federal government to coordinate its policy development with each, individual, Political Subdivision jurisdiction: 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

WHEREAS, New Mexico Executive Order 2021-052 expands the federal 30 by 30 program to include an additional twenty percent (20%) of lands and/or water resources designated as climate stabilization areas and directs the Secretaries (or designees) of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, Environment Department, Department of Agriculture, Office of the State Engineer, Indian Affairs Department, and the Directors (or designees) of the Department of Game and Fish and the Outdoor Recreation Division (collectively the "30 by 30 Committee"), to review and utilize existing authorities, funding, and programs within their respective Departments or Offices to support and implement programs designed to conserve, protect, and enhance lands and natural environments across the State in furtherance of the forgoing goal; and

WHEREAS, Farmers' Board of Trustees acknowledges that while the goals of protecting New Mexico lands, watersheds, wildlife, and natural heritage are commendable, President Biden's Executive Order 14008 and Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham's Executive Order 2021-052 lack sufficient detail as to the means and effectiveness of setting aside lands in New Mexico; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Farmers' Electric Cooperative, Inc. of New Mexico, as follows:

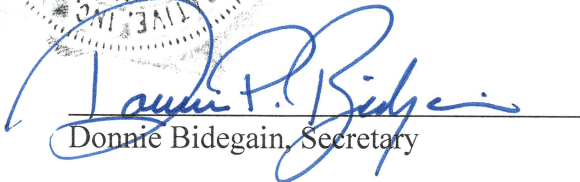
1. The Board opposes the 30 by 30 program, including its objective of permanently preserving 30 percent of the Nation's lands in its natural state by 2030, or any similar program that will set aside and prevent the productive use of millions of acres of our lands.
2. The Board opposes New Mexico Executive Order 2021-052 endorsing the 30 by 30 program and expanding the program to encumber an additional twenty percent (20%) of lands and/or water resources to be designated as climate stabilization areas.
3. The Board further opposes the designation of lands in Farmers' service area 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.
4. The Board supports the continued private ownership of land in Farmers' Service Area, recognizing the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, energy, timber, food, and fiber.
5. The Board recognizes and supports the State of New Mexico's water rights system, and other state laws and programs governing water rights and water use and opposes any federal designation of waters and watercourses within the Farmers' Service Area 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 by 30 and State program objectives.
7. The Board also maintains that any lands or other rights that are acquired to fulfill the 30 by 30 program, and/or State program objectives, should be acquired only from willing landowners and for the payment of full, 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 Farmers' membership.

8. The Board shall send a copy of this Resolution to the Department of Interior and all other relevant Federal and State agencies; and

I, Donnie Bidegain, Secretary of the Board of Trustees of Farmers' Electric Cooperative, Inc. do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution passed at the meeting of the Trustees held at Clovis, New Mexico on the 28th day of December 2021.

Given under my hand this the 28th day of December 2021.





Donnie Bidegain, Secretary