

Udall lays out bold conservation agenda

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‘Confronting the nature crisis’

U.S. Senators Tom Udall, D-N.M., and Michael Bennet, D-Colo., introduced a major Senate resolution to 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 on Oct. 22. The *Udall-Bennet Thirty by Thirty Resolution to Save Nature* recognizes that nature - like climate change - has reached a tipping point.

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The resolution responds to [a growing group of scientists](#), who say that conserving at least 30 percent of the ocean and land by 2030 is the minimum step necessary to adequately address the [extinction, climate, and](#)

[biodiversity crisis](#)

. *The Thirty by*

Thirty Resolution to Save Nature

creates a roadmap for reversing the conservation, climate, and wildlife crises, as ecosystems and wildlife species near the point of no return.

In addition to Udall and Bennet, the resolution is cosponsored by U.S. Sens. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., Kamala Harris, D-Calif., Cory Booker, D-N.J., Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., and Elizabeth

Warren, D-Mass.

“Just over 50 years ago, my father, Stewart Udall, sounded the alarm about the quiet loss of nature. Back then, in a few short years, our nation drastically deepened its commitment to the land and waters that sustain us by creating some of our most successful conservation programs. But today, the crisis is even more dire - and we need to meet it with the urgency it requires. That’s why I’m proud to introduce the *Thirty by Thirty Resolution to Save Nature*,” Udall said. “Globally, one million species are at risk of extinction - many within decades - as a result of factors like habitat destruction and climate change. These species are critical to our rich natural inheritance and our economic success. Now, there’s no question that we must, at a minimum, undo the environmental damage caused by the Trump administration. But let’s be clear: humans are destroying nature at a devastating rate. Only reversing the Trump administration’s wreckage would be like applying a band-aid to a life-threatening wound. We must write a new playbook to address the climate and nature crises. We must set a national goal of protecting and restoring 30 percent of our lands and ocean by 2030 to stem the collapse of our natural world. This is the mass mobilization we need - the collective action that will save the planet.”

“We can’t address climate change without focusing on conservation,” Bennet added.

“Committing to conserving 30 percent of America’s land and oceans by 2030 is exactly the kind of ambitious strategy we need to protect our wildlife and lands, and tackle this urgent crisis. Setting an aggressive, tangible conservation and climate goal has been a long-standing priority of mine, and I could not have asked for a better partner to advance this legislation. That’s why I am thrilled to be leading this resolution with Senator Udall today [Oct. 22].”

The continental United States loses a football field’s worth of natural areas every 30 seconds due to human activity. This loss of nature - accelerated by climate change - is a threat to the

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nation's health and prosperity, affecting communities' clean air, water, and defenses against severe weather, floods, and wildfires. To curb wildlife extinctions, fight climate change, reduce toxic pollution, and safeguard healthy natural systems, the United States must confront the conservation and climate crises head-on.

"The Udall-Bennet Thirty by Thirty Resolution to Save Nature" will establish 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 by:

- Working with federal agencies, local communities, Indian Tribes, States, and private landowners to conserve natural places and resources under their control;
- Including public incentives for private landowners to voluntarily conserve and protect areas of demonstrated conservation value and with a high capacity to sequester carbon and greenhouse gas emissions;
- Improving access to nature for all people in the United States, including for communities of color and economically disadvantaged communities;
- Using land and ocean of the United States to sequester and store carbon;
- Focusing work at a large-landscape scale that is biologically and ecologically meaningful;
- Preventing extinction by recovering and restoring animal and plant species;
- Stabilizing ecosystems and the services of ecosystems, restoring degraded ecosystems, and maintaining ecological functions; and

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- Increasing economic opportunities for farmers, ranchers, fishermen, and foresters.

“It’s our moral obligation [not] to leave future generations with an inhabitable planet. If we are to take this commitment seriously, we must ensure that we prioritize the conservation of our nation’s land and water. I’m proud to stand with my Senate colleagues to introduce the *30 by 30 Resolution*

to protect our planet for years to come,” said Durbin

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“The United States is facing a climate crisis that has already led to damaged oceans, newly extinct species, and ecosystems in distress. In order to ensure our planet is healthy and hospitable for our children and grandchildren, we must commit ourselves to bold land and ocean conservation efforts,” Harris said.

“I’m proud to join my colleagues in calling on the United States to set a goal of conserving at least 30 percent of the land and ocean in our country by 2030. It’s our responsibility to take action before it’s too late.”

“As the damage caused by climate change continues to grow, we must set achievable benchmarks to reduce pollution and protect our environment. Conserving 30 percent of our lands and oceans over the next 30 years will do just that - and will help ensure that future generations can enjoy America’s natural beauty. I’m proud to join my colleagues in introducing this resolution, and I will continue working to address climate change through meaningful action across the board,” Van Hollen said.

“As I travel to every corner of my state, I hear from diverse communities about the importance of preserving the remarkable land and waters that have made Oregon the incredible place it is,” Merkley said. “Maintaining our ecosystems is essential to the quality of life and the economic vitality of communities across Oregon and America, and we have a moral responsibility to leave a healthy, habitable environment behind for our children and our children’s children. This resolution emphasizes the importance of that duty, and reaffirms our commitment to the conservation efforts we need to implement right now in order to protect our most treasured places for generations to come.”

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Udall and Bennet's Resolution, "*The 30 by 30 Resolution to Save Nature*," is supported by a number of organizations including the Center for American Progress, League of Conservation Voters, National Wildlife Federation, National Parks Conservation Association, Wilderness Society, Campaign for Nature, Sierra Club, GreenLatinos, The Nature Conservancy, Marine Conservation Institute, Mountain Pact, Hispanic Access Foundation, Oceana, the National Audubon Society, and the Natural Resources Defense Council.

"We are defined by the wildlife and wild places we leave behind for future generations. Senator Udall and Senator Bennet's resolution underscores not only the urgency of conserving and restoring our public lands, wildlife habitat, and natural spaces, but also the urgency this moment,"

Collin O'Mara, president and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation said. "Recovering wildlife populations and conserving public lands is the best way we can not only safeguard our outdoor heritage and strengthen our outdoor recreation economy, but also transcend political partisanship and deliver for the American people."

"We thank Senators Udall, Bennet and the rest of the supporters of this resolution for demonstrating visionary leadership and urging the United States government to commit to this bold, necessary conservation goal," Alex Taurel, Conservation Program Director at the League of Conservation Voters said. "With one million species at risk of extinction and the continental United States losing a football field of natural area to development every 30 seconds, it's clear that we're in the midst of a crisis of nature that threatens humans as much as it does wildlife. We desperately need to preserve more of the earth in its natural state. It's time for the U.S. government to listen to the science and preserve 30 percent of our land and oceans by 2030."

"Setting aside land and ocean for nature conservation is a fundamental tool to address the twin crises of species loss and climate change. Building on its past leadership, a commitment from the United States to protect a representative 30 percent of our lands and waters in the next decade, will help ensure that wildlife can thrive, that Americans can enjoy the benefits that nature provides, and that wild areas can continue to enhance the strength and wellbeing of our nation and the planet," **Sally Jewell, Interim CEO at the Nature Conservancy said.**

"To slow the loss of nature in America, we need the kind of national leadership and vision that this resolution provides," Matt Lee-Ashley, a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress said. "Establishing a national goal of conserving 30 percent of America's lands and oceans by 2030 would provide much-needed support and encouragement to communities across the country, that are working to protect our lands, waters, and wildlife for future generations."

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Udall [announced the resolution](#) at the Center for American Progress event entitled *Confronting the Nature Crisis: A Discussion*

. U.S. Representative Deb Haaland, D-N.M., and journalist Elizabeth Shogren joined Udall for that

[discussion on the extinction and conservation crisis](#)

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