

EXECUTIVE ORDER N-82-20

WHEREAS the well-being of our communities and California's economic sustainability are interconnected with our natural and cultural resources; and

WHEREAS the State's long-term vitality is threatened by the loss of biodiversity - the variety and variability of plant and animal life in our State - and the impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS California's natural and working lands – our forests, rangelands, farms, wetlands, coast, deserts, and urban greenspaces – sustain our economy, support our unique biodiversity, contribute to the global food supply, support outdoor heritage and provide clean water and air; and

WHEREAS since time immemorial, California Native Americans have stewarded, managed and lived interdependently with the lands that now make up the State of California; and

WHEREAS California is home to more species of plants and animals than any other state, and this biodiversity accounts for about one third of all species found in the nation; and

WHEREAS soils are home to more than a quarter of the world's biodiversity and California boasts more than 2,500 different soil types; and

WHEREAS California's rich biodiversity is increasingly threatened by loss of habitat, spread of invasive species, decreasing water supplies, and increasingly frequent and severe climate impacts; and

WHEREAS the climate change crisis is happening now, impacting California in unprecedented ways including intensifying wildfires, mud slides, floods and drought, sea level rise and extreme heat, that threaten our economy, communities, public safety, and cultural and natural resources; and

WHEREAS as we work to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, we must also accelerate actions to enable the State to adapt and become more resilient to the impacts of climate change, including expanding nature-based solutions – the use of sustainable land management practices to tackle environmental, social and economic challenges; and

WHEREAS national, subnational and indigenous leaders across the globe are coming together to accelerate implementation of nature-based solutions to our climate and extinction crises, improve the way land is managed to absorb carbon pollution from the atmosphere, build resilience by protecting communities and natural places from climate-driven disasters, and restore healthy ecosystems; and

WHEREAS addressing the biodiversity crisis and accelerating nature-based solutions requires inclusive partnerships and collaboration among federal, state

and local governments, California Native American tribes, local communities, businesses, investors, labor, conservationists, outdoor enthusiasts, academia, land managers, and other stakeholders.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the Constitution and statutes of the State of California do hereby issue the following Order to become effective immediately to combat the climate and biodiversity crises:

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. To combat the biodiversity and climate crises, the California Natural Resources Agency, in consultation with the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the California Environmental Protection Agency and other state agencies, is directed to establish the California Biodiversity Collaborative (Collaborative) to bring together other governmental partners, California Native American tribes, experts, business and community leaders and other stakeholders from across California to protect and restore the State's biodiversity. State agencies will consult the Collaborative on efforts to:
 - a. Establish a baseline assessment of California's biodiversity that builds upon existing data and information, utilizes best available science and traditional ecological knowledge, and can be updated over time.
 - b. Analyze and project the impact of climate change and other stressors on California's biodiversity.
 - c. Inventory current biodiversity efforts across all sectors and land managers and highlight opportunities for additional action to preserve and enhance biodiversity.
 - d. Expand the communication and use of information, indicators and tools to monitor, track and protect California's biodiversity and natural resources.
 - e. Advance multi-benefit, voluntary and cooperative approaches that protect and restore biodiversity while stewarding natural and working lands, building climate resilience, and supporting economic sustainability.
 - f. Engage stakeholders across California's diverse communities, including academic and research institutions; local and federal governments; California Native American tribes; outdoor recreation and access groups; fishing and hunting organizations; farmers, ranchers and other private landowners and land managers; environmental advocates and investors; housing and land use developers; educators; philanthropy, and others.

2. To support the global effort to combat the biodiversity and climate crises, it is the goal of the State to conserve at least 30 percent of California's land and coastal waters by 2030. The California Natural Resources Agency and other relevant state agencies, in consultation with the Collaborative, are directed to develop and report strategies to the Governor no later than February 1, 2022 to achieve this goal in a manner that:
 - a. Safeguards our State's economic sustainability and food security.
 - b. Protects and restores biodiversity.
 - c. Enables enduring conservation measures on a broad range of landscapes, including natural areas and working lands, in partnership with land managers and natural resource user groups.
 - d. Builds climate resilience, reduces risk from extreme climate events and contributes to the State's effort to combat climate change.
 - e. Expands equitable outdoor access and recreation for all Californians.

3. To advance efforts to conserve biodiversity, the California Natural Resources Agency is directed to take the following actions within existing authority and resources:
 - a. Strategically prioritize investments in cooperative, high-priority actions that promote biodiversity protection, habitat restoration, wildfire-resilient, sustainably managed landscapes and other conservation outcomes.
 - b. Implement actions to increase the pace and scale of environmental restoration and land management efforts by streamlining the State's process to approve and facilitate these projects.
 - c. Collaborate with federal and state research institutions to utilize innovative scientific observation technology and with tribal partners to incorporate tribal expertise and traditional ecological knowledge to better understand our biodiversity and threats it faces.
 - d. Participate in regional, national and international efforts to advance biodiversity protection and help to stem extinctions across the planet.

4. To advance efforts to conserve biodiversity, the California Department of Food and Agriculture is directed to take the following actions with existing authority and resources:
 - a. Coordinate with other relevant state agencies and private partners to reinvigorate populations of pollinator insects across the State, which restore biodiversity and improve agricultural production.
 - b. Implement strategic efforts to protect California's native plants and animals from invasive species and pests that threaten biodiversity and economic activities.
 - c. Enhance soil health and biodiversity through the Healthy Soils Initiative.
5. The California Natural Resources Agency, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the California Environmental Protection Agency, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, and other state agencies, shall use existing authorities and resources to identify and implement near- and long-term actions to accelerate natural removal of carbon and build climate resilience in our forests, wetlands, urban greenspaces, agricultural soils, and land conservation activities in ways that serve all communities and in particular low-income, disadvantaged and vulnerable communities.
6. Within one year of this Order, the California Natural Resources Agency, in consultation with the California Environmental Protection Agency, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the California Air Resources Board, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, the California Strategic Growth Council and other state agencies, shall develop a Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy that serves as a framework to advances the State's carbon neutrality goal and builds climate resilience.

In developing this Strategy, agencies shall be guided by the following principles:

- a. Promote healthy lands that provide multiple benefits including improved air quality, reliable water supply, thriving communities, and economic sustainability.
- b. Advance equity and opportunity for all regions of California.
- c. Support pathways for sectors such as agriculture and forestry to participate in the transition to a carbon neutrality economy.
- d. Inform policies through public feedback gathered through extensive outreach to and equitable engagement with stakeholders including, but not limited to, land managers, federal, tribal and local governments, communities, environmental justice leaders, businesses, investors, non-governmental organizations, scientists and universities.

- e. Align policies, programs, and funding mechanisms across state government, while identifying opportunities to catalyze and accelerate private investment and actions that contribute to the State's carbon neutrality goal.
7. As part of the next Scoping Plan process, the California Air Resources Board, in coordination with relevant state agencies, shall take into consideration the Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy and science-based data to update the target for the natural and working lands sector in achieving the State's carbon neutrality goal.
8. The California Department of Food and Agriculture shall work with agricultural stakeholders to identify farmer- and rancher-led solutions to inform the next Scoping Plan process.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that as soon as hereafter possible, this Order be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given to this Order.

This Order is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable of law or in equity, against the State of California, its agencies, departments, entities, officers, employees, or any other person.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be offered this 7th day of October 2020.

GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:

ALEX PADILLA
Secretary of State