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2021 Special Committee on
The 30x30 Executive Order #14008

To the Committee Chairman and Committee Members,

This testimony is in **opposition** to the 30x30 Executive Order #14,008, also know as America the Beautiful.

In the 1800's, the Federal Government paid to exterminate the millions of buffalo that travelled up and down the Great Plains. The buffalo prevented the growth of trees on the Prairie because of their biannual trek up and down the Great Plains. Once the buffalo were exterminated, the Federal Government set up a program for homesteaders to plant trees on the Prairie, where no trees had grown before. Then the Army Corps of Engineers built reservoirs and planted Sericea Lespedeza to the Plains of Kansas to prevent soil erosion on those dams. That plant is now considered a noxious weed and covers 2/3 of the Eastern part of Kansas, killing out Prairie Grasses and other Native vegetation. We can also look at the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) wild horse program, where millions of taxpayer dollars are wasted to place the horses on ranches, where the ranchers are paid exuberantly to feed these animals until they die. Yet the land in which the horses were removed from are still plagued by excessive numbers of horses which continue to endanger

"Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God." -Thomas Jefferson

fragile ecosystems and let's not forget about the wildfires that burn across BLM lands every year. The Federal Government has continually proven they are incapable of effectively managing any land yet insists that farmers and ranchers aren't good stewards of the land and 30% of the land and water needs to be set aside to go back to Nature.

I make a living using goats to manage land that has been overgrown by all types of plants and trees that are not native to the Prairies of Kansas. I have seen how they invade land that has been left unmanaged and know that even on a small partial of land, it will take thousands of dollars and strict management for decades if not generations of landowners to return that land to a proper prairie. Returning the Prairie to Nature on a mass scale is impossible. You can release mountain lions and wolves on to the land, which has been done, and these animals thrive, feasting on livestock from farms and ranches, but you cannot expect the Prairie to return to what it was pre-Louisiana Purchase times. With the introduction of trees and non-native species that advantageously spread, sucking up the water out of the creeks and springs, we have passed a point of no return well over a century ago. The only way to return the Prairie to Nature as it was, would be to reintroduce millions of buffalo and cut down every tree in Kansas and remove all cities and towns, which is irresponsible and illogical.

Our Founding Fathers built our country on the premise of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. The Freedoms to choose to build your own little empire, and if you worked hard enough, you could pass that empire onto your heirs and following generations. It is not logical for the Federal Government to insist that it can better manage the land, when the proof is in their total mismanagement of what is not under Federal Government management. The idea that farmers and ranchers are incapable of proper land management is preposterous when you see marginal land now producing abundant crops with the improved farming and ranching techniques, which regenerate the soil and improve its productivity. The farmers and ranchers


"Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph." Thomas Paine

have a financial and time investment in the land, and they understand that if they take care of the land, that land will produce and provide a living for them.

The landowners, farmers and ranchers have a God-given right to Life, Liberty and Pursuit of Happiness, which includes managing the land and Prairie in which they live on and that the Kansas Legislature has a duty to protect those rights so that the People of Kansas can continue to produce the highest quality food the world can consume. The State of Kansas benefits from private property ownership, we cannot allow the Federal Government to overreach their authority and grab any Kansas Land. I implore you to take a stand for the People of Kansas and their private property rights.

Thank you for your consideration. If you wish to visit with me on this matter, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Powell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "M".

Mary Powell

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with the inherent and unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

The Declaration of Independence