



Angeliina Lawson, lobbyist for Land On The Range, private landowners with a background as a land specialist to assess the highest and best use of land and the market value it can produce. There is a point that we would like to make during this committee, that is the Market value of conservation to land and the ability to have more options for landowners.

The federal 30x30 initiative is focused on 30% of the country. There is roughly (3.8) 3,787 million SQ miles of USA land. 30% of that is roughly 1,253,000 million SQ miles.

The federal govt. has already Utah's Bears Ears, 2125 SQ miles and they've officially posted their interest in oceans coastal lines and native american lands.

One of the bodies of water would be the Bering Sea 772,200 SQ miles + Hawaii marine national monument at 583,000 SQ miles + ANWR (Arctic National Wildlife Refuge) at 30,135 SQ miles totaling = 1,385,335. That is the 30% by itself has been met. (In comparison, Kansas is 82,000 SQ miles.)

That is not including Florida's Everglades (7,800 SQ miles), grand canyon (1,902 SQ miles), and all the other national parks that could increase their conservation grade to meet the rating to be counted in the 30%. We've already hit the 30% requirement with many of the oceans and native american lands before we even get to Kansas.

We don't believe that the federal government will come for Kansas. We think about the Lesser Prairie Chicken over what is more desirable would be the Bering Sea.

We don't believe Kansas will need to contribute much if any to this 30% because it will already be met. Now we can see Kansas state volunteering to participate with existing dedicated lands and providing landowners a wider option for the use of their land. Raise the GAP conservation rating to 1 or 2 to qualify for the 30x30 plan.

We believe Kansas can take advantage of any economic initiatives to allow options for landowners. Not every landowner will need to seek out conservation but those that want to should be able to. When a developer makes a community park it increases the value of their land and valuation of the homes. When a wildlife sanctuary is established, it increases the land values in the surrounding areas when the wildlife cross for prime hunting grounds. Our watershed is protected by the floodplains, the kidneys purifying the water, producing better water quality. We would hope to also work with Bi-State conservation projects so that areas in Kansas like, as Fort Leavenworth area gets their water from the Missouri River.

*- There are over 200 CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program) for working farms to use and make more money bundling. There needs to be more education about this program and transparency around any expenses.*

*-CRPs lease (Conservation Reserve Program), are designed for landowners to address concerns of resources. They can be in 15-20 yr leases but if broken it will need to be paid*

*back all at once. There needs to be education around if or how surrounding governing bodies can trigger a violation of this lease.*

*-Carbon Credits - mineral harvesting. Appraisals are needed to make sure farmers are getting the correct market rate per ton. \$5.60 per credit in 2020*

*-Conservation Easements - claim tax deductions for private landowners will also need education around how to manage and understanding what the documents mean when signing.*

*-Solar energy should have better net metering rates for landowners over 20 acres. Consider redeveloping of brownfields into solar farms and look into solar community farms in the urban areas.*

**Urban areas** - We have landowners in the cities/rural counties that struggle with blight, vacant land lots, abandoned homes, and parcels that are too small that cannot be built on and zoning regulations restrict commercial use to generate income. They should have the option to volunteer into the 30% conservation plan as the only means to bring in an income stream and neighbors would appreciate as it would increase housing valuations. Counties can create land banks with several federal programs to help get them up and going for investors, developers to find and use for their projects.

Downside, if landowners with large acre hold out too long the city comes in too close to the last standing farm and they loose land by way of the city's future land use plans to put in a 4 lane road or a highway out the front door. Educating landowners about better options for their land before time makes the decision for them and there is a loss of value for the land because it has reduced in size.

**Rural areas** are emptying out and land values are plummeting. That is a loss of generational wealth, legacy and the American Dream to give your kids a better life than the life you had. If rural landowners don't have anybody interested to buy them out, the cycle of infrastructure will eventually buy their land for pennies on the dollar when we believe that providing a path for more options to maintain the value of the land, developers may not get the smoking deal but it can save the generational wealth for that family. Could conservation be the only way to save the legacy of families that do not have the next generation but do have the pride to leave a mark in their community? Now, if land is left to be abandoned, it could possibly be lost to squatters rights, blight, eminent domain by local governing boards and then the future generations wealth would be lost any ways.

*Country singer Jordan Davis song "Buy Dirt" encourages people to invest in landownership and when lands are retiring, we believe conservation should be an option if the land needs to put it out to pasture.*

*Example:* If you block out development growth into a city/county you risk jobs, better schools and better lives. Bates City in MO is an example that did this for 20 years deterring businesses with big font letters on their county future land use plan "growth for growth is a cancer cell and all efforts to push back the metro must be stopped." The impact? The farmer wanted to sell 88 acres as commercial zoning land use but could only sell from Agriculture to

Agriculture. This farmer could not sell at the market rate that his neighbor could in an adjacent city. He could only sell for \$10,277 per acre (\$900,000) vs \$25,000 per acre (\$2.2 million) for the neighbor for commercial zoning. That is a loss of \$1,300,000 million just by stopping growth into a city.

Example: There was another 6.6 acres next to the Kansas River that after my research discovered it was in a Floodway which is different from flood plain. Local regulations restrict any kind of improvements and at best the landowner could sell the land to the city for under \$8k or wait and wait and the river takes it. Could conservation provide more revenue for that landowner? That would need to be discussed at the local jurisdiction but we can't help think about the options for landowners when they are put in this position.

We don't believe it is the job of the state government to limit options for land use and the use of conservation should be an option for landowners to participate in. It is their right to decide how they use their land. The level of "enoughness," for how much a landowner can make, should be decided by the landowner. Just like 500 heads of cattle is not enough for a rancher to make the income they want but 1 cow could make enough income for another family only wanting that level of income.

I heard questions, "Should there be tax credits for landowners that volunteer their land into a conservation because that is the only choice they feel they can do with the land?" By doing that will increase the value of the surrounding areas. But of course, we do not want it to be such a tax credit that could cost county/city infrastructure. Needs for responsible taxation.

We hope that this special committee will be helpful to review the economic options for landowners to have more choices for the use of their land.

Thank you Mr Chair and elected officials,



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