



30 by 30 Talking Points

Biodiversity

The Problem

- In a major biodiversity report released in May 2019, the UN warned that 1 million species are at risk of extinction across the world.
- One-third of species in the US is endangered or vulnerable to extinction.
- California is considered to be one of the world's 36 biodiversity hotspots.
- California has lost more than 1 million acres of natural area in the last twenty years and native species in California have declined by 20 percent.
- Currently, only 22% of California's land and 18% of coastal areas is protected
- Biodiversity is important as it shows us how healthy an ecosystem is. The more diverse and populated an ecosystem, the more likely it is to be resilient to climate change effects and stable in the long-term.
- People depend on healthy ecosystems as they provide us with fertile soils, clean air and water, healthy fisheries, greenhouse gas reduction, and protect us from diseases.

The Solutions

- Prioritize biodiversity needs when determining which lands to conserve. Focus on conserving areas with the highest biodiversity density first (biodiversity hotspots).
- Protect keystone species to improve overall ecosystem health.
- Protect upstream watershed habitat to improve water quality and aquatic ecosystem health.
- Adopt sustainable management plans that ensure the long-term protection of conserved areas.
- Ensure that the newly conserved areas are interconnected through wildlife corridors to reduce habitat fragmentation.
- Encourage the population growth of native and endangered species while reducing the presence of invasive species.
- Improve ecosystem resiliency to allow conserved areas to withstand negative impacts from climate change.

Equitable Access

The Problem

- Disadvantaged communities are more likely to live in areas that are nature deprived (74% of nonwhite people and 70% of low-income families live in a nature-deprived area).
- Living in a nature-rich area provides benefits such as air and water purification, climate mitigation, biodiversity and disease control, and opportunities for leisure and recreation.
- Studies have found that low-income communities and people of color are more likely to develop immunocompromising diseases, such as asthma, and are more likely to catch COVID-19, due to being more likely to live in polluted areas with a lack of access to the outdoors.
- One dollar spent on creating and maintaining park trails can save almost three dollars in health care.
- Urban areas are also likely to be hotter due to presence of asphalt and human activity and could become a public health problem as temperatures increase due to climate change. Urban green spaces have been found to decrease the surrounding temperatures.
- Access to nature has also been found to improve school performance in children
- Even when access to nature is available, people of color experience higher instances of discrimination when engaging in outdoor activities, such as birdwatching and dog walking.

The Solutions

- Prioritize conserving lands in regions with low-income communities and communities of color.
- Focus on restoration degraded lands and waters in California which have affected the health and quality of life of communities across the country.
- Focus on developing more urban parks and urban green spaces and ensure there are parks and green areas near schools.
- Include disadvantaged communities in the decision-making process. Make sure that notices and materials are available in more than one language and that sufficient effort is made to inform the community of public meetings and opportunities for input.
- Encourage the conservation and management of these lands in a way that improves climate resilience, provides plenty of space and opportunity to enjoy nature, and builds a strong, safe, and healthy sense of community.