

30% of California land must be conserved under Gov. Newsom's new order

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Citing a need to tackle the growing problem of climate change, California Gov. Gavin Newsom on Wednesday gave the order for state agencies to conserve 30% of state land and coastal water by no later than 2030.

The move is a bid to store carbon in the state's natural and working lands and remove it from the atmosphere, according to a statement from the

governor's office.

The order directs state agencies to pursue strategies and partnerships that focus on healthy soil management, wetlands restoration, active forest management and boosting green infrastructure, according to the governor's office.

"It's an audacious goal, and it's an achievable goal," Newsom said shortly before signing the executive order on Wednesday.

California becomes the first state in the nation to take such a step, the Democratic governor said, and it does so as part of a broader international movement.

The governor said that the new order builds off of the momentum generated by the executive order regarding fossil fuel-free cars by 2035, as well as other measures being taken by his administration to combat [climate](#) change.

Newsom cited record-hot temperatures, drier weather and heavier rain activity as consequences of the changing global climate.

The governor's move was hailed by the Center for Western Priorities, whose [executive director](#), Jennifer Rokala, said in a statement, "Accelerating climate change and plummeting biodiversity are plainly visible across America right now. Historic fire seasons and crippling droughts are gripping the West, with impacts that will be felt for years to come. But there is hope that the coming decade will be one in which our leaders step up to meet the most pressing challenges of our time."

The Center for Biological Diversity also approved of the move, though not without a caveat.

"We hope other states and ultimately the [federal government](#) follow California's lead. However, Gov. Newsom can't effectively combat [climate change](#) and protect biodiversity without also addressing oil and gas production. We know that burning the [fossil fuels](#) in the ground will heat the planet well beyond 1.5 degrees Celsius and push many animals and plants towards extinction," said Shaye Wolf, climate science director at the center.

The move was less well-received by Republicans in the Legislature.

The Senate GOP Caucus tweeted in response to the announcement, "This is an overreach. Newsom isn't even hiding behind COVID-19 emergency powers any more."

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