



“30x30” is the goal to conserve 30% of lands and waters by the year 2030. California aims to conserve 30% of natural land and water areas. These “30x30 Conservation Areas” will be protected from development and managed to sustain the ecosystems and life that they support. This effort will occur across California, to protect and restore biodiversity (the variety of life, from genes to species to ecosystems), respond to climate change, and expand access to nature for all Californians.





By Executive Order (**N-82-20**) California committed to conserving 30 percent of our lands and coastal waters by 2030 (30x30).

The **Pathways to 30x30** document outlines the state's strategy for meeting the 30x30 goal and three key objectives:

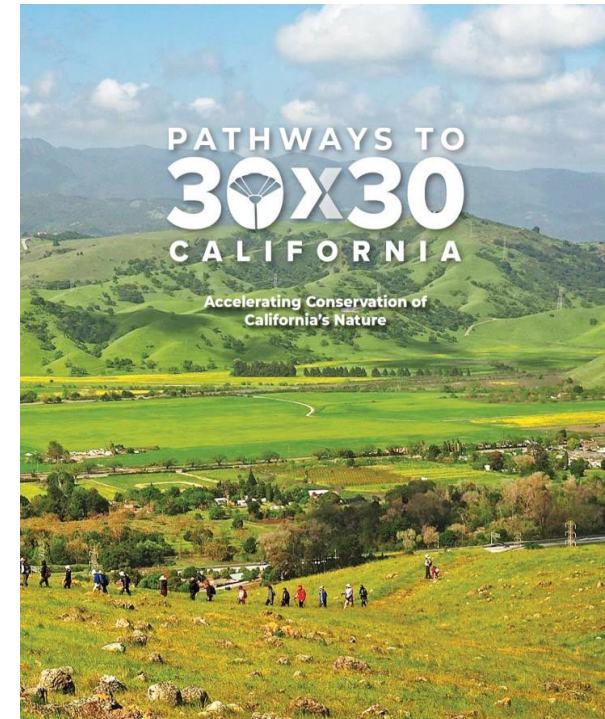
- Protect and restore **biodiversity**
- Expand **access** to nature
- Mitigate and build resilience to **climate** change

California's 30x30 initiative is committed to:

- Advancing **justice equity, diversity, and inclusion**
- Strengthening **tribal partnerships**
- Sustaining our **economic prosperity, clean energy resources, and food supply**



The California Natural Resources Agency's Pathways to 30x30 document describes this effort, and outlines the goals and actions necessary to achieve 30x30.



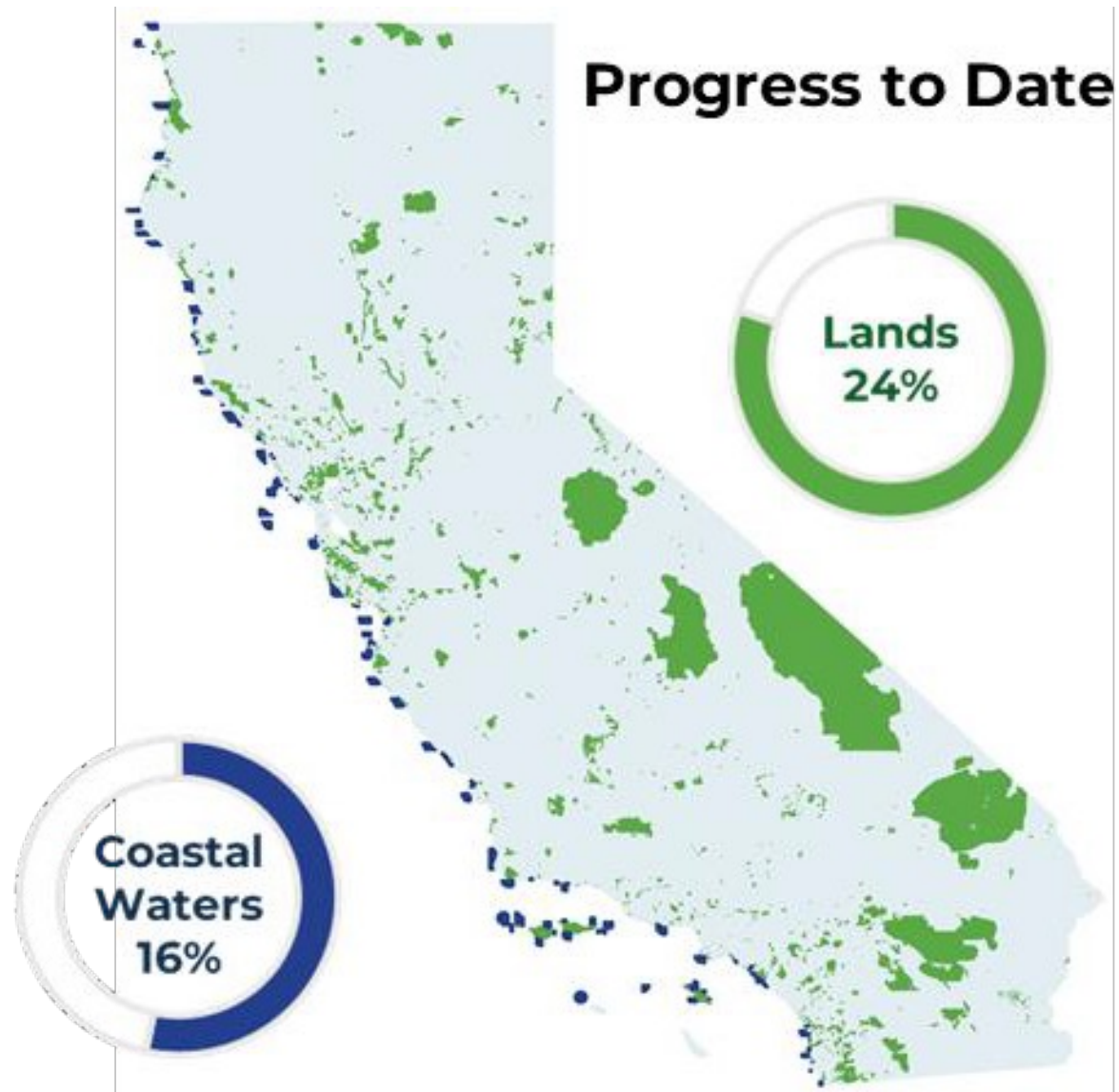


### **30x30 Conservation Areas**

*Land and coastal water areas that are durably protected and managed to sustain functional ecosystems, both intact and restored, and the diversity of life they support.*

## How much is conserved already?

Approximately 24% of land areas and 16% of coastal waters areas fit the criteria for a “30x30 Conservation Area.” That means we have 6% of land and 14% of coastal water areas to go to achieve the 30x30 goal. That is approximately six million acres of land and half a million acres of coastal waters! Achieving this ambitious goal will require help from diverse groups of people across the state.





California's strategy to conserve an additional six million acres of land and half a million acres of coastal waters is organized into **10 Pathways**:

1. Accelerate Regionally Led Conservation
2. Execute Strategic Land Acquisitions
3. Increase Voluntary Conservation Easements
4. Enhance Conservation of Existing Public Lands and Coastal Waters
5. Institutionalize Advance Mitigation
6. Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
7. Strengthen Coordination Among Governments
8. Align Investments to Maximize Conservation Benefits
9. Advance and Promote Complementary Conservation Measures
10. Evaluate Conservation Outcomes and Adaptively Manage



# California's Pathways to 30x30: Conserving Freshwater Ecosystems



Freshwater ecosystems provide important recreational opportunities, biocultural resources, and nutrition to people across California. Despite their ecological and economic importance, freshwater ecosystems are uniquely threatened.

The key objectives of California's 30x30 goal are to advance biodiversity protection, access to nature, and climate action. Freshwater ecosystems are a central component of California's stated priorities within each of these objectives:



**(1) Protect California's unique biodiversity:** freshwater ecosystems support large, interconnected landscapes, host high species richness and species rarity, and hold exceptional biocultural significance making them central to all of the biodiversity priorities outlined in the strategic document. [Pages 12-13]

**(1) Expand equitable access to nature and its benefits:** Increasing access points and trails within existing natural areas, including urban rivers, is a central priority of 30x30. [Page 14-15]

**(1) Conserve places that help California achieve carbon neutrality and/or build climate resilience:** Freshwater ecosystems can store large amounts of carbon per unit area making them critical to climate mitigation. Additionally, freshwater ecosystems enhance climate resilience by buffering the effects of extreme climate events such as flooding and heat waves. [Page 16-17]



Protecting freshwater systems is integral to protecting California's biodiversity. California's Pathways to 30x30 strategy reflects this importance and outlines priorities and strategic actions that will ensure freshwater systems contribute to, and benefit from, 30x30 actions..

The Pathways to 30x30 document identifies numerous specific strategic actions aimed at conserving and managing freshwater systems to achieve 30x30. These actions include:



- (1) Managing invasive species in freshwater habitats to restore functional ecosystems.[Page 49]
- (2) Supporting research to determine areas of climate refugia for freshwater species. [Page 61]
- (3) Developing terrestrial-freshwater management plans at the watershed scale to increase complementary management of upper and lower watersheds. [Page 61]
- (4) Reconnect wetlands to ocean tides by removing human-made barriers [Page 49]
- (5) Remove aging or obsolete barriers from waterways to restore connectivity and processes in watersheds. [Page 48]
- (6) Utilize food protection tools and levee removals to restore floodplains and riparian areas. [Page 48]
- (7) Incentivize restoration of upper watersheds and groundwater-surface interactions which protect California's water security [Page 48]