



30x30:

a commitment to conserve 30% of lands and oceans by 2030

The 30x30 goal is meant to be a bold vision that reflects the severity of the biodiversity and climate change crises. **Our future depends on preventing the collapse of natural systems that provide our food, clean water, clean air, and a stable climate.** To preserve those important ecosystem services, we must conserve and protect enough of our natural world to sustain them for this and future generations.

30x30 Commitments

International

- United Nations Biological Diversity Convention (COP15) ratified by 196 nations – 12/2022¹
- High Ambition Coalition (HAC) for Nature and People ratified by 116 countries – 12/2022²
- Currently, about 17% of land and 8% of ocean worldwide is protected.³

National

- Executive Order 14008, *Tackling the Climate Change Crisis at Home and Abroad*, was signed by President Biden on 1/27/2021. This first-ever national goal for nature conservation challenges the US to conserve “at least 30 percent of our land and waters by 2030.”⁴
- The US is among the top five countries in the world in the amount of remaining intact natural lands (~60%, but we lose about a football field’s worth of it every 30 seconds).⁵
- Currently, ~12% of US land and ~25% of US marine waters are protected.⁶

Maine

- Maine is at the forefront in adopting 30x30. The goal was included in Maine’s climate action plan, *Maine Won’t Wait*, adopted in 12/2020.⁷
- 21% of the State’s land is already protected according to the Maine Natural Areas Program.⁸
- For Maine to meet the goal will require conserving another 2 million acres by the end of this decade.⁹

Scarborough’s Focus on Land Conservation

- **Scarborough Town Council’s** 2023 goals include a commitment to sustainability, conservation, and climate change, with a priority action plan to partner with committees and groups to define how Scarborough can achieve 30x30.
- **Scarborough Conservation Commission’s** 2023 goals include conserving land and building resiliency. Among other actions, the Commission is identifying changes needed to prioritize land conservation in Scarborough and helping determine the Town’s current conserved acreage.
- **Scarborough Land Trust (SLT)** is currently working on 11 land protection projects totaling approximately 300 acres. Hiring a Conservation Director has allowed SLT to increase its conservation efforts.
- Other organizations, including **Friends of Scarborough Marsh, Maine Audubon, Maine Farmland Trust**, etc. also play an important role in protecting marshlands, wildlife habitat, and agricultural land in Scarborough.

Scarborough Stats

Town area: 31,404 acres

30% conservation target: 9,421 acres

Conserved acres (as of April 2023): 5,391 acres (~17%)

Conservation needed to reach 30%: 4,030 acres

Developed area since 2013: 1,781 acres

Conserved area since 2013: 424 acres



We need nature, and now, nature needs us.

Endangered piping plover chick

Credit: Maine Audubon

The Growing Biodiversity Crisis

- Earth’s loss of biodiversity is happening in decades, not millennia. Global species loss is 1,000 times higher than the natural extinction rate.¹⁰
- A large number of species are on a path to extinction – 14% of birds, 25% of mammals, 40% of amphibians.¹¹
- 2.9 million birds in North America have been lost over the past 50 years.¹²
- The rate of extinction of insects is eight times faster than that of mammals, birds, and reptiles.¹³ Insects are near the base of the food chain, which makes them critical to the survival of other species.
- One million acres of nature are lost to development in the US every year. A football field’s worth of natural land disappears every 30 seconds.¹⁴
- Half of all freshwater and saltwater wetlands in the lower 48 states have disappeared.¹⁵

The Urgent Climate Crisis

- Humans are emitting greenhouse gases at a far higher rate than any previous increase in the history of the planet. CO₂ emissions were 150 times higher in 2011 than they were in 1850.¹⁶
- Global temperature has risen about 2°F since 1980 and is accelerating. It will reach 1°C above pre-industrial levels around 2030, a full decade earlier than predicted. Catastrophic repercussions are expected at 1.5°C.¹⁷
- Ice sheets are shrinking dramatically – 279 billion tons of ice per year in Greenland and 148 billion tons in Antarctica between 1993 and 2019.¹⁸
- Sea level is rising – an increase of about 8 inches over the last century, and the rate over the last decade is nearly double that of the last century.¹⁹
- Extreme weather events are occurring more frequently and with greater intensity. Since 1980, the US has sustained over 323 weather and climate disasters where overall damages/costs exceeded \$1 billion. The total cost of these 323 events exceeds \$2.195 trillion.²⁰
- The global economy could lose \$23 trillion to climate change by 2050.²¹



Route 1, Scarborough | January 17, 2022

Sources

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- ⁴“Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful” 2021 Report <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/report-conserving-and-restoring-america-the-beautiful-2021.pdf>
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- ¹⁵“Wetlands Loss Since the Revolution” - <https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Documents%5CWetlands-Loss-Since-the-Revolution.pdf>
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- ¹⁷“The Evidence for Rapid Climate Change is Compelling” - <https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>
- ¹⁸Ibid.
- ¹⁹Ibid.
- ²⁰“Calculating the Cost of Weather and Climate Disasters” <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/news/calculating-cost-weather-and-climate-disasters>
- ²¹“Climate Change May Cut World Economy by USD 23 Trillion by 2050” - <https://earth.org/climate-change-may-cut-the-world-economy-by-usd23-trillion-by-2050/>