



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **Parks Now Coalition Statement on ‘Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful’**

As public health experts and community advocates championing outdoor access, we are greatly encouraged by the Biden administration’s commitment to focus on collaborative and inclusive, community-led efforts to create more protected areas and outdoor recreation opportunities for communities that face historic and systemic barriers to nature.

With Indigenous communities continuing to lose access to their land, and more people moving into urbanized areas, our relationship to nature—an important driver of what keeps us invested in protecting it—has never been more tenuous. To cultivate the next generation of environmental stewards, we need to reimagine our conservation practices and rebuild them in a way that instills principles of environmental protection that are, and will remain, accessible and culturally relevant for all.

And yet access to safe, welcoming parks and other outdoor natural spaces, so fundamental to public health and social well-being, remains deeply inequitable for communities of color and low-income neighborhoods. They face myriad physical and emotional barriers such as a lack of walkable access to parks, spotty public transportation, lack of affordable accommodations, signage and programs that are in English only, and the presence of often hostile law enforcement, among others.

The Biden administration’s goal to protect 30 percent of our land and coastal waters by 2030, with a clear focus on creating more protected areas and increasing outdoor access in park-poor communities, is an important opportunity to correct these inequities. We look forward to working with his administration to make conservation relevant and accessible to those who will become our planet’s future stewards and ensure the enduring success of our collective effort.

#### **About Parks Now**

Parks Now represents a coalition of California-based organizations committed to public health and social and environmental justice, who share a belief that access to parks, the coast, and public land is fundamental to healthy, vibrant communities. For more information, visit <http://www.caparksnow.com/>

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