



Steward Natural Resources and Address Climate Change: An Agenda for 2021

Academy Election 2020 Project

Working Group: Steward Natural Resources and Address Climate Change

Background

As a nation, we have made significant progress reducing air and water pollution, managing waste materials, and preserving threatened species. In the early 1970s, Congress enacted the modern environmental legal system that delivered these changes from which we currently benefit, and now we must determine how best to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Given the litany of disasters in late summer 2020—including wild fires, hurricanes, and rising sea levels and temperatures—it is more important than ever that we rise to the occasion. All of these disparate disasters are related to climate change and changing ecosystems, and the nation needs to take more aggressive measures to address them.

The Challenge: Steward Natural Resources and Address Climate Change

As the nation's industry and population grow, it is critical that the public, nonprofit, and private sectors effectively steward natural resources and protect the environment for ourselves and future generations. America's natural resources—including our public lands—are a rich heritage that have made enormous contributions to our economy, health, environment, and society.

Recommendations for 2021

1. Optimize and expand federal research and demonstration on climate solutions and technology to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Embrace natural infrastructure as a key contributor to climate research.
3. Coordinate and expedite renewable energy siting decisions to accelerate decarbonization of the power sector, including a focus on siting on degrading lands.
4. Undertake a national effort to enhance forest health to build resilience to wildfire, enhance natural carbon storage, and strengthen habitats.
5. Improve federal coordination across federal agencies with states, tribes, and local governments.

Additional Resources

These resources provide additional information and recommendations in the line with the Election 2020 Paper, *Steward Natural Resources and Address Climate Change: An Agenda for 2021*

[The Academy: Election 2020: Steward Natural Resources and Address Climate Change](#)

[The Academy: Roundtable: Steward Natural Resources and Address Climate Change](#)

[The Academy: New Systems of Governance are Needed to Address Climate Change](#)

[GAO: Climate Resilience: A Strategic Investment Approach for High-Priority Projects Could Help Target Federal Resources](#)

[GAO: Climate Change: Analysis of Reported Federal Funding](#)

[GAO: Limiting the Federal Government's Fiscal Exposure by Better Managing Climate Change Risks](#)





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