

# National Nature Assessment & Other White House Nature Efforts

Ecological Society of America Briefing

Dec 6, 2022

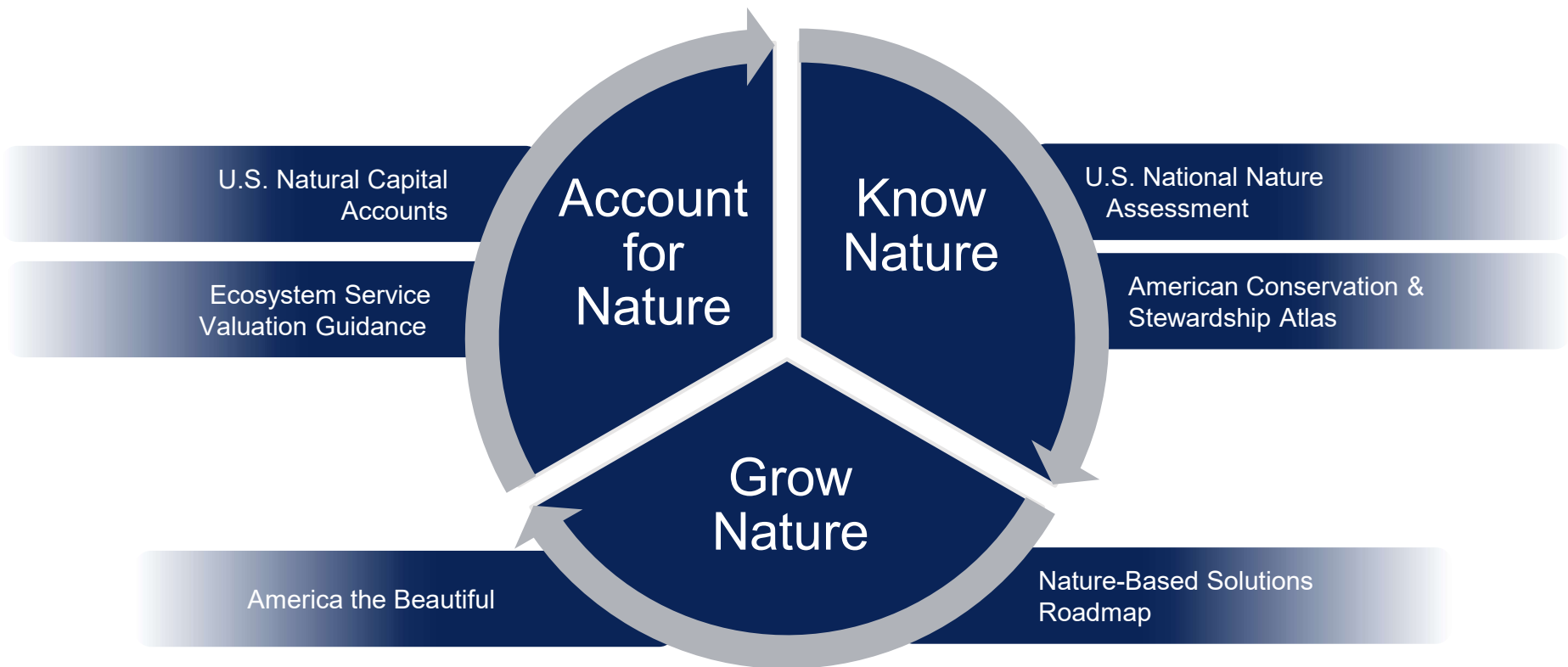
Heather Tallis

Acting Director, National Nature Assessment

# Nature Is Essential

Nature is critical to our economy and our lives. To achieve national goals for climate change, equity, economic prosperity and global competitiveness, the Biden-Harris White House is leading all-of-government efforts to better know, account for, and grow nature.

# White House Nature Strategy

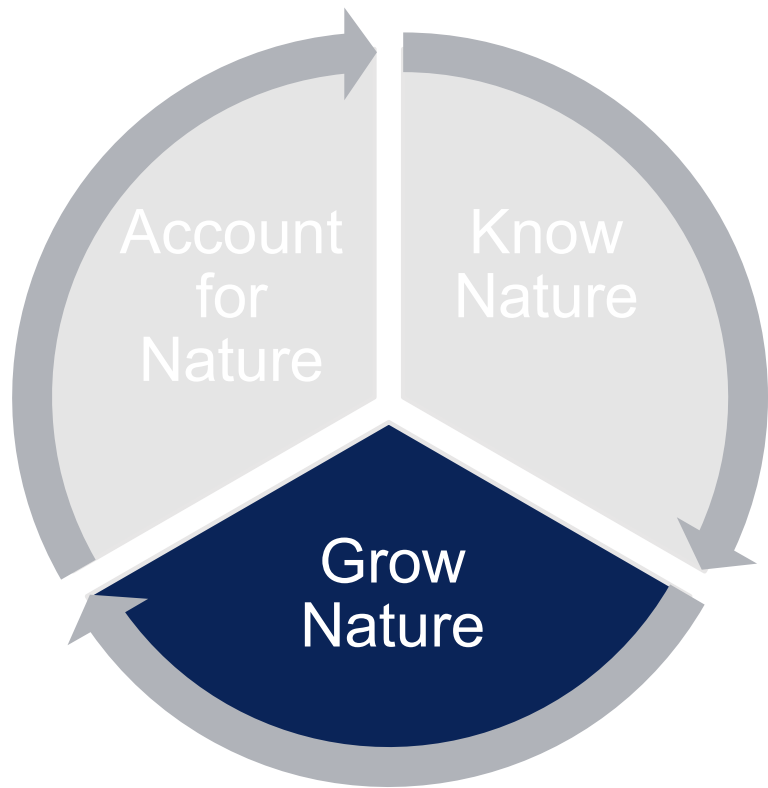


# Grow Nature

Nature is essential to America- and to meeting Biden-Harris Administration goals. We must reverse the trend of nature loss.

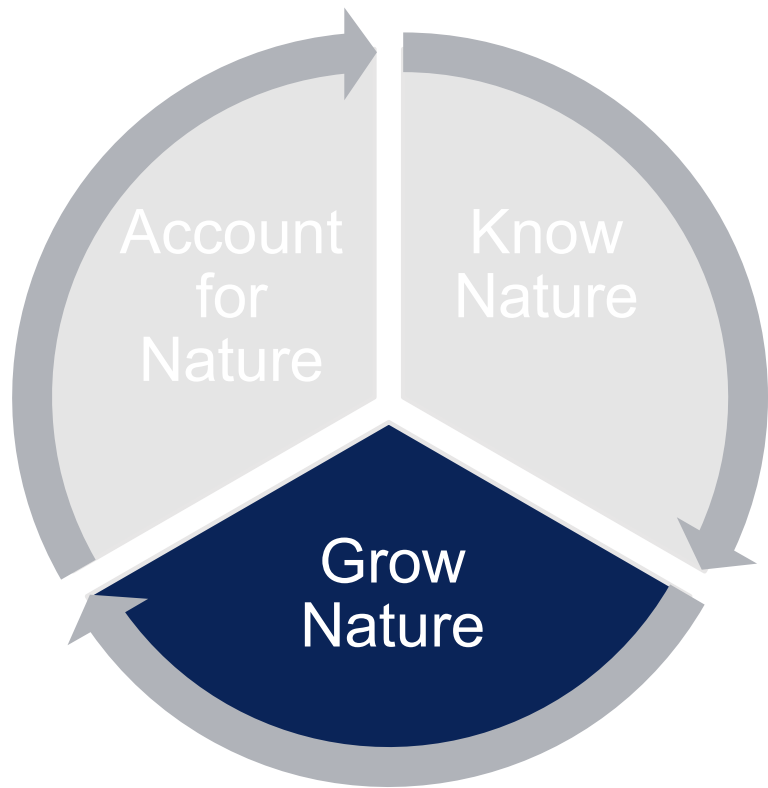


# America the Beautiful



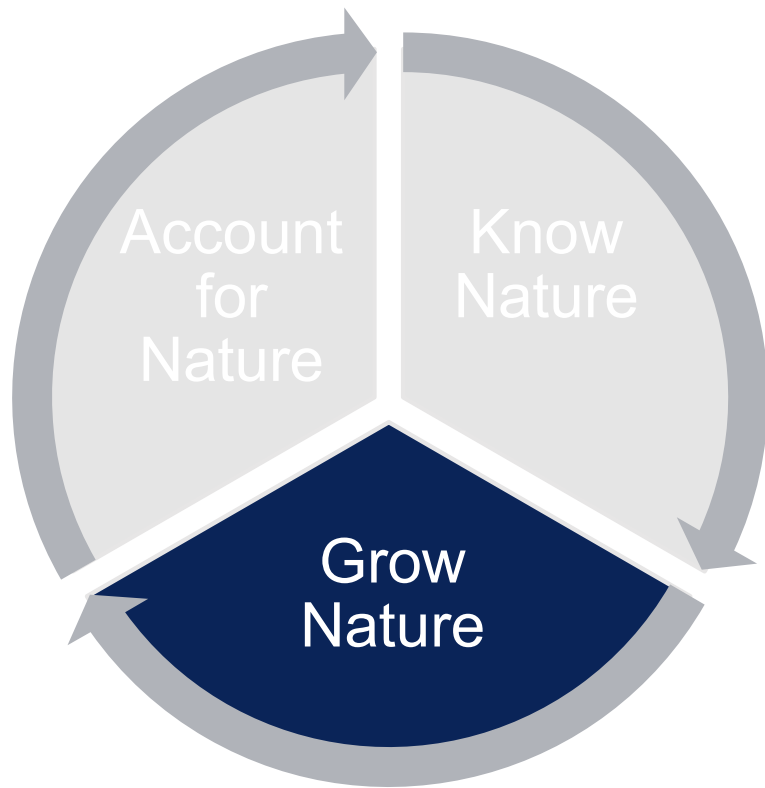
- **Conserve 30% of US lands and waters by 2030**
- DOI, USDA, NOAA, CEQ lead
- Focus on benefits to biodiversity, climate and equity
- Emphasize all can contribute

# Convention on Biological Diversity



- **Strong global framework for conservation**
- Including global goal aligned with America the Beautiful, and beyond
- Orient economic policies to generate net gains in natural asset wealth

# Nature-Based Solutions Roadmap



- No path to net zero without nature
- OSTP, CEQ and CPO led
- All-of-government recommendations to unlock full potential of nature-based solutions
- **Nature-based solutions should be go-to options** for climate, equity, prosperity—and we know how to get there

ROADMAP



GUIDE

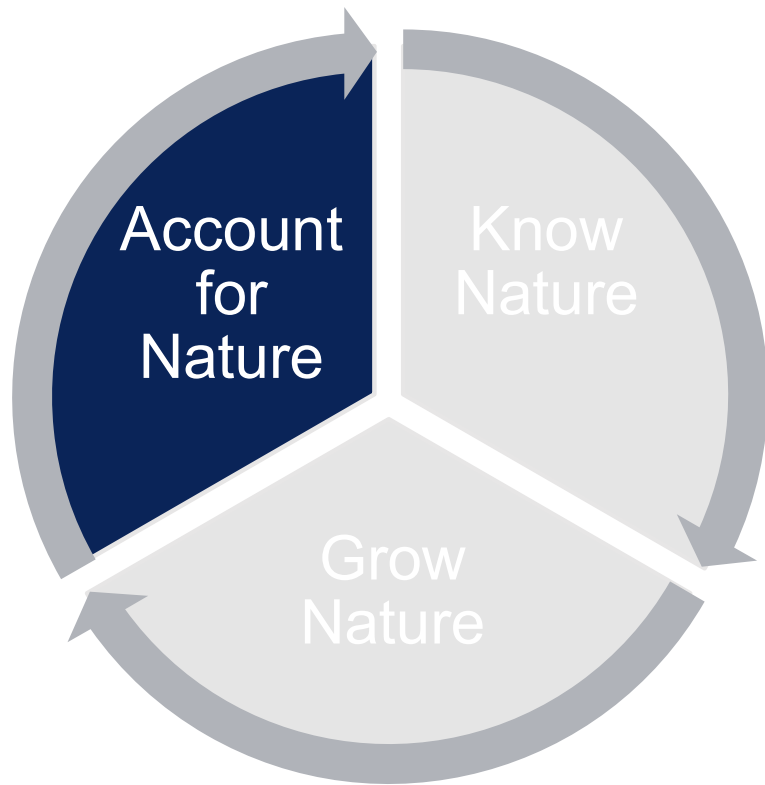


# Account for Nature

Nature provides critical benefits- that are largely invisible in our accounting systems. It's easy to mis-manage what you can't see. It is time to more fully account for nature in Federal decisions.

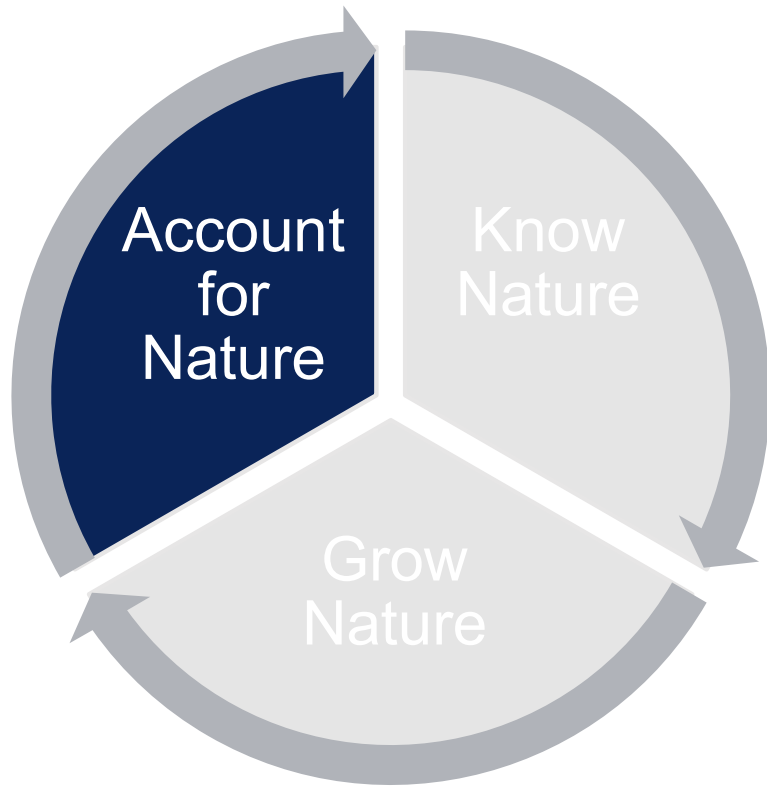


# Natural Capital Accounts & Statistics



- **Put nature on the nation's balance sheet**
- DOC, OMB, OSTP lead
- Track natural asset stocks and flows of ecosystem services—in physical and monetary terms
- First accounts next year, build over next decade

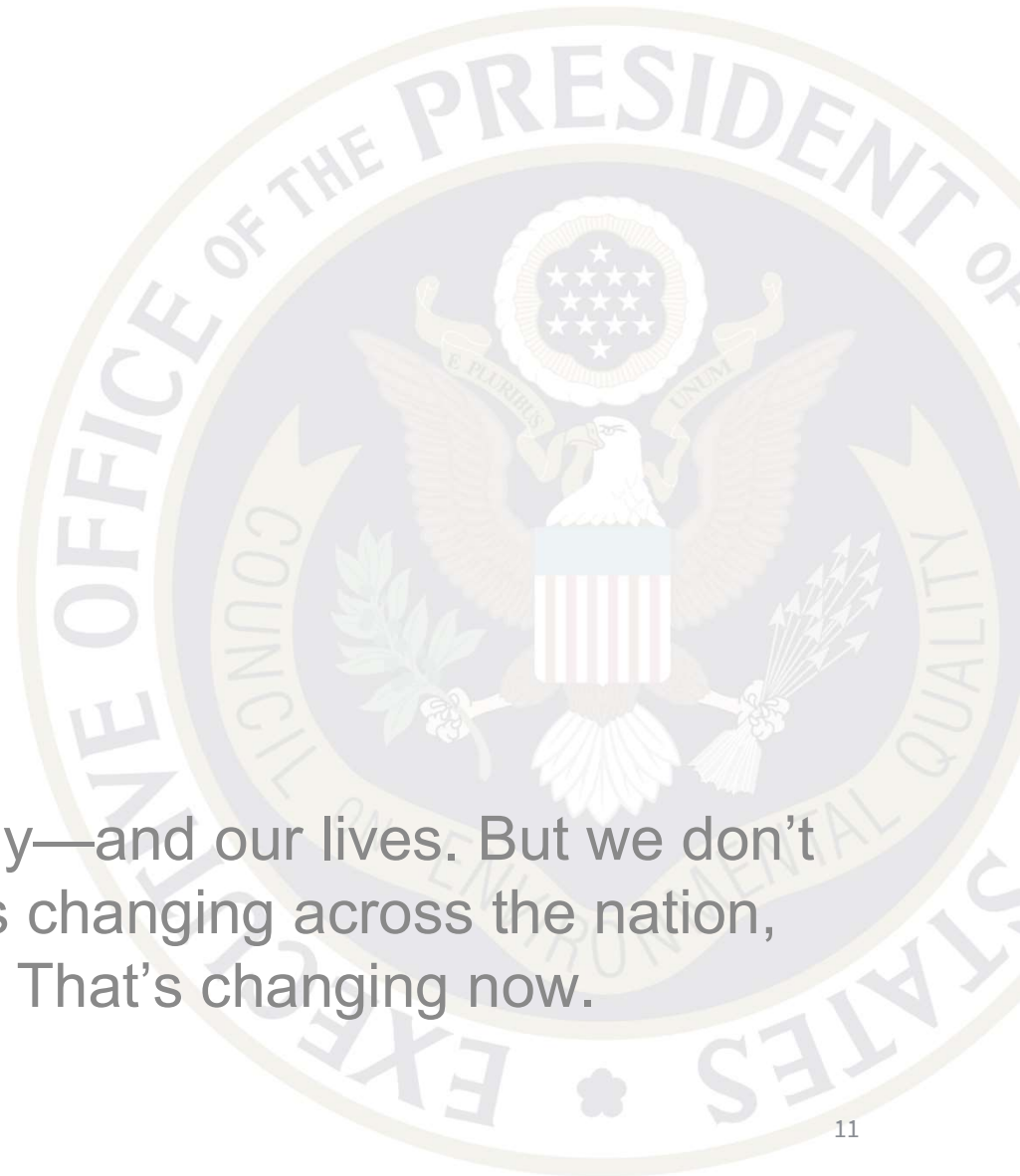
# Ecosystem Service Valuation



- **Account for nature's benefits and cost savings Federal in benefit-cost analysis**
- OMB leads
- Updating central guidance on methods
- Creating Federal technical working group to build capacity

# Know Nature

Nature is important to the economy—and our lives. But we don't have a full picture of how nature is changing across the nation, and what that means for our lives. That's changing now.



# American Conservation and Stewardship Atlas



- **Track progress towards conserving 30% of US lands and waters by 2030**
- USGS leads
- Picture of how conservation is changing and benefitting biodiversity, climate and equity

# National Nature Assessment



- **Take stock of nature across the nation- and benefits**
- **Look ahead to future of nature and how nature can contribute to the future we want**
- Build on Conservation and Stewardship Atlas, Natural Capital Accounts, Indigenous Knowledge, existing data and assessments

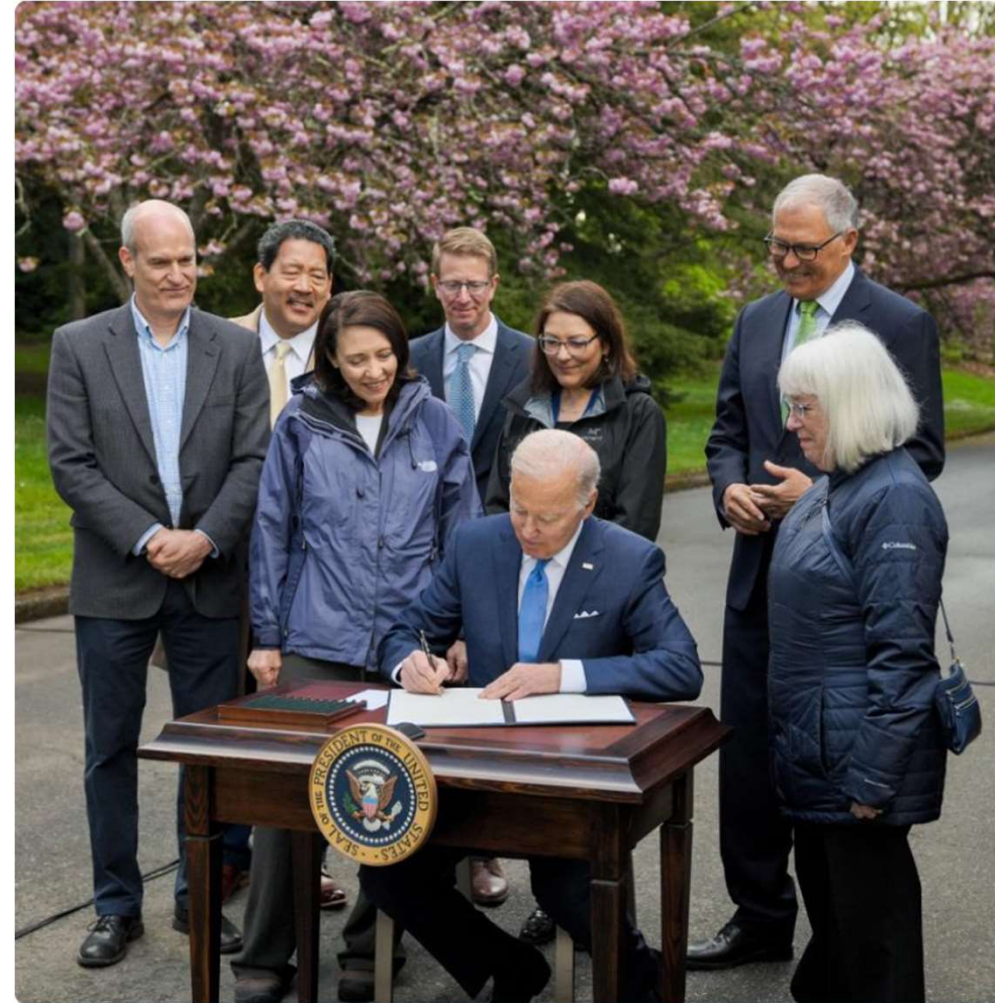
# National Nature Assessment

Introduction to Request for Information on  
Framing the Assessment

# Executive Order 14072

Strengthening the Nation's Forests,  
Communities & Local Economies

- Requested USGCRP to conduct the first-ever National Nature Assessment



# NNA1 Direction

## SCOPE

The NNA will assess the status, observed trends, and future projections of America's lands, waters, wildlife, biodiversity and ecosystems and the benefits they provide, including connections to the economy, public health, equity, climate mitigation and adaptation, and national security.

The NNA considers nature in US states, marine areas (exclusive economic zone), territories, Native or Indigenous lands and waters, and other affiliated areas (as appropriate), as well as its significant interactions with global changes.



# NNA1 Direction

## PRINCIPLES

- Authoritative, credible, timely, and concise
- Fully compliant with relevant laws and policies
- Policy relevant but not policy prescriptive
- Transparent, accurate and reproducible with well-documented methods
- Inclusive
- Use- inspired
- Accessible to the widest possible audience

# Federal Steering Committee

- Responsible for delivering the NNA by 2026
- 13 agencies of USGCRP
- Chair, Vice Chair
- DOI Technical Support Unit, Administrative Agency

## MEMBERS

Heather Tallis – USGCRP, Chair  
Allison Crimmins – USGCRP, Vice Chair  
Jason Link – Department of Commerce  
Todd Bridges – Department of Defense  
Tristram West – Department of Energy  
Chris Dawson – Department of State  
Jacob Malcom – Department of the Interior  
Britta Bierwagen – Environmental Protection Agency  
Flora Katz – Department of Health and Human Services  
Woody Turner – National Aeronautic and Space Administration  
Jack Meszaros – National Science Foundation  
Kyle Connors – Office of Management and Budget  
Holly Sweat – Smithsonian Institution  
Sarah Carlson – US Agency for International Development  
Chris Hartley – US Department of Agriculture

Credit: NPS/ Jacob W. Frank

# Public Engagement - We Need You!

- Beacon of use-inspired knowledge
- Accessible to widest-possible audience
  
- Request for Information OPEN NOW
- Ongoing throughout process



Credit: Marsh and Coneflower USFWS,  
Tree lined street, simonrumi, Kite  
NPS/Janice Wei

# Framing the First NNA

- Use-inspired assessment
- Definition of nature
- Relevant knowledge

## PUBLIC COMMENT



Credit: Marsh and Coneflower USFWS,  
Tree lined street, simonrumi, Kite  
NPS/Janice Wei

# Use-Inspired Assessment

***Design is driven by potential uses of final products***

*Audiences and processes*

- Who are the key audiences for, or users of the NNA?
- What engagement processes should be used so that users are best able to participate?
- What forms of engagement are likely to help USGCRP meet principle of inclusivity?

# Use-Inspired Assessment

## *Scope*

- What decisions should the NNA help inform?
- What needs can the assessment fill?
- What questions should the NNA answer?
- How far back in time should the NNA look and what kinds of questions about the future should be answered?

# Use-Inspired Assessment

## *Products*

- What kinds of products can best communicate the findings?
- How should information be organized (e.g. regions, benefits, policies)?

# Definition of Nature

*Many experiences with nature, many ways of knowing nature*

- What does nature mean to you?
- What should the definition of nature used in the NNA include, and exclude, and why?



# Relevant Knowledge

*Many existing sources of knowledge and ways of knowing nature.*

*Guided by new White House Guidance For Federal Departments and Agencies on Indigenous Knowledge:*

- How can USGCRP best engage with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to develop the NNA?
- How should IK be woven with other ways of knowing?

# Relevant Knowledge

*Many existing sources of knowledge and ways of knowing nature.*

- What existing assessments and knowledge efforts should the NNA draw from to provide a comprehensive view of the status, observed trends and future projections of nature and its benefits in the United States, and why?
- How can USGCRP best engage with local communities to incorporate their lived experiences into the NNA?
- What existing datasets, knowledge sources, information or stories should USGCRP draw from in creating the NNA, and why?
- How should the NNA be designed to add value beyond what these existing efforts and sources already provide?

# Providing Useful Input

- Answer the questions
- You can answer one or more questions – do not have to answer all
- Make your recommendation clear, and give your rationale (don't assume we know what you are thinking or that we agree with you)
- If you answer more than one question, answer each independently
- Be bold in your thinking, and keep constraints in mind
- *Do* back up your points with citations or examples if you like, *don't* send long lists of references without interpretation



We want to hear from you!