



**Cornell University**  
**The University Faculty**

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To: Deans, Directors and Department Chairs  
Faculty Senators

From: Charles Van Loan, Dean of Faculty

Re: Request to Rename Department of Natural Resources

The faculty of the Department of Natural Resources in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences would like to change its name to the *Department of Natural Resources and the Environment*. Notice of this name change is being sent to the Deans, Directors and Department Chairs in accordance with the [policy](#) adopted by the Faculty Senate in November 2001. Any questions or comments about this name change should be sent to [deanoffaculty@cornell.edu](mailto:deanoffaculty@cornell.edu) by March 9, 2020.

### **Rationale**

The primary reason for the requested name change is to have the department's name better reflect what it does. The department has always worked towards prudent management of nature's abundant plant and animal resources. Its work recognizes the balance needed in sustaining both humanity and the environment and integrates understanding of these elements. Given the more modern emphasis on environmental sustainability, the department's focus is now broader than the more traditional management of natural resources. Focal research and teaching areas currently represent a more comprehensive approach to environmental sustainability with a reach that includes invasive species management, conservation genetics, ecology, and conservation social sciences while still supporting more traditional programs (i.e. forestry, fisheries, and wildlife management) that support CALS' Land-Grant mission. The new name will also map more directly with the expanded cross-college environment and sustainability major that is primary to the department. The department faculty voted unanimously for the inclusion of 'environment' in the department name. This name change is fully endorsed by the department chair and Dean Kathryn Boor.

### **Approval History**

The department faculty discussed this change at numerous meetings held between September 2018 and August 2019, and held an electronic vote the week of September 2, 2019. The CALS Faculty Executive Committee also held a vote after discussing the proposal during its January 9, 2020 meeting. Both votes support the name change.