



# TRCP National Sportsmen's Survey

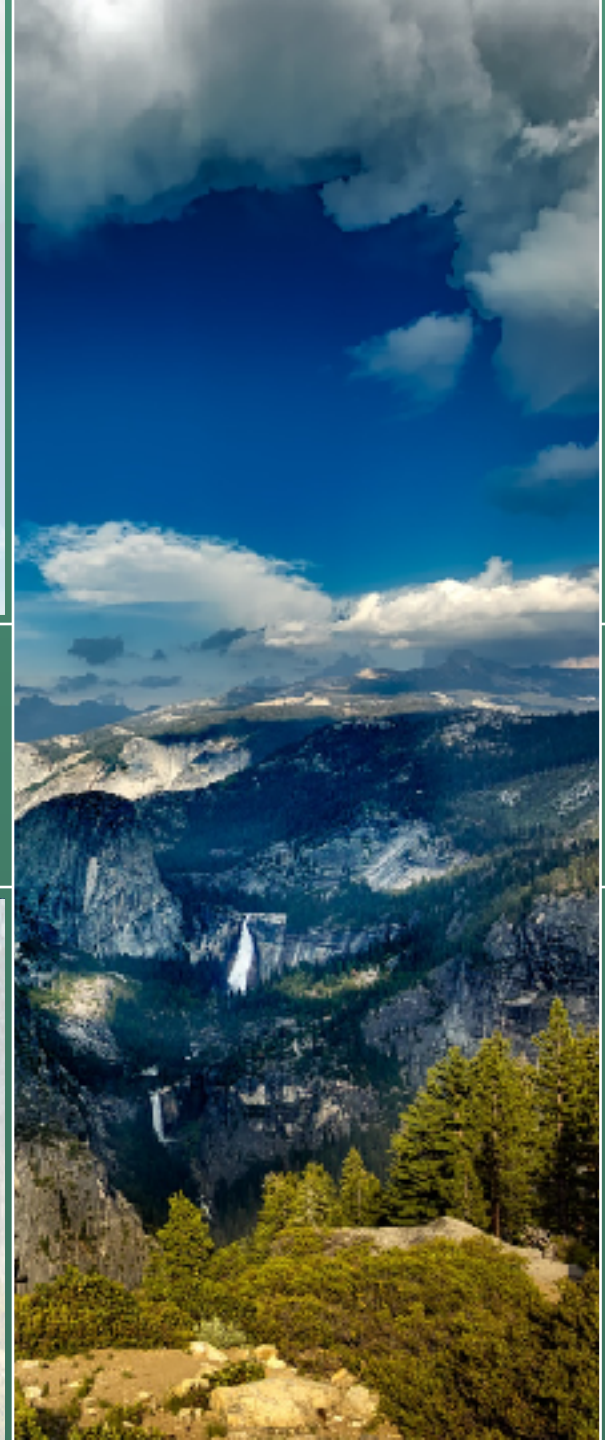
*Online/phone survey of 1,000 hunters and anglers throughout the United States*

## Lori Weigel



**PUBLIC OPINION  
STRATEGIES**

#17144



# Methodology

- ❑ Public Opinion Strategies conducted a national survey of  $N = 1,000$  voters who identify as a hunter or angler from May 1-8, 2017.
- ❑ Of the 1,000 sportsmen we interviewed, 500 interviews were conducted online, 350 on a landline phone, and 150 on a cell phone.
- ❑ The confidence interval associated with this sample is  $\pm 3.5\%$ .
- ❑ Quotas were set to ensure interviews were distributed proportionally throughout the nation. The sample is demographically representative of hunters and anglers.



# Hunters & Anglers

# Key Demographics



## Gender

Male 62%  
Female 38%



## Region

Northeast 17%  
Midwest 27%  
South 37%  
West 18%



## Age

18-34 28%  
35-44 22%  
45-54 12%  
55-64 20%  
65+ 18%



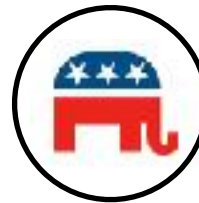
## Community

Urban 17%  
Suburban 30%  
Rural 33%



## Ethnicity

White 79%  
Total Non-White 20%



## Party

Republican 37%  
Independent 36%  
Democrat 20%

# Most sportsmen have hunted or fished waters on public lands.



Hunt big game such as deer or elk

**% who...**

**73%**

Hunt small game

**57%**

Hunt upland birds & waterfowl

**42%**



Hunted on privately owned land

**31%**

Hunted on public lands

**13%**

Hunted on BOTH private and public lands

**51%**



Fished waters on privately owned land

**% who...**

**4%**

Fished waters on public lands

**38%**

Fished waters on BOTH private and public lands

**56%**

**They report spending an average of over \$800 on hunting and angling activities in an average year.**

**Less Than  
\$200**

**31%**

**\$200-\$999**

**46%**

**More than  
\$1,000**

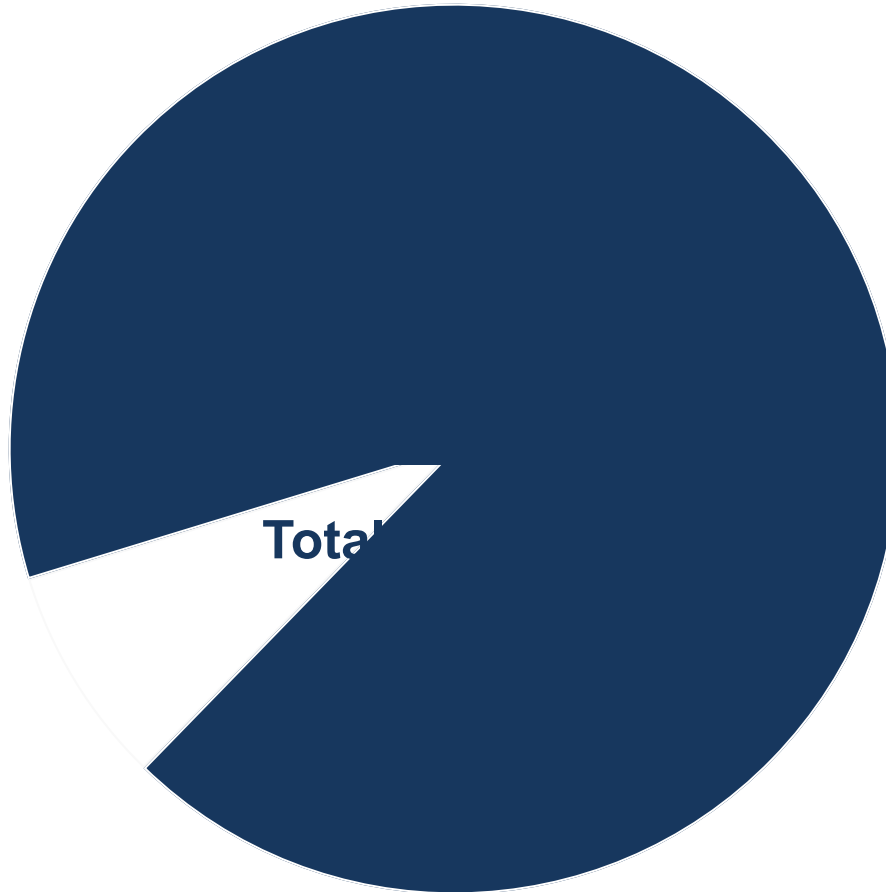
**23%**

**MEAN  
\$815**

*Approximately how much do you spend in an average year on everything related 1) hunting; 2) fishing OR 3) hunting and fishing), including equipment, licenses, lodging, guides, travelling to those areas, and anything else related to the sport?*

# The sportsmen we interviewed say their sport is important compared to other personal activities.

Importance of Hunting or Fishing to You Personally



*Compared to other activities you participate in, how important is hunting and fishing to you personally?*

# Hunters and anglers worry that outdoor opportunities are being lost for the next generation.

**I worry that our outdoor traditions and recreation opportunities are being lost for the next generation.**

Strongly Agree

Total Agree

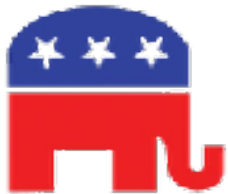
**52%** **85%**

*For each of the following, please tell me if you agree or disagree with that particular statement.*



# 81%

Consider themselves a  
conservationist, including  
sportsmen across party lines...



83%



80%



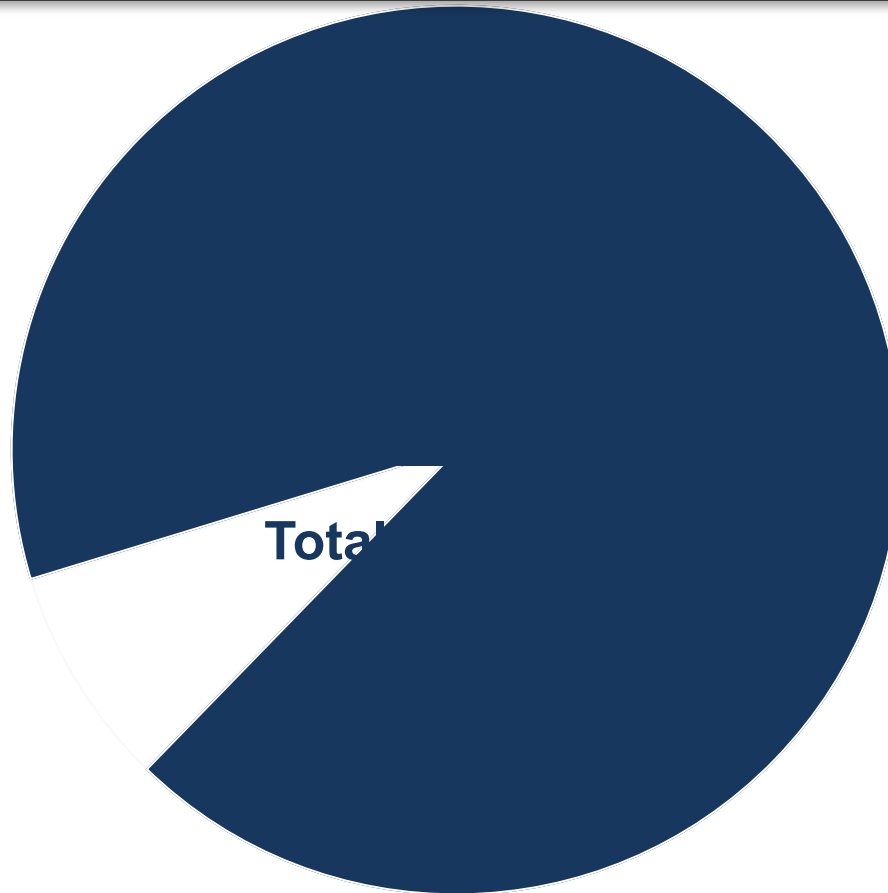
81%



# Importance of Conservation Issues

# A resounding nine-in-ten sportsmen say that conservation issues are important in support for an elected official.

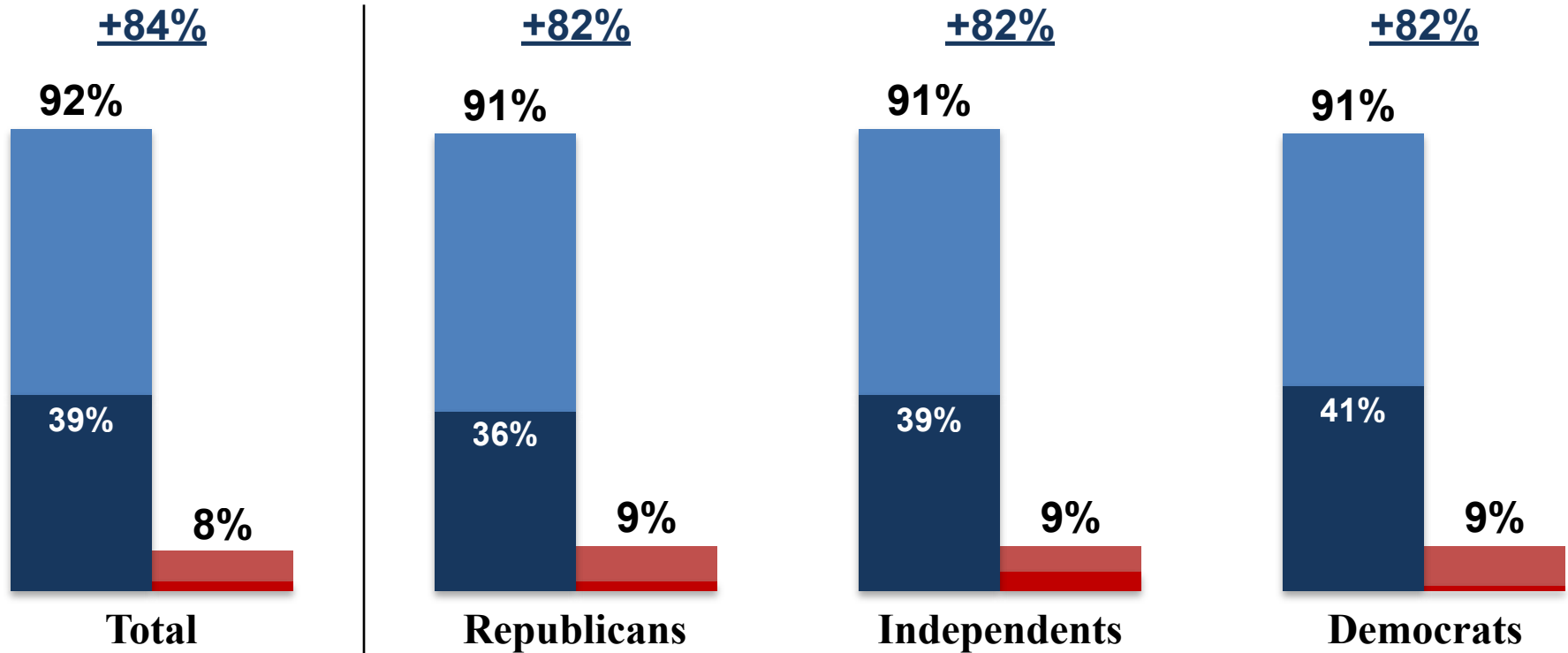
## Importance of Conservation Issues in Support for Elected Official



*Compared to other issues like the economy, health care, and education, how important are issues involving protecting fish and wildlife habitat, public lands and water quality of lakes, rivers and streams for you in deciding whether to support an elected public official? Are they...*

# A majority of sportsmen across the political spectrum say that conservation issues are important.

*Conservation Issues are Important by Party*



■ Very Important     
 ■ Total Important     
 Column4     
 ■ Not at all Important  
■ Total Not Important     
 Much Too Slow

*Compared to other issues like the economy, health care, and education, how important are issues involving protecting fish and wildlife habitat, public lands and water quality of lakes, rivers and streams for you in deciding whether to support an elected public official? Are they...*

**Sportsmen who say this is a primary factor point to the importance of their sport and these lands and waters as the reason for it affecting their vote decision.**



*And what are the one or two reasons you feel this is a primary factor in whether to support an elected public official or not?*

**Sportsmen are nine times more likely to say their Member should do more for conservation, than is doing too much.**

Would you say that your Member of Congress needs to...

**Do more to help conserve land, water and wildlife habitat** **54%**

**Is doing enough to help conserve land, water and wildlife habitat** **34%**

**Has done too much to conserve land, water and wildlife habitat** **6%**

Would you say that your Member of Congress needs to...

# Sportsmen offer this advice for their Member of Congress...



*If you were going to give some advice to your Member of Congress in how they should address issues of concern to sportsmen like you regarding fish and wildlife habitat, public lands and water quality of lakes, rivers and streams, what would you tell him or her?*

# Sportsmen say...

**“I want the elected public official to believe that we need to take care of (this), because God has given these wonderful treasures to us and because we need to be proud of our state's resources.”**

*-Woman, Angler, Trump Voter, Arkansas*

**“Never trust anyone who doesn't hunt or fish. They don't care about preservation or (the) environment around them.”**

*-Woman, Hunter & Angler, Third Party, Minn.*

**“The federal government has turned over federal land to the states and in return they are selling it for money. This is bad for the hunters and fishermen, for the land amount is getting less and less - free land for hunting and fishing.”**

*-Man, Hunter & Angler, Trump Voter, New York*

**“If someone elected doesn't support hunting or fishing, we could lose our opportunities to fish or to hunt. That would make these small towns even more depressed.”**

*-Man, Hunter & Angler, Trump Voter, Louisiana*

**“Waters need to be clean in order to have healthy fish and aquaculture. I personally fish to feed.”**

*-Man, Angler, Clinton Voter, S. Carolina*

**“I believe that these items may be an indicator of the basic beliefs of the elected party or person.”**

*-Man, Hunter & Angler, Clinton Voter, Miss.*

**“Pollution of water is a big issue and we need to improve the quality of our water and help conserve this great resource.”**

*-Man, Angler, Trump Voter, Utah*



# Hunters and anglers do not want to see funding for conservation programs cut either.

**Even with federal budget problems, funding to safeguard land, water, and wildlife should not be cut.**

Strongly Agree

Total Agree

**59%**

**87%**

*For each of the following, please tell me if you agree or disagree with that particular statement.*

# A majority of sportsmen rate all of these goals as very important.

## Policies Ranked by % Very Personally Important



*As you may know, Congress and the Administration is considering changing some policies that affect land, water and wildlife habitat in the United States. I'd like to read you some goals and priorities some people say should be important as changes are considered. Please tell me how important each one is to you personally.*

# Majorities of Trump AND Clinton voters rate these goals as very important to them.

<i>% Very Important</i>	Trump Voters	Clinton Voters
Ensuring polluters are held accountable and that protections are in place to prevent polluted spills into waterways or emissions into air.	<b>78%</b>	<b>92%</b>
Protecting and conserving public lands for future generations	<b>73%</b>	<b>90%</b>
Protecting water quality in rivers, streams and lakes by restoring forest health and conserving areas alongside streams	<b>70%</b>	<b>88%</b>
Ensuring adequate amounts of water in streams and rivers for the health of fish and for recreation opportunities	<b>66%</b>	<b>82%</b>
Protecting and conserving wildlife habitat and migration corridors	<b>64%</b>	<b>82%</b>
Ensuring access for recreational activities such as hunting, fishing and hiking	<b>67%</b>	<b>71%</b>
Restoring depleted populations of threatened wildlife and fish	<b>62%</b>	<b>76%</b>
Making sure that there is adequate funding and people to take care of public lands and provide services to visitors	<b>53%</b>	<b>72%</b>
Prioritizing the hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation uses of public lands over industrial development	<b>54%</b>	<b>67%</b>
Maintaining infrastructure on public lands adequately, like roads, trails, campgrounds, and historic sites	<b>54%</b>	<b>61%</b>

*As you may know, Congress and the Administration is considering changing some policies that affect land, water and wildlife habitat in the United States. I'd like to read you some goals and priorities some people say should be important as changes are considered. Please tell me how important each one is to you personally.*

**Sportsmen view public lands as net benefits economically by nearly an eight-to-one margin.**

**Public Lands' Impact on the Economy**

**Helps our economy 63%**

**Has little impact on our economy 27%**

**Hurts our economy 8%**

*Do you think the presence of national public lands, such as national forests, wildlife refuges or Bureau of Land Management, that is BLM, lands...*

**Similarly, they tell us that public lands are positive economic drivers.**

**Public lands like our national parks, forests, and wildlife areas positively contribute to the economy.**

Strongly Agree

Total Agree

**58%** **92%**

*For each of the following, please tell me if you agree or disagree with that particular statement.*



# Views of Sportsmen on Policy Issues

**Overwhelmingly, sportsmen see a role for the federal government in conserving natural resources.**

**Rivers and wildlife habitat cross state borders, so the federal government is necessary to get states to work together in conserving our natural resources.**

**Strongly  
Agree**

**Total  
Agree**

**54% 88%**

# There is intense and overwhelming support for policies to keep in stream flows, LWCF funding and national monuments.

<i>Actions Ranked by % Strongly Support</i>	Strongly Support	Total Support
<p>Assist states and local communities in <u>improving water conservation</u> efforts to ensure adequate water in rivers and streams for fish</p>	<p><b>56%</b></p>	<p><b>83%</b></p>
<p>Continuing to <u>keep the number and size of</u> existing national monuments created by presidents over the past thirty years that have <u>protected lands available for hunting and fishing</u></p>	<p><b>51%</b></p>	<p><b>77%</b></p>
<p>Use some of the <u>money from fees charged to oil and gas companies</u> that drill offshore for conservation of natural areas and clean water, and <u>to ensure access to outdoor recreation</u></p>	<p><b>50%</b></p>	<p><b>79%</b></p>

*Next thinking about several actions that Congress or the Administration could take. For each one, please indicate whether you would support that action, oppose that action - or feel neutral about it.*



# Similarly, three-quarters or more support conservation funding for agriculture and maintaining Forest Service funding.

<i>Actions Ranked by % Strongly Support</i>	<b>Strongly Support</b>	<b>Total Support</b>
<p><u>Allow the US Forest Service to treat the largest and most expensive wildfires as natural disasters</u> in order to have access to emergency disaster funding, like the government handles other natural disasters such as hurricanes and tornadoes</p>	<b>46%</b>	<b>79%</b>
<p><u>Provide financial incentives for farmers and ranchers</u> to conserve land for habitat and clean water, allow for public access, and practice sustainable farming and ranching methods, such as the Conservation Reserve Program, Environmental Quality Incentives Program, and Walk-in Access Programs</p>	<b>46%</b>	<b>75%</b>

*Next thinking about several actions that Congress or the Administration could take. For each one, please indicate whether you would support that action, oppose that action - or feel neutral about it.*

# There is also majority support for ensuring safety and migration corridors for wildlife.

<i>Actions Ranked by % Strongly Support</i>	Strongly Support	Total Support
<p><u>Increase funding for highway crossings and fences that help prevent vehicle collisions with wildlife</u></p>	<p><b>35%</b></p>	<p><b>70%</b></p>
<p><u>Ensure that any plans to secure the U.S. border with Mexico allow for movement of deer and big game to ensure hunting will not be negatively affected</u></p>	<p><b>29%</b></p>	<p><b>57%</b></p>

*Next thinking about several actions that Congress or the Administration could take. For each one, please indicate whether you would support that action, oppose that action - or feel neutral about it.*

# There is solid majority support across the partisan spectrum for these policies.

## *Proposals – Total Support by Party*



Improve water conservation for in-stream flows	<b>80%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>85%</b>
Keep the number and size of national monuments	<b>77%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>80%</b>
Use fees charted to oil and gas companies to ensure access to outdoor recreation	<b>80%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>77%</b>
Allow the US Forest Service to treat the largest and most expensive wildfires as natural disasters	<b>76%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>82%</b>
Provide financial incentives for farmers and ranchers for conservation	<b>71%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>82%</b>
Increase funding for wildlife crossings	<b>70%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>71%</b>
Ensure plans to secure the U.S. border allow for movement of deer and big game	<b>52%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>66%</b>

*Next thinking about several actions that Congress or the Administration could take. For each one, please indicate whether you would support that action, oppose that action - or feel neutral about it.*

# Two proposals tested - selling off public lands and transferring them to the state - elicit net negative responses.

## *Actions Ranked by % Total Support*

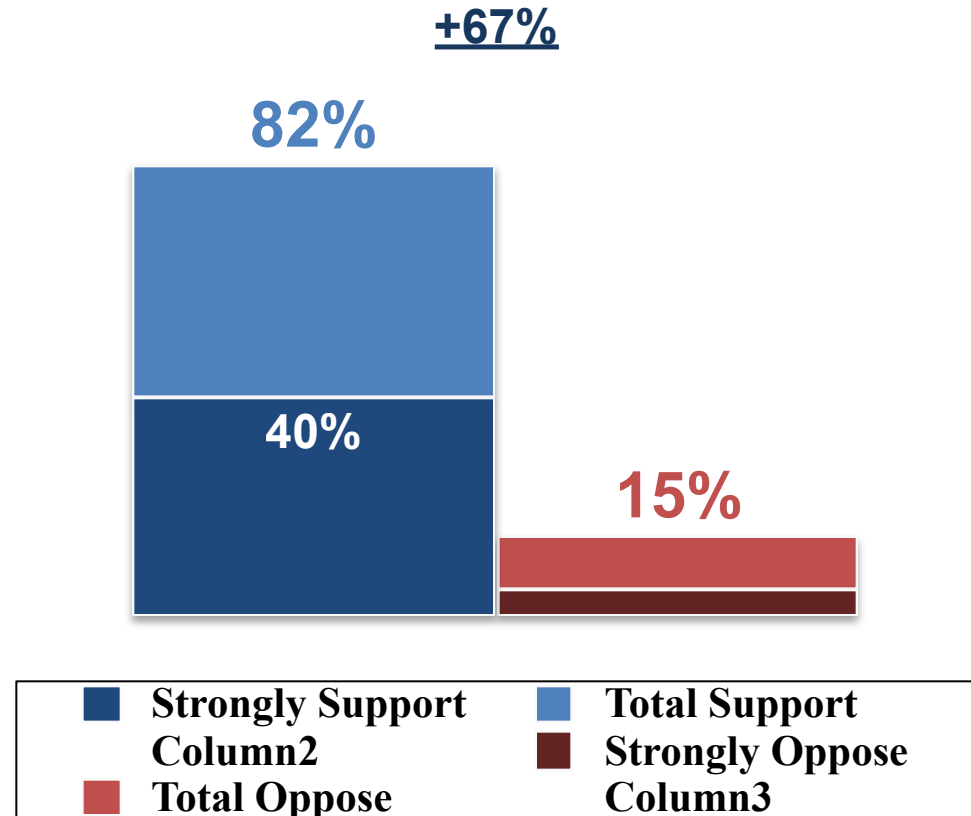
	Total Support	Total Oppose
<p><u>Give state government control over national public lands</u>, such as national forests and national wildlife refuges in its borders. The state government would decide the future management of the lands, but state taxpayers would pay all costs, including the cost of maintenance and preventing and fighting wildfires.</p>	<p><b>36%</b></p>	<p><b>50%</b></p>
<p><u>Sell significant areas of public lands</u> like national forests <u>to reduce the budget deficit</u></p>	<p><b>22%</b></p>	<p><b>67%</b></p>

*Next thinking about several actions that Congress or the Administration could take. For each one, please indicate whether you would support that action, oppose that action - or feel neutral about it.*

# Four-in-five sportsmen support BLM efforts to protect sage grouse habitat.

Approximately half of all remaining Greater sage-grouse habitat is on public lands managed by the BLM, that is the Bureau of Land Management. Because of the sage-grouse's declining population, the BLM drafted plans to protect habitat important to the bird and other game species. Those plans would keep the habitat open to camping, hunting, fishing and more, but there would be some limits on energy development and off-road vehicle use in sensitive areas.

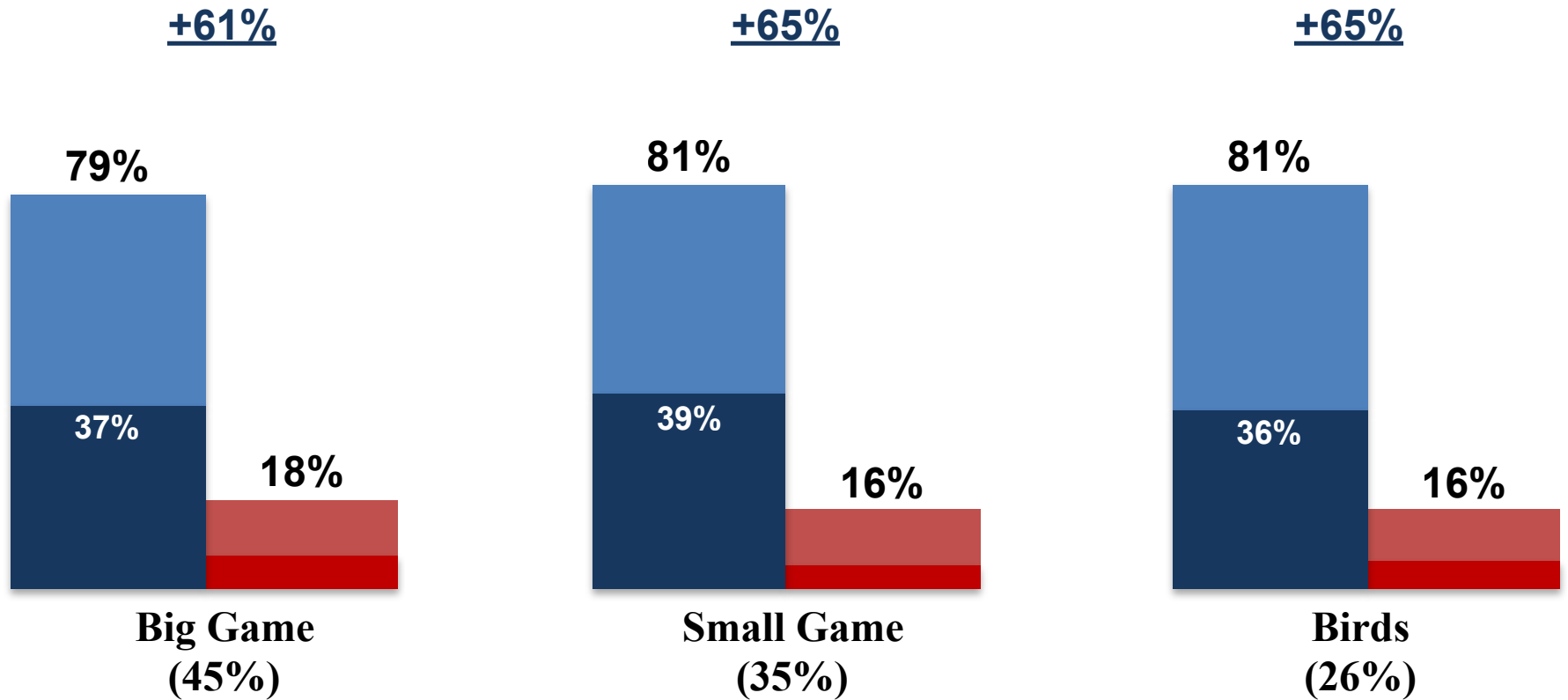
## Support for Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat



Based on what you know, do you support or oppose these plans?

# Hunters are strongly supportive no matter what type of game they hunt.

Support for Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat by Type of Game Hunted



■ Strongly Support    
 ■ Total Support    
 Column4    
 ■ Strongly Oppose  
■ Total Oppose    
 Much Too Slow

*Compared to other issues like the economy, health care, and education, how important are issues involving protecting fish and wildlife habitat, public lands and water quality of lakes, rivers and streams for you in deciding whether to support an elected public official? Are they...*

# More broadly, sportsmen gravitate toward ensuring drilling is restricted in some manner on public lands.

## Opinion on Public Land Drilling Access

There should not be drilling on public lands.

22%

Oil and gas drilling on public lands should be strictly limited.

25%

93%

Some public lands should be drilled, while environmentally sensitive places should be permanently protected.

44%

Public lands should be widely available to oil and gas drilling.

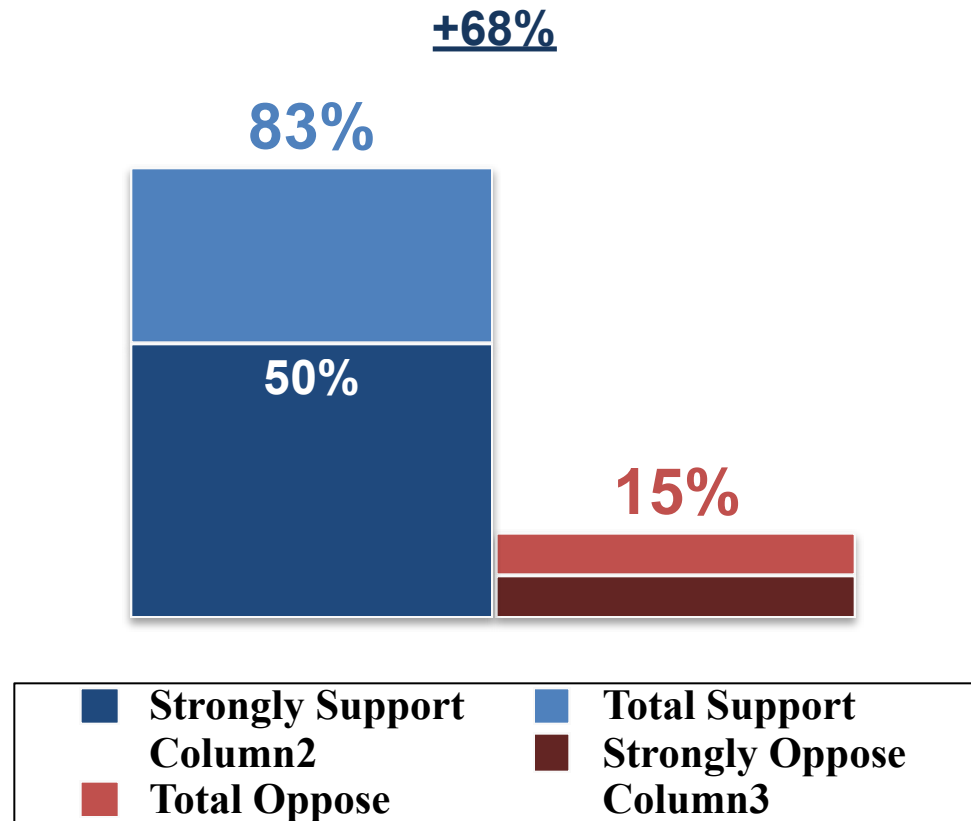
9%

*The federal government allows oil and gas drilling to take place on public lands, like national forests, wildlife refuges, and BLM lands. Which of the following comes closest to your point of view –*

# Four-in-five sportsmen support applying CWA to smaller headwater streams and wetlands.

A couple of years ago, the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said that smaller streams and wetlands which flow into larger rivers, lakes and eventually the ocean are protected under the Clean Water Act – a point that had been unclear after a number of recent court decisions. Do you support or oppose applying the same Clean Water Act rules and standards that apply to larger rivers to these smaller, headwater streams and wetlands?

## Support for CWA Standards Expansion

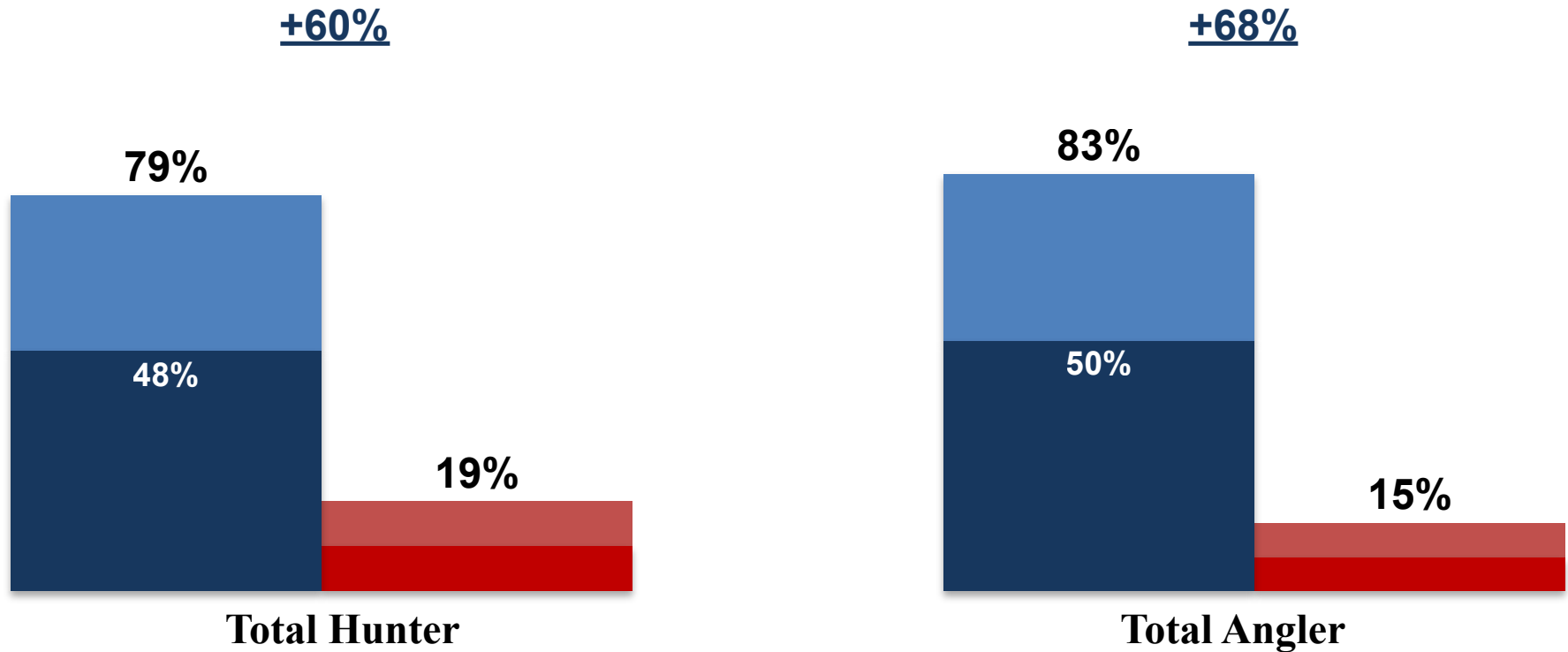


Do you support or oppose applying the same Clean Water Act rules and standards that apply to larger rivers to these smaller, headwater streams and wetlands?



# Anglers and hunters alike support applying the Clean Water Act to headwater streams.

Support for CWA Standards Expansion by Sportsmen Type



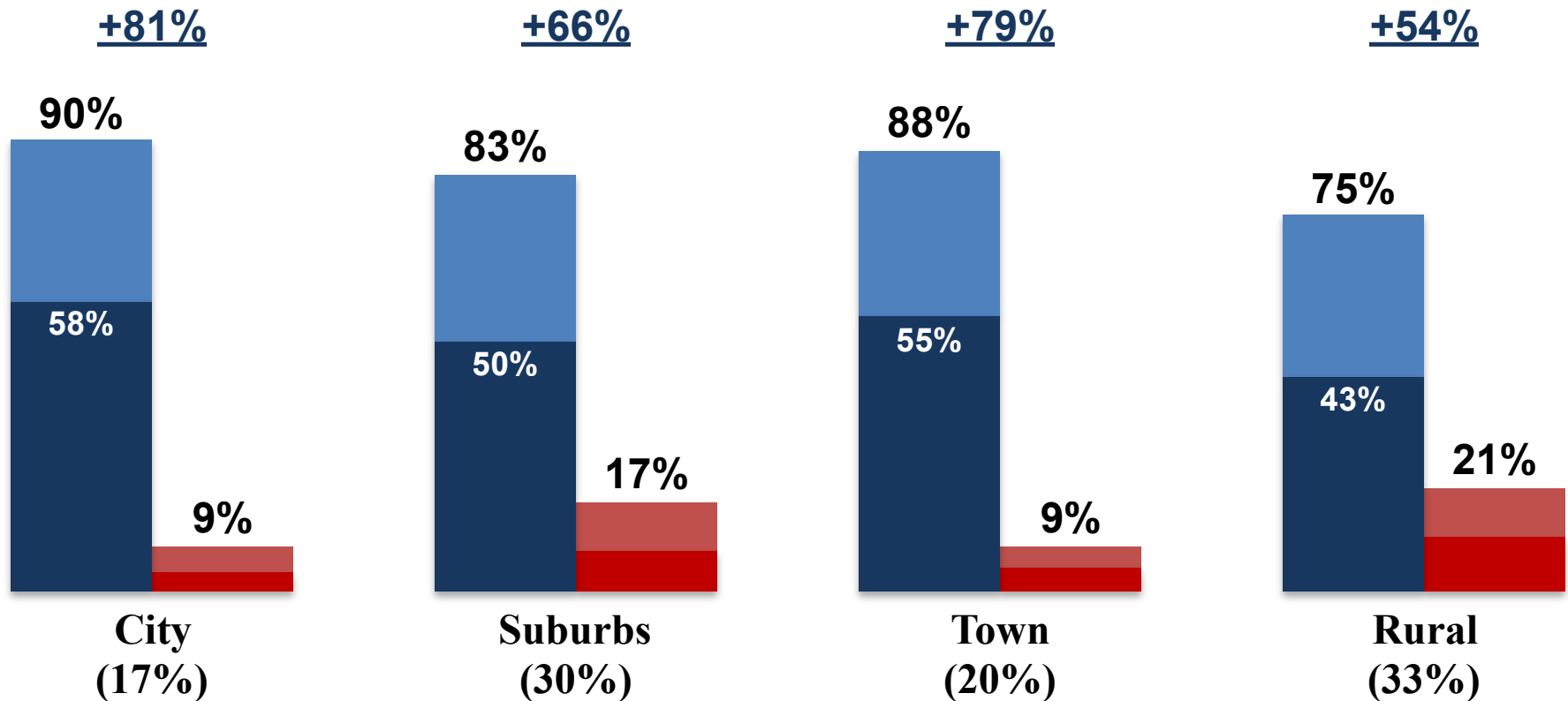
Strongly Support
  Total Support
  Strongly Oppose

Total Oppose
  Much Too Slow
  Column4

*Do you support or oppose applying the same Clean Water Act rules and standards that apply to larger rivers to these smaller, headwater streams and wetlands?*

# Three-quarters or more in every type of community support applying Clean Water Act to smaller streams.

Support for CWA Standards Expansion by Geography

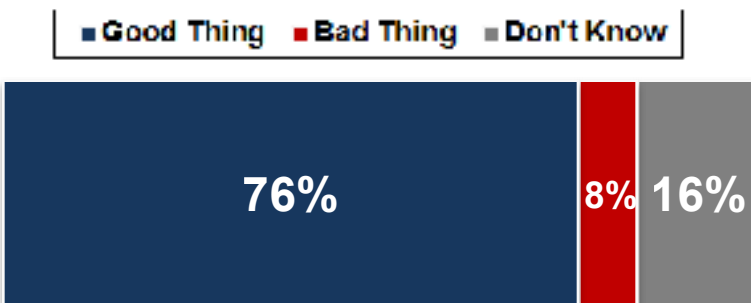


■ Strongly Support    
 ■ Total Support    
 ■ Strongly Oppose  
■ Total Oppose    
 Column4    
 Much Too Slow

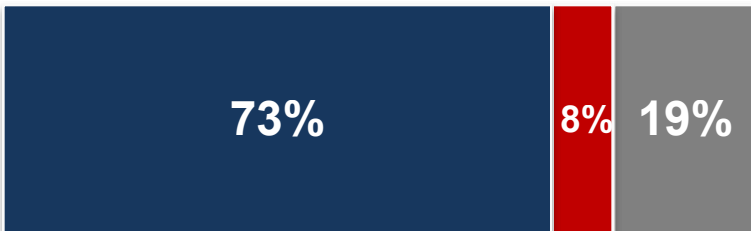
*Do you support or oppose applying the same Clean Water Act rules and standards that apply to larger rivers to these smaller, headwater streams and wetlands?*

# Past laws to protect the environment are overwhelmingly seen as positives by sportsmen.

The Clean Water Act, which reduced polluted runoff and prevented destruction of wetlands, rivers, streams, and lakes



The Endangered Species Act, which seeks to recover threatened species from potentially being extinct

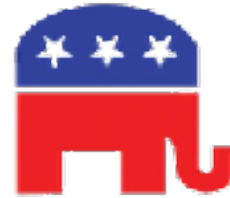


The National Environmental Policy Act, which requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions and include public input before making decisions



*Thinking about some laws passed previously – For each one, please indicate if you think that has ended up being (ROTATE) -- more of a good thing, more of a bad thing – OR whether you do not know enough to say one way or the other.*

# There is solid majority support across the partisan spectrum for these laws.



*Laws – Good thing by Party*

The Clean Water Act	<b>75%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>83%</b>
The Endangered Species Act	<b>69%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>80%</b>
The National Environmental Policy Act	<b>60%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>72%</b>

*Thinking about some laws passed previously – For each one, please indicate if you think that has ended up being -- more of a good thing, more of a bad thing – OR whether you do not know enough to say one way or the other.*



Questions?





**PUBLIC OPINION  
STRATEGIES**

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