



NEW PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH REVEALS:

**VOTERS WANT MORE PROTECTION FOR WILDLIFE**

New public opinion research from Defenders of Wildlife reveals broad and diverse support for the National Wildlife Refuge System among registered voters in three key regions: Florida, Southern California and the Intermountain West. The key findings, summarized below, also demonstrate that voters strongly support making specific financial investments in wildlife refuges. Defenders commissioned a national poll to inform its National Wildlife Refuge Expansion Campaign, which seeks to address the biodiversity and climate crises by investing in and expanding the nation's system of refuges.

## 1. **Strong support exists for a proposal to invest \$1.5 billion in National Wildlife Refuge System expansion and maintenance.**

- **80%** of voters polled support investments in the National Wildlife Refuge System.
- **95%** of Democrats, **80%** of Republicans and **64%** of Independents support the proposal.
- **80%** of Floridians, **81%** of Southern Californians and **79%** of voters from the Intermountain West support the proposal.
- **Four in five** outdoor recreationists support the proposal, including three-quarters of anglers and two-thirds of hunters.

## 2. **Voters overwhelmingly recognize the benefits of the National Wildlife Refuge System.**

- **More than 80%** of voters see **protection of water quality, habitat and species** at risk as key refuge benefits.
- Of the many benefits that national wildlife refuges offer, **77%** of voters say that the **protection of iconic species and wildlife corridors** is “**extremely**” or “**very important.**”

### 3. Voters broadly value protecting species at risk of extinction, as well as iconic keystone species like wolves, grizzly bears, American bison and bald eagles that are vital to ecosystems.

- **Most voters** strongly believe that **more needs to be done to help wildlife** in their state and protect them from threats.
- **90%** of voters see **pollution of air and water as a threat to wildlife**, and **88%** see **new development as a significant threat**.
- For **80%** of voters, the fact that when a **species disappears** from an **ecosystem, other species** that depend on them for **food or pollination** also **disappear** is a compelling reason to support investment in refuges.

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**About the Poll:** The bipartisan polling team of FM3 Research (D) and New Bridge Strategy (R) conducted 707 online interviews in three key regions from Sept. 26–Oct. 11, 2022. The margin of error is  $\pm 5.9\%$  at the 95% Confidence Level for the Florida sample,  $\pm 6.9\%$  at the 95% Confidence Level for Southern California and  $\pm 6.5\%$  at the 95% Confidence Level for Intermountain West. Due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to 100%.



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