



OPINION
RESEARCH
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PUBLIC OPINION
STRATEGIES

TO: Interested Parties

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RE: Wisconsin Voters Back Reauthorization of LWCF

DATE: June 30, 2018

A recent statewide survey of Wisconsin voters¹ conducted by the bipartisan research team of FM3 Research (D) and Public Opinion Strategies (R) demonstrates overwhelming support for Congress to reauthorize and continue to fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Support for reauthorization of LWCF extends across party lines, across the state, and with all key demographic subgroups. Specifically, the survey found that:

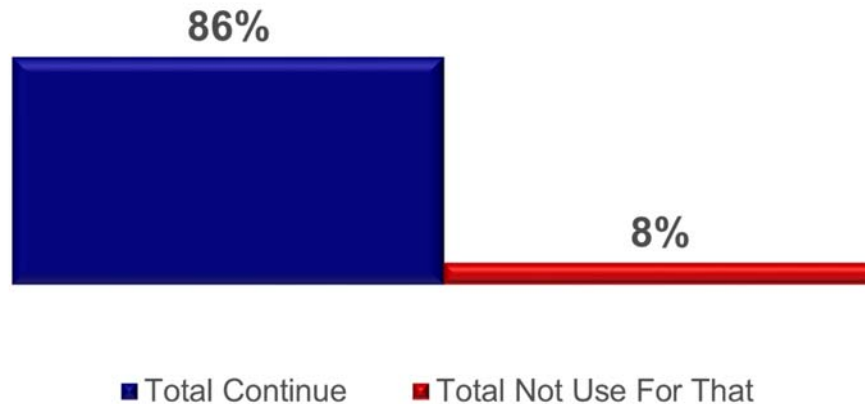
- **The overwhelming majority of Wisconsin voters want Congress to reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.** Fully 86 percent of the state's electorate would prefer that the nation continue to fund LWCF. Only eight percent of the electorate would prefer to have those funds available for different purposes. Respondents were read a neutral explanation of the Land and Water Conservation Fund as follows in order to have the same level of information about the Fund:

"The Land and Water Conservation Fund is a national program that was established in 1965 to help conserve, develop and ensure access to outdoor recreation resources for the benefit of all Americans. This fund supports our parks, recreation and open spaces, and protects forests and wildlife areas. The program is funded by fees paid by oil and gas companies drilling offshore. It has funded conservation of natural areas throughout Wisconsin, such as the Ice Age Trail and the Apostle Islands National Seashore. The program is set to expire this September unless Congress acts to re-authorize the program."

Respondents were then asked whether they "think that Congress should reauthorize this program to provide on-going, long-term funding for the Land and Water Conservation Foundation" or whether they think they should use those funds for other purposes. As the following graph illustrates, by a ratio of more than ten-to-one, Wisconsin voters want to continue to have these funds dedicated to LWCF.

¹ **Methodology:** From June 6-11, 2018, FM3 and POS completed 500 telephone interviews with registered voters throughout the state of Wisconsin. Interviews were conducted on landlines and cell phones. The margin of sampling error for the full sample is +/-4.4 percent; margins of sampling error for subgroups within the sample will be larger. Some percentages may sum to more than 100 percent due to rounding.

Reauthorize and Continue Land and Water Conservation Fund or Use Funds for Something other than Conservation



The desire to have continued federal investments in the Land and Water Conservation Fund is evident across all major segments of the electorate, including:

- ✓ 91% of Democrats, 88% of independents, and 79% of Republicans;
- ✓ 92% of moderates, 77% of conservatives, and 95% of liberals;
- ✓ 88% of men and 85% of women;
- ✓ 88% of voters of color, and 87% of whites;
- ✓ 87% of urban voter, 90% of suburban voters, 89% of small town residents, and 82% of rural residents; and
- ✓ 83% of voters in the Green Bay/Appleton media markets, 87% of voters in the Milwaukee media market, 91% of those in the Madison area, and 86% of those in the northern portions of the state.

- **Support for LWCF may be grounded in the view that conservation is important to Wisconsin's economy.** Fully 95 percent agree that "protecting water quality and land in Wisconsin is critical to keeping the state's economy strong." An overwhelming majority (78 percent) strongly agrees with this view. This view is also widely shared across party lines, as 95 percent of Republicans, 90 percent of independents indicate agreement, along with virtually all - 99 percent - of Democrats.

Similarly, there is nearly complete agreement that "keeping our lands and waters healthy both benefits our economy and quality of life here in Wisconsin" (99 percent agree).

Wisconsin voters overwhelmingly support reauthorization of LWCF, with broad support across every demographic sub-group and throughout the state. It also holds strong support across party lines, perhaps in part due to the sense that investments in conservation are positive for the state economy.