

October 14, 2014

To: Interested Parties
From: Ben Tulchin, Ben Krompak, and Kiel Brunner; Tulchin Research
Re: **New Poll Finds Strong Support for Protecting Greater Sage-Grouse, Including Listing As An Endangered Species**

Tulchin Research recently conducted a survey on issues relating to the protection and conservation of greater sage-grouse in the western United States. We interviewed 800 likely November 2014 voters across Colorado, Montana, Nevada, and Wyoming. Our research finds large majorities of voters in these states support efforts to protect sage-grouse in this region, including listing this native western bird under the Endangered Species Act, if necessary.

Voters Hold Sage-Grouse in High Esteem, Strong Majorities Would Support Listing the Species under the Endangered Species Act to Prevent Extinction

Our polling finds broad awareness of and very positive feelings towards sage-grouse – an icon of the American West – among voters in all four states. Sage-grouse are viewed favorably by Colorado voters by a 39-point margin (44% favorable to 5% unfavorable), by Montana voters by a 57-point margin (67% favorable to 10% unfavorable), by Nevada voters by a 35-point margin (42% favorable to 7% unfavorable), and by Wyoming voters by a 68-point margin (77% favorable to 9% unfavorable).

<i>“Are you familiar with the species of bird known as sage-grouse? Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion about it?”</i>					
	Overall	Colorado Voters	Montana Voters	Nevada Voters	Wyoming Voters
Yes, Favorable	54%	44%	67%	42%	77%
Yes, Unfavorable	7%	5%	10%	7%	9%
Not Familiar / Don’t Know	38%	51%	24%	51%	14%
Favorable – Unfavorable	+47	+39	+57	+35	+68

Additionally, voters overwhelmingly support increased protections for sage-grouse. Strong majorities in all four states indicated they would support listing sage-grouse under the Endangered Species Act if necessary to prevent extinction, including:

- 75 percent of voters in Colorado;
- 67 percent of voters in Nevada;
- 62 percent of voters in Montana; and
- 57 percent of voters in Wyoming.

<i>“If current state and local conservation plans are inadequate and fail to protect the species from the threat of extinction, would you support or oppose placing the sage-grouse on the Endangered Species list to prevent it from going extinct?”</i>					
	All Voters	Colorado Voters	Montana Voters	Nevada Voters	Wyoming Voters
Total Support	67%	75%	62%	67%	57%
Total Oppose	28%	21%	33%	25%	39%
Don't Know	6%	4%	5%	8%	4%
Support – Oppose	+39	+54	+29	+42	+18

Support for listing sage-grouse under the Endangered Species Act if necessary to prevent extinction extends across age, gender, and ethnic lines and across the political spectrum. Additionally, listing to prevent extinction is supported by majorities of both urban and rural voters and by majorities of hunters and anglers.

<i>“If current state and local conservation plans are inadequate and fail to protect the species from the threat of extinction, would you support or oppose placing the sage-grouse on the Endangered Species list to prevent it from going extinct?”</i>		
	Total Support	Total Oppose
All Voters	67%	28%
Democrats	90%	6%
Independents	55%	35%
Republicans	50%	45%
White Voters	66%	28%
Latino Voters	76%	21%
Men	62%	33%
Women	71%	23%
Age 18-39	82%	14%
Age 40-64	65%	30%
Age 65+	61%	31%
Urban Counties	69%	26%
Rural Counties	62%	32%
Anglers	62%	32%
Hunters	51%	44%

Voters More Likely to Support Candidates Who Support Protecting Sage-Grouse

Our research also finds a significant political upside for candidates for public office who back stronger protections for sage-grouse. A majority (51%) of voters surveyed across all four states indicate they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who supports protecting sage-grouse. This includes majorities of voters in Colorado (55% more likely to 29% less likely) and Nevada (52% more likely to 30% less likely) and pluralities in Montana (48% more likely to 27% less likely) and Wyoming (48% more likely to 39% less likely).

<i>“Would you be more likely or less likely to vote for a candidate for office who supports protecting the sage-grouse?”</i>					
	Overall	Colorado Voters	Montana Voters	Nevada Voters	Wyoming Voters
More Likely	51%	55%	48%	52%	48%
Less Likely	31%	29%	27%	30%	39%
More Likely – Less Likely	+20	+26	+21	+22	+9

Conclusion

In conclusion, our polling clearly demonstrates that voters in Colorado, Montana, Nevada, and Wyoming hold sage-grouse in high esteem and support taking steps to better protect them, including listing the bird under the Endangered Species Act if necessary to prevent their extinction. Additionally, voters are *more* likely to support a candidate for office who favors protecting sage-grouse.

Survey Methodology: From August 17-25, 2014, Tulchin Research conducted a telephone survey using professional interviewers calling both landlines and cell phones among 800 registered voters. The sample included 250 voters in Colorado, 150 voters in Montana, 250 voters in Nevada, and 150 voters in Wyoming. The margins of error for this survey are as follows:

- +/- 3.5 percentage points for the 800 voters region-wide;
- +/- 6.2 percentage points for the Colorado and Nevada statewide samples of 250 voters; and
- +/- 8.0 percentage points for the Montana and Wyoming statewide samples (150 voters).

Appendix: Support for Listing Sage-Grouse under the Endangered Species Act in Colorado among Key Demographic Groups

“If current state and local conservation plans are inadequate and fail to protect the species from the threat of extinction, would you support or oppose placing the sage-grouse on the Endangered Species list to prevent it from going extinct?”		
	Colorado	
	Total Support	Total Oppose
All Colorado Voters	75%	21%
Democrats	95%	2%
Independents	68%	26%
Republicans	59%	37%
White Voters	76%	19%
Latino Voters	80%	19%
Men	74%	24%
Women	76%	19%
Age 18-39	89%	11%
Age 40-64	74%	22%
Age 65+	65%	28%
Anglers	72%	24%
Hunters	58%	36%
Urban Counties ¹	75%	22%
Rural Counties ²	74%	19%
Denver/Fort Collins/Front Range Region ³	85%	12%
Plains/Western Slope Region ⁴	61%	35%

1. Urban Counties: Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, El Paso, Jefferson, Larimer, Mesa, Pueblo and Weld.
2. Rural Counties: All other Colorado counties.
3. Denver/Fort Collins/Front Slope Region: Congressional Districts 1, 2, 6 and 7.
4. Plains/Western Slope: Congressional Districts 3, 4 and 5.

Appendix: Support for Listing Sage-Grouse under the Endangered Species Act in Montana among Key Demographic Groups

“If current state and local conservation plans are inadequate and fail to protect the species from the threat of extinction, would you support or oppose placing the sage-grouse on the Endangered Species list to prevent it from going extinct?”		
	Montana	
	Total Support	Total Oppose
All Montana Voters	62%	33%
Democrats	85%	8%
Independents	57%	37%
Republicans	45%	53%
White Voters	63%	31%
Latino Voters	69%	31%
Men	53%	44%
Women	70%	22%
Age 18-39	77%	15%
Age 40-64	58%	41%
Age 65+	62%	31%
Anglers	60%	34%
Hunters	52%	44%
Urban Counties¹	68%	32%
Rural Counties²	60%	33%
East³	62%	30%
West⁴	63%	35%

1. Urban Counties: Butte-Silver Bow, Cascade, Flathead, Gallatin, Lake, Lewis & Clark, Lincoln, Missoula, Park, Ravalli and Yellowstone.
2. Rural Counties: All other Montana counties.
3. East: Billings, Denver, Glendive, Great Falls, Minot-Bismarck-Dickinson and Rapid City media markets.
4. West: Butte-Bozeman, Helena, Missoula and Spokane media markets.

Appendix: Support for Listing Sage-Grouse under the Endangered Species Act in Nevada among Key Demographic Groups

“If current state and local conservation plans are inadequate and fail to protect the species from the threat of extinction, would you support or oppose placing the sage-grouse on the Endangered Species list to prevent it from going extinct?”		
	Nevada	
	Total Support	Total Oppose
All Nevada Voters	67%	25%
Democrats	87%	8%
Independents	65%	26%
Republicans	52%	40%
White Voters	66%	27%
Latino Voters	73%	22%
Men	63%	29%
Women	71%	21%
Age 18-39	84%	9%
Age 40-64	67%	27%
Age 65+	60%	29%
Anglers	61%	31%
Hunters	46%	38%
Urban Counties¹	68%	24%
Rural Counties²	58%	30%
Clark County	65%	26%
Washoe County	79%	17%
Congressional District 1	66%	25%
Congressional District 2	73%	21%
Congressional District 3	71%	22%
Congressional District 4	57%	32%

1. Urban Counties: Clark and Washoe.
2. Rural Counties: All other Nevada counties.

Appendix: Support for Listing Sage-Grouse under the Endangered Species Act in Wyoming among Key Demographic Groups

“If current state and local conservation plans are inadequate and fail to protect the species from the threat of extinction, would you support or oppose placing the Sage-Grouse on the Endangered Species list to prevent it from going extinct?”		
	Wyoming	
	Total Support	Total Oppose
All Wyoming Voters	57%	39%
Democrats	91%	9%
Independents	57%	42%
Republicans	40%	54%
Men	49%	46%
Women	64%	33%
Age 18-39	53%	42%
Age 40-64	54%	36%
Age 65+	59%	38%
Anglers	53%	42%
Hunters	46%	52%
Urban Counties¹	60%	34%
Rural Counties²	52%	48%
North³	50%	45%
South⁴	65%	33%

1. Urban Counties: Albany, Campbell, Fremont, Laramie, Natrona, Sheridan, Sweetwater and Teton.
2. Rural Counties: All other Wyoming counties.
3. North: Billings, Rapid City and Riverton-Casper media markets.
4. South: Denver, Idaho Falls, Salt Lake City media markets.