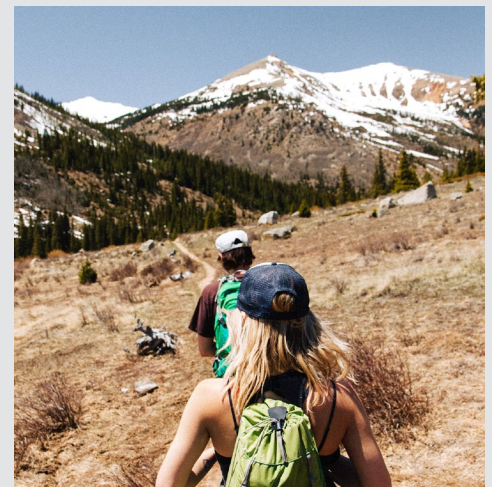


Gen Z Voters in the West

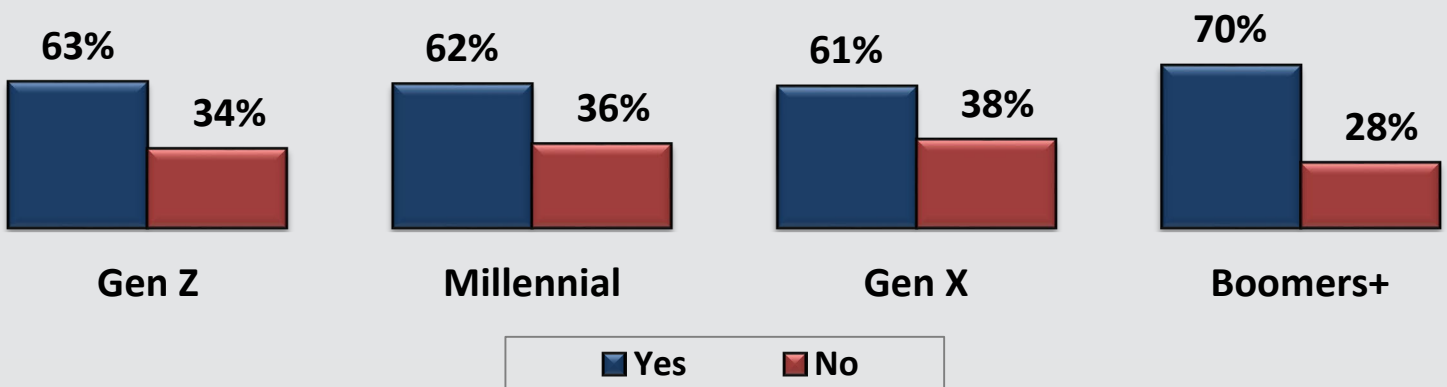
Generation Z voters emerged as a powerful force in the 2022 midterm election. Given the size of this voting bloc (not all are ages 18+), this is the first year that the State of the Rockies Poll has conducted enough interviews among the members of this generation who can vote (born 1997-2004) to examine them more closely.

Gen Z voters are the most diverse of all generations interviewed, with 37 percent being voters of color compared to 31 percent of millennials, 28 percent of Gen X and 21 percent of Boomers and older. Both Gen Z voters and Millennial voters are most likely to identify as Independent politically at 36 percent, making the younger generations politically important to appeal to.

Gen Z are the least likely of all generations to say they are a hunter, angler or both: 34 percent of Gen Z-ers are sportsmen compared to 39 percent of Millennials, 40 percent of Gen X-ers and 36 percent of Boomers. Being a hunter or angler has typically had a strong relationship to voters viewing themselves as a conservationist. So, it is even more impressive that Gen Z is just as likely as other generations to consider themselves to be a conservationist, as seen below.



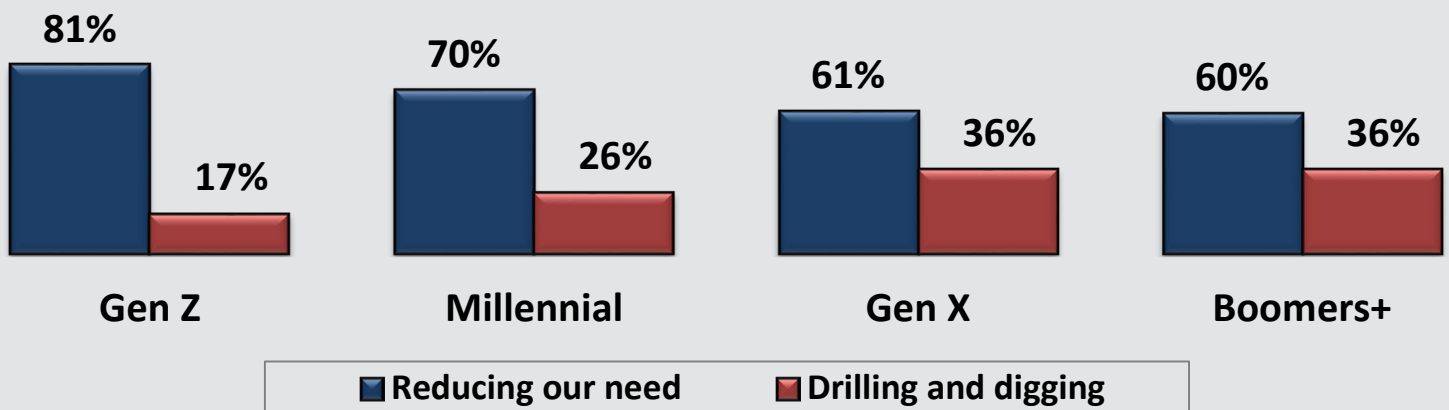
Identify as Conservationist





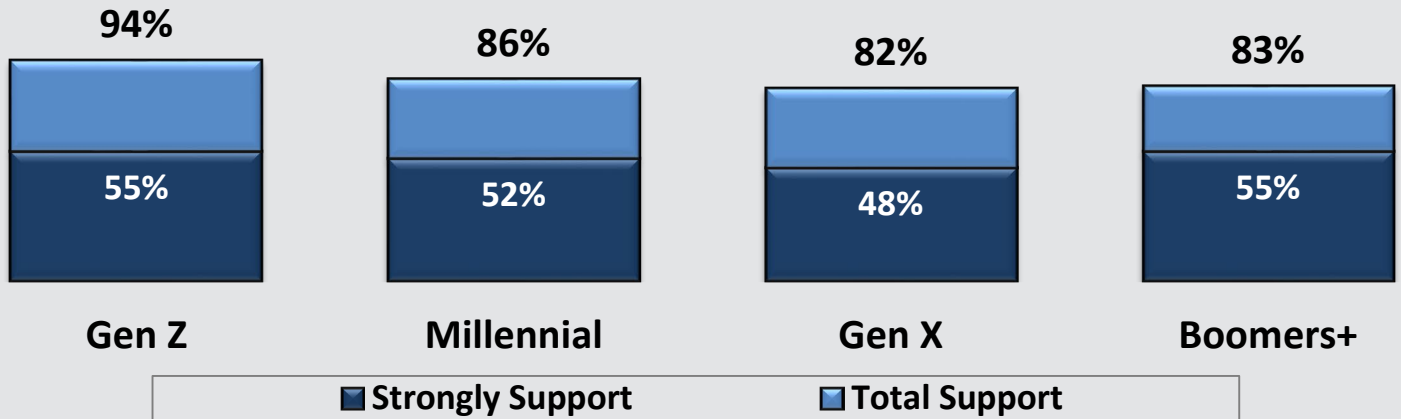
That conservation ethic of the youngest generation is evident throughout the survey in their support for a range of policies and the emphasis they place on conservation when asked to consider trade-offs. When it comes to public lands, for example, Gen Z voters are clear - conservation should be prioritized over energy development. Over three-in-five (68 percent) Gen Z voters would prefer that their Member of Congress place more emphasis on protecting sources of clean water, our air quality and wildlife habitat over maximizing the amount of national public lands available for oil and gas drilling and mining. Compared to other generations, Gen Z is also most likely to say that the highest priority for meeting America’s energy needs is expanding use of clean, renewable energy.

Highest Priority for Meeting America’s Energy Needs



Gen Z voters are also more likely to support Presidents continuing to use their ability to protect existing public lands as national monuments. At most, 86 percent of other generations support this idea, while Gen Z voter support is almost unanimous at 94 percent.

Executive Action to Establish National Monuments



Gen Z voters in the West perceive conservation issues as extremely or very serious at the same or higher rates than voters of other generations. Loss of habitat, uncontrollable wildfires, low levels of water in rivers and climate change are issues deemed extremely or very serious issues by these Gen Z voters.

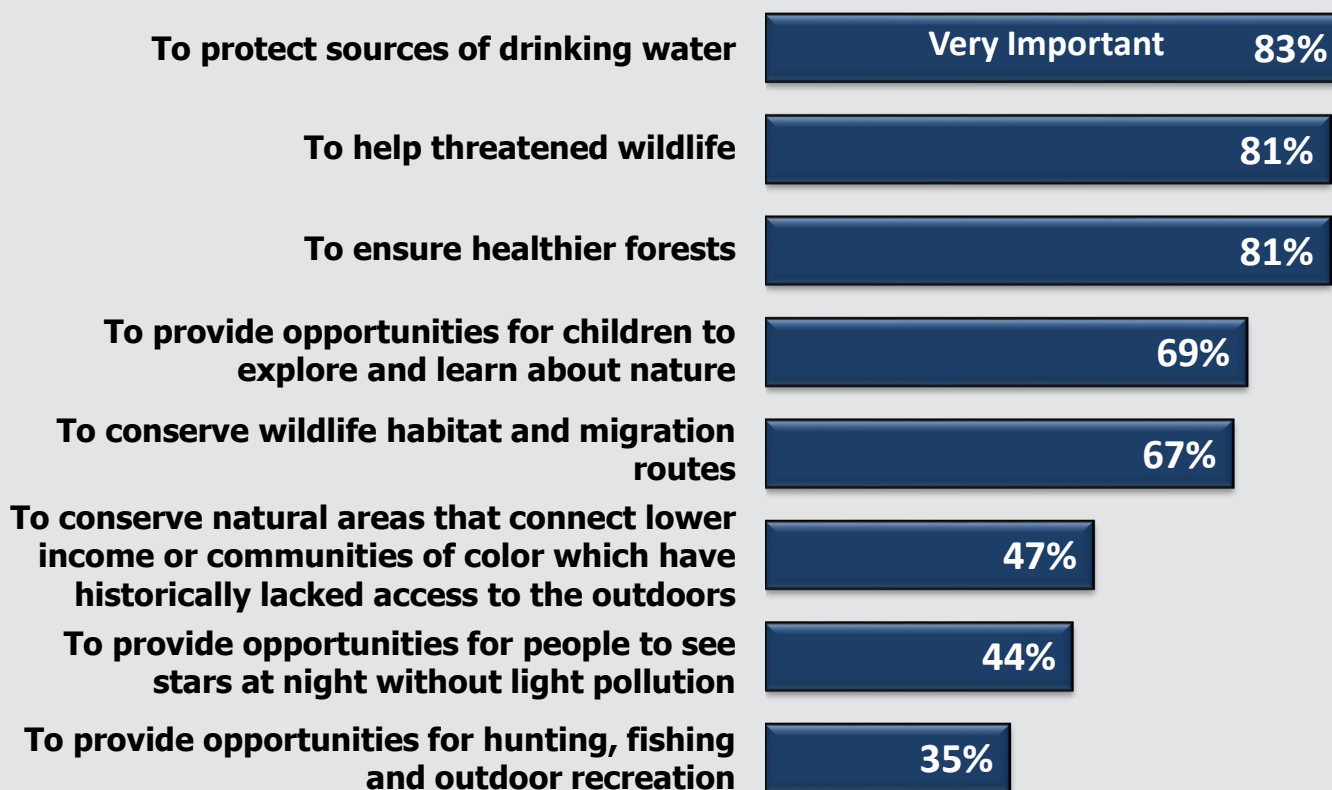


Environmental Issues

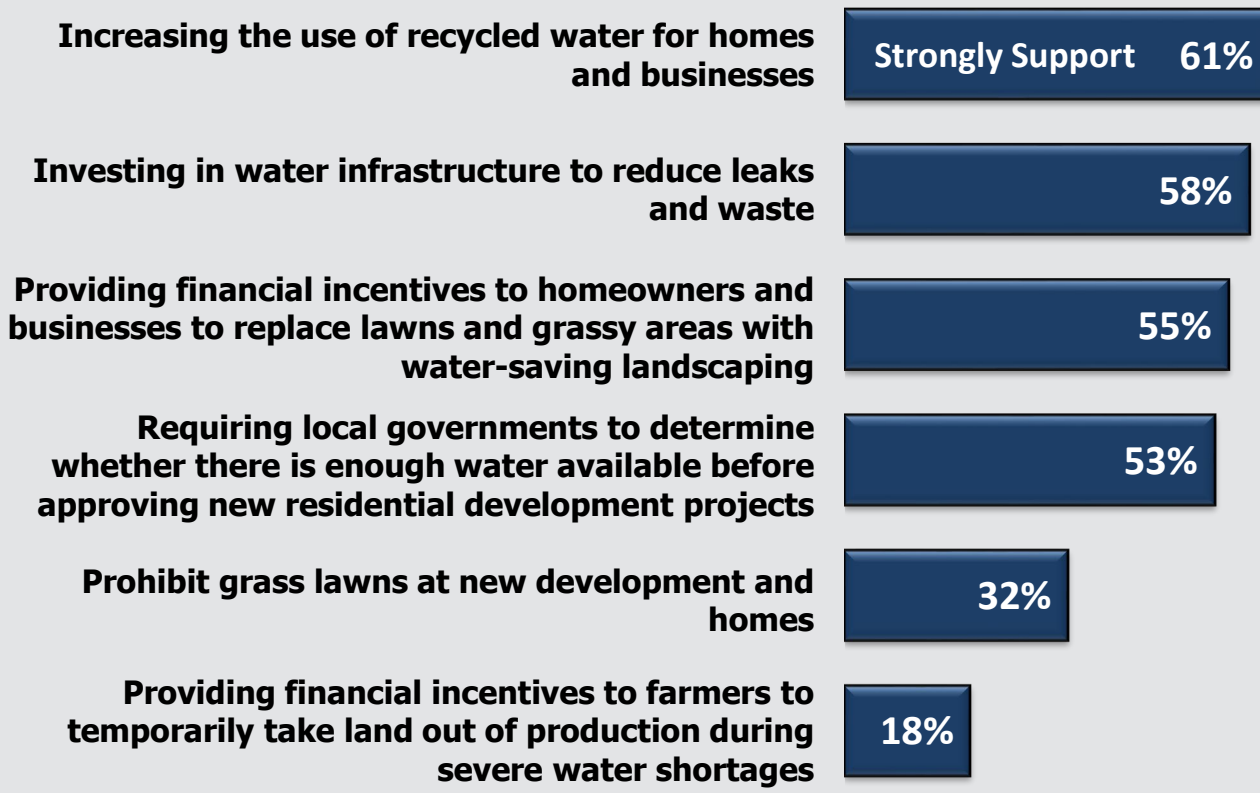
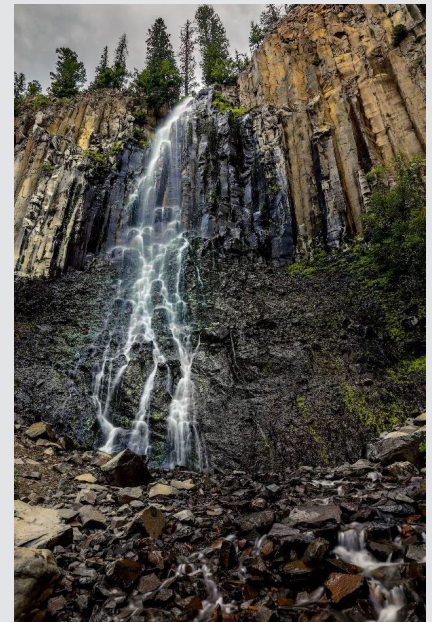
<i>% Extremely/Very Serious</i>	Gen Z	Millennial	Gen X	Boomers+
Loss of habitat for fish and wildlife	70%	59%	48%	45%
Uncontrollable wildfires that threaten homes and property	66%	55%	48%	54%
Low level of water in rivers	66%	71%	68%	70%
Climate change	64%	53%	43%	47%



And protecting sources of water, helping threatened wildlife, and ensuring healthier forests rise to the top as reasons Gen Z-ers believe it is important to conserve land, water and wildlife habitat.



These young voters express concern about low levels of water in rivers with nearly all - 98 percent - saying that it is a serious problem compared to 93 percent of Millennials and Gen X voters and 90 percent of Boomer voters and older. In terms of taking action to address inadequate water supplies, Gen Z is supportive of every policy action we tested. They are most intensively supportive of increasing the use of recycled water for homes and businesses (61 percent strongly support) as well as investing in water infrastructure to reduce leaks and waste (58 percent strongly support).



Overall, this emerging generation is demonstrating that it views conservation as important for a wide range of reasons and supports a host of actions to help protect public lands, water and wildlife in the West.