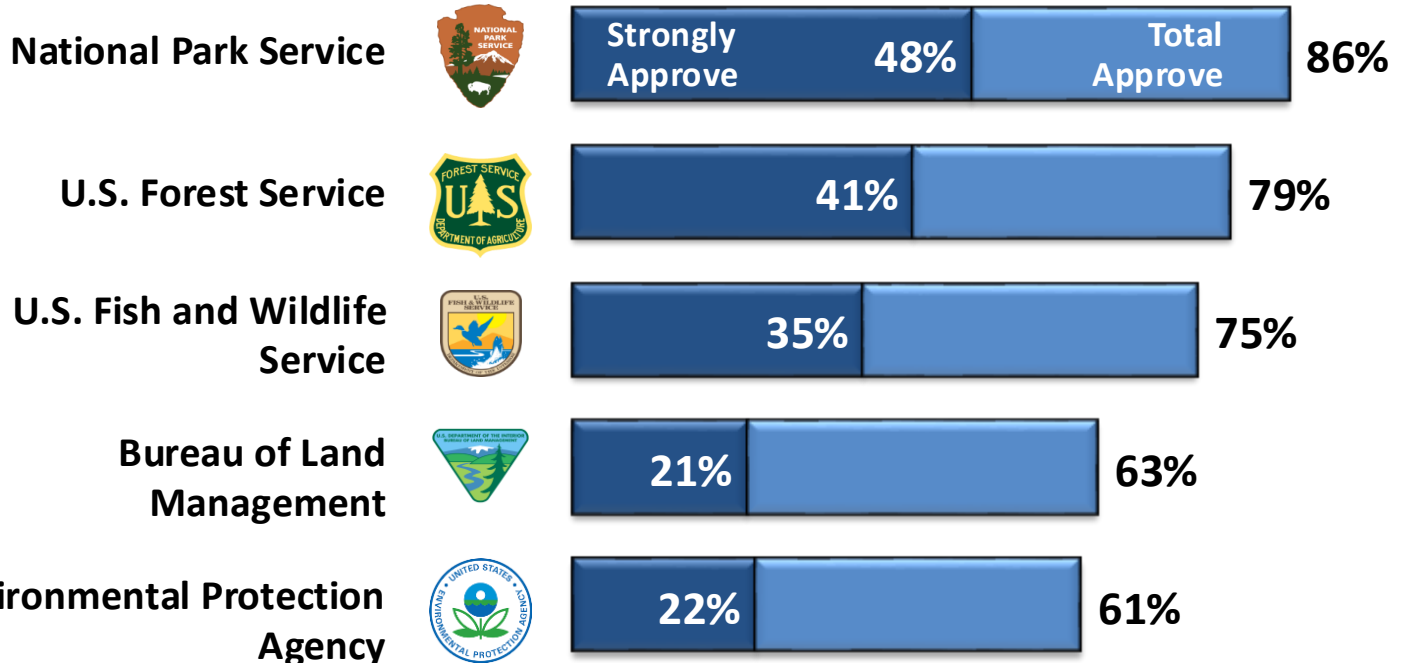


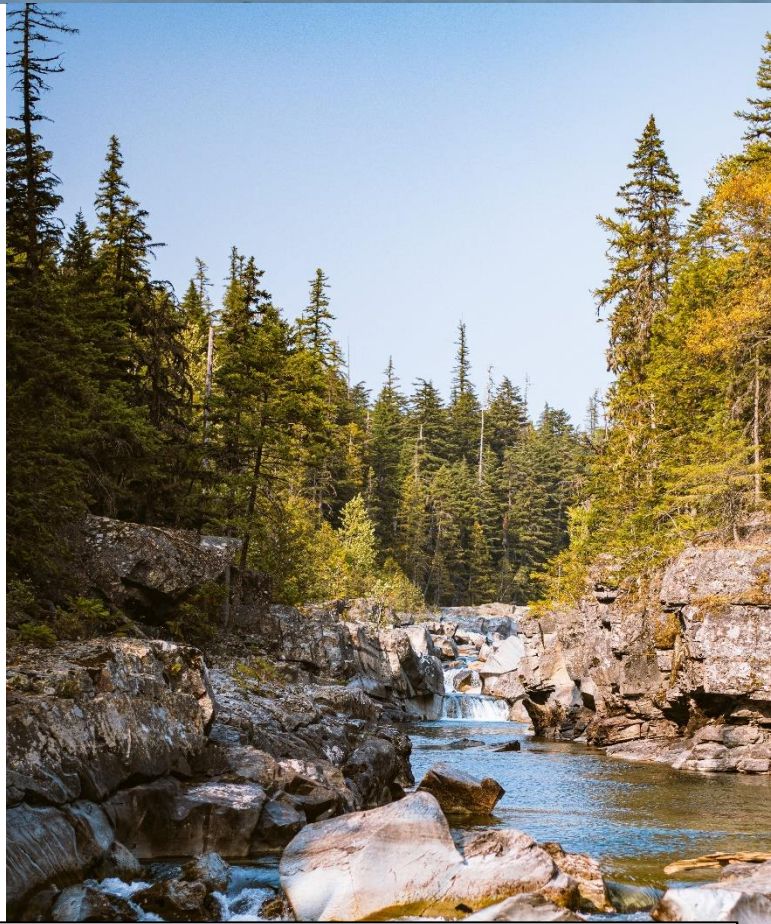
Management of Public Lands in the West

Majorities of Westerners approve of the way federal agencies manage public land in their state, with approval on par or higher than eight years ago. Three-quarters of voters oppose reducing funding to these agencies. By more than a nine-to-one margin, voters prefer career professionals make decisions about how public lands and other natural resources are managed over new officials who “have different perspectives.” And despite recent pushes from some in the region, Western voters are opposed to state governments taking control over national public lands.

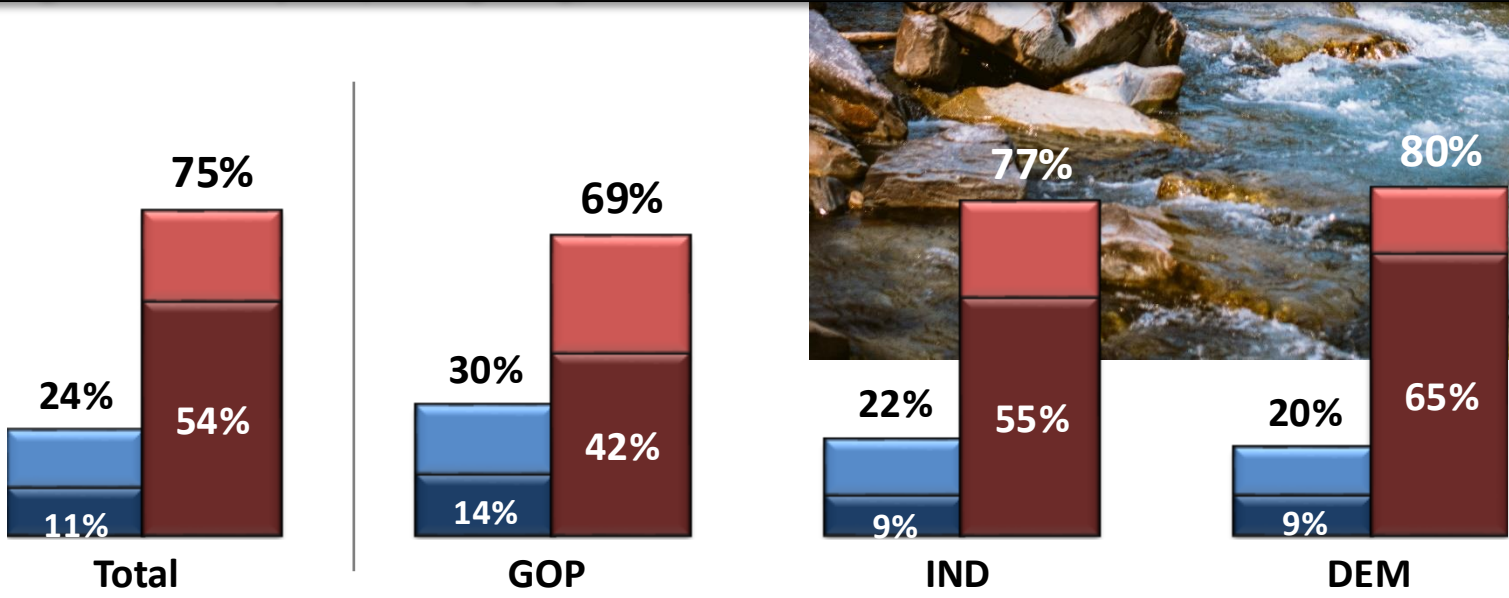
A solid majority of Westerners approve of the federal agencies dealing with public land management and the environment in their region. At least three-in-five Western voters approve of every federal agency tested in this year’s survey. The National Park Service receives the highest approval rating, as it did in previous years, with more than four-in-five (86 percent) saying they approve and nearly half (48 percent) who strongly approve of the job they are doing. Voters also record strong marks for the Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management. The latter saw the greatest increase in approval (6 points) as 62 percent offer approval today. As seen in the following graph, another three-in-five also approve of the Environmental Protection Agency, although it has more partisan ratings than other agencies (48 percent of Republicans, 60 percent of independents and 76 percent of Democrats approve).



Three-quarters of Western voters are opposed to reducing funding to the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies and more than half say they are strongly opposed. Fully 75 percent of Western voters oppose reducing funding to these agencies “for repairs, firefighting, visitor services, and oversight of those public lands.” Strong majorities of every major demographic subgroup oppose cutting funding to these agencies, as do voters across party lines.



Reducing funding to the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies for repairs, firefighting, visitor services, and oversight of those public lands.



■ Strongly Support
 ■ Total Support
 ■ Strongly Oppose
 ■ Total Oppose

By more than a nine-to-one ratio, Western voters prefer that career professionals make decisions about natural resources over new officials with different perspectives. A stunning 87 percent of Westerners opt for those who have been guiding land management and resource decision.

Career professionals such as rangers, scientists, fire fighters and other specialists who have worked in the field.

87%

Career professionals such as rangers, scientists, fire fighters and other specialists who have worked in the field.

9%

Preference for career professionals is consistent across partisan lines, with 83 percent of Republicans, 87 percent of independents and 92 percent of Democrats saying they want career professionals rather than new officials making decisions about public lands and other natural resources.

Western voters are opposed to giving state government control over national public lands. Nearly two-in-three (65 percent) Western voters express opposition to “giving state government control over national public lands, such as national forests, national monuments, and national wildlife refuges in its borders.” A majority in every state are opposed to such a change, including 57 percent in Utah. This opposition is even more decisive than in 2017, with a significant nine-point increase in opposition in the last eight years.

Support for giving state government control over national public lands

