



# 2023 NPCA Wildlife Poll



*In the summer of 2023, the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) partnered with The Harris Poll to complete our first ever poll of the American public on wildlife in national parks. Our goal was to better understand perspectives specific to the current threats to park wildlife and opportunities to better conserve these populations.*

*The poll explored perspectives across a variety of wildlife relevant topics including climate change, beyond park boundary development threats, migratory wildlife conservation, plastics, overfishing, threatened and endangered species, park air quality, and a sampling of individual park wildlife species.*

### **Key Findings**

**Safeguarding Park Wildlife:** 88% of Americans (85% of Republicans, 91% of Democrats, and 87% of Independents) agree that more needs to be done to safeguard national park wildlife.

**Climate Change:** 83% of Americans (74% of Republicans, 89% of Democrats and 85% of Independents) believe climate change is harmful to national park wildlife.

**Collaboration:** 89% of Americans (85% of Republicans, 92% of Democrats and 89% of Independents) agree that more needs to be done to ensure federal, state and tribal governments work together to restore, maintain or protect national park wildlife populations.

**Endangered Species:** More than 4 in 5 Americans (86%), (84% of Republicans, 87% of Democrats and 88% of Independents) support continuing recovery by federal agencies of threatened and endangered species in the National Park System.

### **Park Adjacent Development Threats**

- Nearly 9 in 10 Americans (87%) (86% of Republicans, 85% of Democrats and 91% of Independents) believe land development (such as subdivisions, mines, solar and wind farms, strip malls) is harmful to national park wildlife.
- 60% of Americans (55% of Republicans, 61% of Democrats and 65% of Independents) believe the federal government should ensure that placement

of new development doesn't harm habitats next to national parks.

#### Wildlife Corridors, Habitat Connectivity and Crossings

- 87% of Americans (85% of Republicans, 89% of Democrats and 90% of Independents) support restoring or preserving wildlife habitat connectivity and migration corridors.
- 71% of Americans (68% of Republicans, 77% of Democrats and 70% of Independents) support federal investments on privately owned lands next to national parks such as paying for habitat maintenance and restoration, fence removal for safe passage of wildlife, and wildlife friendly farm practices to maintain national park wildlife populations.
- 86% of Americans (83% of Republicans, 88% of Democrats and 88% of Independents) support dedicating resources to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions for public safety and habitat connectivity. Solutions could include wildlife overpasses and underpasses.

#### Aquatic Species Conservation

- 88% of Americans (85% of Republicans, 91% of Democrats and 89% of Independents) agree that more needs to be done to support the safeguarding of native freshwater fish species.
- 88% of Americans (85% of Republicans, 91% of Democrats and 88% of Independents) support establishing more marine-protected areas in and around coastal national parks to better protect marine wildlife.
- 88% of Americans (87% of Republicans, 90% of Democrats and 88% of Independents) support protecting more ocean habitat such as salt marshes, coral reefs, and coastal wetlands in and around coastal national parks to better protect marine wildlife.
- 83% of Americans (79% of Republicans, 87% of Democrats and 83% of Independents) support preventing recreational overfishing in coastal national parks to better protect marine wildlife.

**Water:** 92% of Americans (91% of Republicans, 93% of Democrats and 93% of Independents) support reducing water pollution to better protect marine wildlife.

**Plastics:** 81% of Americans (79% of Republicans, 85% of Democrats and 80% of Independents) support reducing or

eliminating the sale of single use plastics such as water bottles and straws in national parks to protect park wildlife.

#### Air

- Nearly 9 in 10 Americans (88%), (85% of Republicans, 90% of Democrats and 89% of Independents) feel more needs to be done to protect birds and pollinators from harmful air pollution.
- 84% of Americans (80% of Republicans, 88% of Democrats and 84% of Independents) support strengthening clean air standards to protect nature and wildlife from air pollution.

#### Species Specific Findings

**Bison:** 91% of Americans (88% of Republicans, 92% of Democrats and 92% of Independents) support restoring healthy bison herds at Yellowstone National Park and other national parks.

**Coral reefs:** 90% of Americans (88% of Republicans, 92% of Democrats and 91% of Independents) support restoring coral reefs and mangrove forests in national parks to protect coastlines from hurricanes.

**Caribou:** 87% of Americans (84% of Republicans, 91% of Democrats and 88% of Independents) support protecting wildlife such as caribou in national park lands in northwest Alaska from mining development.

**N. Cascades grizzlies:** 85% of Americans (83% of Republicans, 89% of Democrats and 85% of Independents) support restoring grizzly bear populations back to their historic habitat in North Cascades National Park in northern Washington state.

**Lower 48 wolves:** 84% of Americans (80% of Republicans, 89% of Democrats and 83% of Independents) support restoring gray wolf populations to national parks in the lower 48 states.

**Research Method:** The survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of the National Parks Conservation Association from June 20-22nd, 2023 among 2,037 adults ages 18 and older. Results were weighted to align demographics with their actual proportions in the population. The sampling precision of the Harris online polls is weighted using a Bayesian credible interval. This study is accurate to within +/- 2.7% using a 95% confidence level.