



OPINION
RESEARCH
& STRATEGY

TO Interested Parties

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RE: American Voters' Views of Funding Deferred Maintenance at National Parks Sites

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The Pew Charitable Trusts' restore America's parks campaign recently commissioned the bipartisan research team of New Bridge Strategy (R) and Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (D) to complete a survey of voters throughout the United States to determine their views on funding to remedy deferred maintenance at national park sites.¹ **The study found strong support for a proposal to dedicate oil and gas leasing fees on public lands to address the backlog of repairs at national parks.** Support is strong across party lines and throughout the country. Voters say that addressing a wide variety of deferred maintenance projects is personally important to them. The importance of addressing these projects is widespread, even including Americans who say they have never visited a national park site.

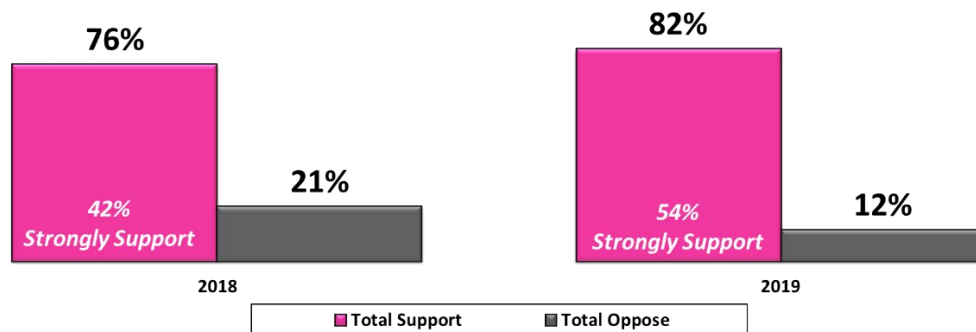
Specifically, the survey found that:

- **More than 4 in 5 U.S. voters support a proposal to use oil and gas leasing fees to help remedy the deferred maintenance backlog at national park sites—even higher than one year ago.** Fully 82 percent support a proposal to dedicate \$1.3 billion each year for five years from these fees to address deferred maintenance projects. A solid majority of 54 percent strongly supports such a proposal. Only 12 percent register opposition to this proposal.

Notably, support today is higher than in a survey conducted one year ago. In that national survey conducted Oct. 30-Nov. 4, 2018, 76 percent indicated support for this same proposal while 21 percent were opposed.

Proposal to Address Deferred Maintenance at National Parks

Oil and gas companies now operate on some federal lands and waters, and pay fees to the government for this. There is a proposal before Congress to dedicate \$1.3 billion each year for five years from this money to pay for maintenance and repairs at national parks. Would you support or oppose this proposal?

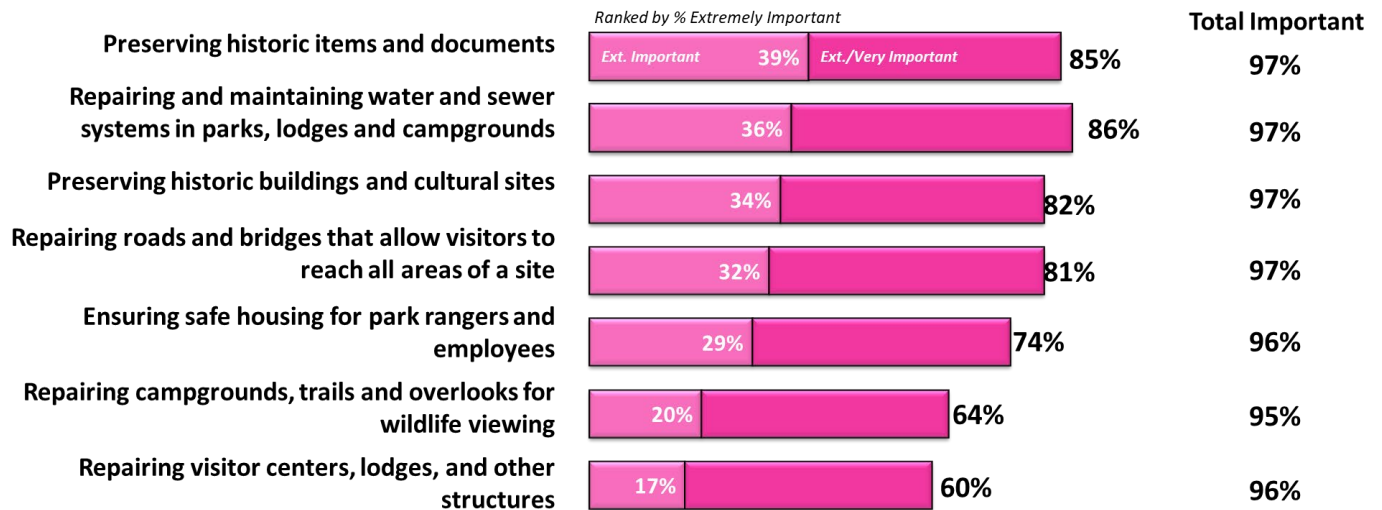


Support for addressing deferred maintenance through this dedication of funds is broad-based. It is evident among such subgroups as:

- 84 percent of men and 80 percent of women.
 - 89 percent of Republicans, 72 percent of independents, and 82 percent of Democrats.
 - 83 percent of white voters, and 79 percent of voters of color.
 - 83 percent of Northeastern voters, 87 percent of Midwesterners, 81 percent of Southerners, and 78 percent of voters in the West.
- **Virtually all U.S. voters say it is personally important to them to address a wide array of deferred maintenance projects at national park sites.** The response to every single type of project that was tested was resounding and clear—voters say that addressing these repairs is important to them personally, with majorities going so far as to say that they are very important to them personally. As one can see on the following graph, the response to addressing water and waste projects, preservation of historic items and homes, and repairing roads that provide access at these sites is overwhelming.

Personal Importance of Addressing National Parks Repair Backlog Projects:

The National Park Service currently has a backlog of repairs of “eleven point nine” billion dollars. The following are different ways the National Park Service might use additional funds to address this backlog. Knowing that there are often not enough funds to do everything, please tell me how important each of the following is to you personally. Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important or not really important?



Voters in every region of the country, across the political spectrum and of every background, say that these projects are very important to address. What is more striking is that even a majority of voters who have never visited a national park or a historic site managed by the National Park Service deem these projects to be very important.

- In sum, majorities of U.S. voters want to see Congress dedicate funding for deferred maintenance at national park sites. Support for the specific proposal tested in the survey is both broad-based, and has increased from a little less than a year ago. Moreover, American voters view these projects at national park sites as personally important to them.

ⁱ **Methodology:** From June 20-24, 2019, NBS and FM3 completed 700 telephone interviews on landlines and cellphones with randomly selected voters throughout the United States. A Spanish language option was provided. The margin of sampling error for the full sample is plus or minus 3.7 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence interval; margins of sampling error for population subgroups within the sample will be higher. Due to rounding, not all totals will sum to 100 percent.