Minnesota Voters’ Environmental Priorities in 2017

Results of a Statewide Voter Survey Conducted February 1-5, 2017

220-4733
Survey Methodology

• 502 live telephone interviews with registered Minnesota voters, with an oversample of rural Minnesotans to yield 306 rural interviews and 196 urban interviews
  – *Interviews conducted from February 1-5, 2017 on both landlines and cell phones*
  – *Data statistically weighted to reflect true geographic distribution of voters throughout the state*
• Margin of sampling error of +/-5.3% for statewide sample; +/-6.9% for urban voters and +/-5.7% for rural voters
• Some percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding
Pollinators
Concern about disappearing pollinators is quite strong in Minnesota.

Disappearance of species essential for pollinating crops, like honeybees and monarch butterflies

- Very concerned: 52%
- Somewhat concerned: 34%
- Not too concerned: 7%
- Not at all concerned: 5%
- Don't know/NA: 1%

Democrats, women and southern Minnesotans are disproportionately concerned about this issue.

Q3f. Would you say that you are very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned about each of the following? Split Sample
Intensity of concern about disappearing pollinators is especially high among urban voters.

Disappearance of species essential for pollinating crops, like honeybees and monarch butterflies

### Urban

- **Very concerned**: 57%
- **Somewhat concerned**: 30%
- **Not too concerned**: 6%
- **Not at all concerned**: 5%
- **Don't know/NA**: 2%

### Rural

- **Very concerned**: 46%
- **Somewhat concerned**: 40%
- **Not too concerned**: 10%
- **Not at all concerned**: 4%
- **Don't know/NA**: 1%
My next questions have to do with another subject. For more than a decade, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, or EPA, has allowed the use of a new class of pesticides known as neonics. Unlike traditional pesticides that are sprayed and applied to the surface of plants, neonics are taken or absorbed into the plant and then found in every plant part, including the flower pollen and nectar. After years of study, many scientists believe this new class of pesticides is a main contributing factor in the declining population of honeybees and other species which pollinate crops.
A majority favors phasing out certain pesticides and increasing funding for research.

Here are a series of ideas that have been proposed to help prevent the decline of pollinator species. Please tell me whether each sounds like something you would favor or oppose.

- **Phasing out the use of pesticides proven to harm species like bees which pollinate crops**
  - Strongly Favor: 57%
  - Somewhat Favor: 26%
  - DK/NA: 7%
  - Somewhat Oppose: 7%
  - Strongly Oppose: 7%
  - Total Favor: 83%
  - Total Oppose: 14%

- **Increasing funding for research, education, outreach, and habitat creation with a small fee on pesticides known to harm pollinators**
  - Strongly Favor: 51%
  - Somewhat Favor: 31%
  - DK/NA: 6%
  - Somewhat Oppose: 8%
  - Strongly Oppose: 8%
  - Total Favor: 82%
  - Total Oppose: 14%

- **Applying the same regulations to corn and soybean seeds coated with neonics as apply to other pesticides**
  - Strongly Favor: 37%
  - Somewhat Favor: 32%
  - DK/NA: 10%
  - Somewhat Oppose: 10%
  - Strongly Oppose: 11%
  - Total Favor: 69%
  - Total Oppose: 21%
A majority of the state’s urban voters strongly support funding research with a small pesticide fee.

Increasing funding for research, education, outreach, and habitat creation with a small fee on pesticides known to harm pollinators.

By Type of Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Area</th>
<th>Strongly Favor</th>
<th>Somewhat Favor</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
<th>Somewhat Oppose</th>
<th>Strongly Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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Total Favor: 80% 17%
Total Oppose: 84% 12%
Two in five urban voters strongly favor regulations on neonics.

Applying the same regulations to corn and soybean seeds coated with neonics as apply to other pesticides.

By Type of Area

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>21%</td>
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Two in five urban voters strongly favor regulations on neonics.

Applying the same regulations to corn and soybean seeds coated with neonics as apply to other pesticides.

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<td>12%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>21%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Nearly half of Minnesota voters say they are “very concerned” about rollbacks of environmental laws.

Rollbacks of laws that protect our land, air and water

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Very Conc.</th>
<th>Smwt. Conc.</th>
<th>Not Too Conc.</th>
<th>Not At All Conc./DK/NA</th>
<th>Total Concerned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nearly half of Minnesota voters say they are “very concerned” about rollbacks of environmental laws.
More than three in five voters want tougher laws or better enforcement of existing laws.

Which of the following statements comes closest to your view of government regulations of the environment in Minnesota?

- **20%** Environmental laws need to be made tougher
- **42%** Environmental laws are tough enough but need better enforcement
- **20%** Both environmental laws and enforcement are at the right levels
- **12%** Environmental laws are too tough and should be loosened up
- **6%** Don’t know/NA

Toughen/Enforce 62%
Nearly one-third of Democrats believe environmental laws should be made tougher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>All Voters</th>
<th>Party ID</th>
<th>Type of Area</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental laws need to be made tougher</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental laws are tough enough but they need better enforcement</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both environmental laws and enforcement are at the right levels</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental laws are too tough and should be loosened up</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know/NA</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By a margin of more than three to one, voters say weakening environmental laws would give them a less favorable view of their legislator.

Suppose that your state legislator voted to weaken environmental protection laws. Would you have a more favorable or less favorable view of them?

- Much more favorable: 5%
- Somewhat more favorable: 16%
- Somewhat less favorable: 30%
- Much less favorable: 40%
- Makes no difference/Don't know/NA: 8%

Total More Favorable: 21%
Total Less Favorable: 70%
This impression varies along party lines, though with little difference between urban and rural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Favorability</th>
<th>All Voters</th>
<th>Party ID</th>
<th>Type of Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dems.</td>
<td>Inds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much more favorable</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat more favorable</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total More Favorable</strong></td>
<td><strong>21%</strong></td>
<td><strong>7%</strong></td>
<td><strong>18%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat less favorable</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much less favorable</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Less Favorable</strong></td>
<td><strong>70%</strong></td>
<td><strong>92%</strong></td>
<td><strong>68%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes no difference/ Don't know/NA</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q5. Suppose that your state legislator voted to weaken environmental protection laws. Would you have a more favorable or less favorable view of them?
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