Public Opinion Strategies conducted a statistically valid survey of 500 voters throughout the state of Wyoming, from November 10-13, 2018. Interviews were conducted on both landline and cell phones and were distributed proportionally throughout the state. The study has an overall margin of error of plus or minus 4.38%; margins of error for sub-groups vary depending on the size of that group.

The majority of Wyoming voters say the sage grouse plans for national public lands should be kept in place. There is solid support for keeping the existing plans for conservation of sage grouse habitat in place, with 58 percent of voters throughout Wyoming siding with the status quo. Only one-in-three (33 percent) say we should change the plans. Survey respondents were provided with a brief, neutral explanation of the plans and then asked whether those should be kept in place or changed: “Here in Wyoming, the U.S. government, the Governor and local communities created plans to protect habitat for the threatened sage-grouse and other wildlife like mule deer. The Interior department now says these plans should be changed to allow more oil and gas production on public lands. Supporters of the existing plans say that they had public input and were created to avoid more significant restrictions on drilling in the future if the sage grouse is listed as an endangered species.” Again, a majority (58 percent) say to keep the plans in place after hearing this information.

The view that the existing sage grouse plans for national public lands should be kept in place is wide-spread and broad-based. This view that the plans should stay in place is evident across nearly all key voter sub-groups we examined, including...

- 57 percent of women and 60 percent of men;
- 60 percent of seniors, 57 percent of those 45-64 years of age, and 63 percent of 35-44 year olds and 51 percent of voters under age 35;
- 77 percent of Democrats, 67 percent of Independents, and 53 percent ofRepublicans;
- 68 percent in Northwestern Wyoming, 54 percent of Northeastern residents, 64 percent in the Southeast, 56 percent in Central Wyoming, and 50 percent in the Southwest;
- 56 percent of hunters and anglers; and
- 61 percent of those who identify as a conservationist (which represents 81 percent of voters in Wyoming).
This desire to ensure conservation of sage grouse habitat may be grounded in the significant importance that Wyoming voters place on wildlife. In fact, more than three-quarters (77 percent) say that “wildlife are an important part of my daily life.” A majority of 55 percent strongly feels this way.

- Nearly nine-in-ten Wyoming voters agree with the Governor-elect that conserving wildlife corridors and habitat can co-exist with Wyoming’s energy industry. A striking 89 percent agree that “responsible energy development and protecting Wyoming open spaces and wildlife are not mutually exclusive. We can strike an appropriate balance in harnessing our natural resources while ensuring sensitive wildlife corridors are protected.” The vast majority of voters – including 91 percent of Republicans, 89 percent of independents, and 80 percent of Democrats – agree with this view.

- Voters perceive public lands to be more beneficial for Wyoming, rather than a detriment to the state. When given two different viewpoints about public lands, the overwhelming majority side with those who view public lands as more beneficial, as the following graph depicts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public lands like national parks and national forests in Wyoming support our economy; provide opportunities to hunt, fish, and enjoy the outdoors; and enhance our overall quality of life.</th>
<th>80%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...Or...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public lands like national parks and national forests in Wyoming take land off the tax rolls, cost government to maintain them, and prevent opportunities for oil and gas production that could provide jobs.</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
State voters also respond strongly to providing incentives for private landowners to help conserve wildlife habitat, such as through Congress continuing incentives provided in the Farm Bill to Wyoming farmers and ranchers. Respondents were provided with a brief explanation of the program: “The U.S. Farm Bill is the major agricultural legislation which allocates funding for programs for agricultural trade, research, and marketing, as well as programs to protect and conserve land and water. One of those provides incentives for Wyoming farmers and ranchers to conserve wildlife habitat on their lands, while at the same time operating as a working farm or ranch.” As the next graph illustrates, nearly four-in-five (79 percent) say Congress should continue to provide these incentives for conservation.

**Support for Continuing to Provide Incentives**

+62%

79%

52%

17%

10%

Again, support is significant and broad-based. A majority of voters across party lines express significant support for Congress continuing the program, including three-quarters (75 percent) of Republicans, 84 percent of independents and nearly all Democrats (91 percent).

Conservation of natural areas and wildlife is viewed by Wyoming voters as both a benefit to the economy and a legacy they want to preserve for future generations. Nearly all voters in the state – 94 percent - agree that “we owe it to our children and grandchildren to conserve Wyoming’s natural areas, water, and wildlife, so that future generations can enjoy them the same way we do.”

Along the same lines, 88 percent say that “protecting water quality, wildlife and natural areas in Wyoming is critical to keeping the state’s economy strong.”
Two-thirds of voters support an extension of pollution rules to all oil and gas production in Wyoming. Respondents were also queried about changes to standards for oil and gas production as follows: “Since 2015, oil and gas producers in Wyoming’s Upper Green River Basin near Pinedale have been required to limit gas leaks to reduce pollution from oil and gas facilities. Some have proposed extending those rules to the entire state, so that all companies would be required to use technologies to limit air pollution and ensure less natural gas is wasted.” **Two-thirds (67 percent) say the limits should be extended statewide, while fewer than one-in-four (24 percent) oppose this change.** Support for this change is evident throughout the state, as well as across party lines as the next graph illustrates:

**Support for Extending Pollution Requirements Across State – by Party**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>+43%</th>
<th>+30%</th>
<th>+61%</th>
<th>+88%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</table>

**The Bottom Line:** Wyoming voters express support for a range of conservation policies, and say that conservation of wildlife, water and natural areas helps the state economy and is a legacy they want to preserve for the future. Whether it is sage grouse habitat, incentives for farmers and ranchers to conserve privately owned habitat areas, or extension of pollution standards, a majority of voters across the state and across party lines, express a desire to continue these programs and standards.