TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Dave Metz and Rachel Weiler
Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates

Lori Weigel
Public Opinion Strategies

RE: Key Findings from Recent New Jersey Voter Survey

DATE: June 22, 2014

The bipartisan research team of Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (D) and Public Opinion Strategies (R) recently completed a survey of 600 telephone interviews with New Jersey likely voters to assess their support for a potential state ballot measure to fund land and water conservation. Overall, the survey found that a substantial and diverse majority of New Jersey voters would support a proposed constitutional amendment dedicating additional funding to land and water conservation in New Jersey. More than seven in ten voters back the proposed measure – with a high degree of intensity – and that support remains equally strong after voters hear pro and con messages. Voters rate the protection of water quality and natural areas a high priority for the state, and feel strongly that voters should be given the opportunity to cast a ballot on the issue.

Among the key specific findings of the survey were the following:

- Over three-quarters of New Jersey voters support the proposed conservation constitutional amendment. Respondents were read the official ballot language for the proposed amendment as it would appear on the November ballot (Figure 1 on the next page), and asked how they thought they would vote. More than three-quarters (76%) say that they would vote “yes,” including fully half saying they would “definitely” vote in favor. By contrast, only one in five voters (21%) say that they might vote “no.”
**FIGURE 1**
Initial Support for a Conservation Constitutional Amendment

"CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT DEDICATING STATE FUNDS FOR OPEN SPACE, FARMLAND, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION, AND CHANGING EXISTING DEDICATION FOR WATER PROGRAMS, UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS, AND HAZARDOUS SITE CLEANUPS."

“Do you approve amending the Constitution to dedicate certain State revenues each year for environmental programs?

- The Constitution now dedicates four percent of the money collected from the Corporation Business Tax to help pay for some environmental programs.
- This amendment raises the amount from four percent to six percent beginning on July 1, 2019.
- The amendment also changes, beginning July 1, 2015, some of the programs funded by the current dedication.
- The new dedication would be used mostly to preserve and steward open space, farmland, historic sites, and flood-prone areas.
- Funds would also be used to improve water quality, remove and clean up underground tanks, and clean up polluted sites.
- Lastly, the amendment dedicates money received from leases and other uses of State open space lands to pay for open space, farmland, and historic preservation.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definitely yes</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probably yes</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided, lean yes</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided, lean no</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probably no</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitely no</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Yes 76%

Total No 21%

Undecided 4%
The constitutional amendment enjoys support from majorities of all major geographic, demographic and attitudinal subgroups within the New Jersey electorate, including:

- 71 percent of men and 80 percent of women;
- 79 percent of voters under 55 and 73 percent of voters aged 55 and older;
- 85 percent of Democrats, 74 percent of independent voters, and 63 percent of Republicans;
- 62 percent of voters who support the Tea Party movement and 82 percent of those who do not;
- 80 percent of city dwellers, 77 percent of suburbanites, 74 percent of voters in small towns, and 69 percent of rural voters;
- 75 percent of white voters and 82 percent of voters of color;
- 75 percent of labor union households, and
- 75 percent of voters in the New York Metro region, 78 percent of voters in Northwestern New Jersey, 73 percent of voters in the Pine Barrens region, and 76 percent of voters in the Shore region; and
- Over seventy percent of voters at all income levels.

- **A substantial majority of New Jersey voters view conservation as a high priority issue.** Respondents were asked how high a priority they considered the programs that the measure would fund to protect open space, farmland, and water quality, and support underground tank removal and polluted site clean-up. As shown in **Figure 2**, a majority of voters (69 percent) view these programs as “very important,” with over one-quarter (26%) labeling them “extremely” important. Only six percent of voters describe conservation programs funded by the measure as “not too” important.

**Figure 2**
**Perceived Importance of Conservation Programs Funded by the Measure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely important</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not too important</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• **By a wide margin, voters want the opportunity to cast a ballot on this issue.** Respondents were asked whether they would rather see the State Legislature place this issue before New Jersey voters, or keep this measure off the ballot. Nearly four in five voters (78%) say they would rather have the chance to vote on this constitutional amendment (Figure 3 below).

![Figure 3: Preference for Legislative Action](image)

- **Support for the constitutional amendment remains remarkably high even after voters hear pro and con arguments on the issue.** Respondents were read a series of statements from supporters and opponents of the proposed amendment, and were asked after each set how they thought they would vote. As shown in Figure 4 on the following page, support for the measure is remarkably consistent; despite a slight dip after the opposition arguments, more than seven in ten voters continue to indicate that they will vote for the amendment – nearly three times as many as say they would oppose it.
Figure 4
Impact of Pro and Con Arguments on Support for the Amendment

Taken together, these survey results clearly show that New Jersey voters see conservation as a high priority, and are very likely to support a constitutional amendment dedicating additional funding to conservation if such a measure is placed on the ballot this November. Support for the proposal cuts across demographic lines – even receiving strong support from some of New Jersey’s most conservative voters – and remains high even after voters have considered potential downsides highlighted by opponents. The measure would have an excellent chance of approval if it were placed on the November ballot.

Methodology: From June 17-19, 2014, FM3 and POS completed 600 telephone interviews (on landlines and cell phones) with voters in New Jersey likely to cast ballots in November 2014. The margin of sampling error is +/-4.0% at the 95% confidence level; margins of error for population subgroups will be higher. Due to rounding, not all totals will sum to 100%.