



c/o The Workplace HUB  
2225 Sycamore Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17111  
Phone: (717) 233-8850  
Email: james@susquehannapolling.com  
www.susquehannapolling.com  
James Lee, President

To: All Interested Parties

Re: **Pa. Voters Prioritize Funding for Parks/Forests; Seek Additional Investments to Improve Environment**

Date: March 14, 2022

## STATEWIDE POLL OVERVIEW, HIGHLIGHTS AND CONCLUSIONS

### SURVEY METHODOLGY AND PROCEDURES

Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation commissioned Susquehanna Polling and Research, Inc., to conduct a scientific statewide poll with Pennsylvania voters to assess their overall opinions and attitudes regarding support for additional funding for the state parks and forest system. The telephone survey was conducted Feb. 21-28, 2022, with 701 Pennsylvania likely voters, and has a margin of error of +/-3.7% at the 95% confidence level.

### HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY FINDINGS

#### **Funding for Outdoor Recreation Including Parks & Forests Should Be a High Priority for State Government**

- By more than 2:1, or a 66% to 30% margin, most Pennsylvania likely voters **agree** funding for outdoor recreation facilities, including parks, trails, lakes and overnight visitor facilities (in parks and forests) should be a high priority for state government. This is an important finding at a time when state budget revenues can only support a limited number of requests, and voters were specifically informed in the survey that agreeing to prioritize funding for outdoor recreation activities, including parks and forests, in all likelihood means funding for other competing programs and/or state services could be scaled back and/or level funded. Agreement that funding for parks and forests should be a priority is broad based and bipartisan, and includes majorities of voters in key demographic groups regardless of party affiliation, geography, gender, age cohort or ethnicity.
  - Sixty-seven (67) percent of Pennsylvania likely voters **support** tapping up to \$125 Million in federal funding from Pennsylvania's [share] of the American Rescue Plan to address a backlog of repairs, projects and related maintenance issues currently facing the state parks and forest system in the Keystone State. Support is broad-based and bipartisan and includes 62% of self-identified Democrats, 66% of Independent and 73% of Republican voters – the latter representing a key constituency given that more state parks and forests are physically located in the districts of Republican State House/Senate districts than in Democrat-represented districts. Moreover, support for funding is high across all geographic regions of the Commonwealth, including the conservative "T"/Central (70%), Southwest/Pittsburgh (69%), Southeast/Philadelphia (68%), Northeast (69%), Northwest/Erie (55%) and Southcentral/Harrisburg (62%).
  - When told state forests serve as a natural filter to remove harmful pollutants in Pennsylvania streams, rivers and lakes, 79% of Pennsylvania likely voters **agree** state government should be doing more to invest in state forests to project clean water and reduce flooding. Only 18% disagreed.
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