



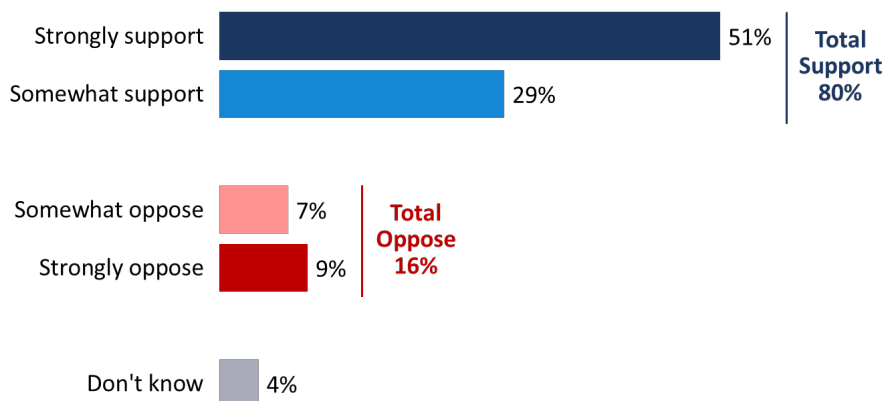
TO Interested Parties
FROM Dave Metz and Miranda Everitt
FM3 Research
RE: Hawai'i Voter Support for Conservation Investments
DATE January 23, 2024

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) recently completed a survey of 802 Hawai'i voters to assess views of a proposal to increase investment in protecting, managing and restoring land, water, wildlife and recreational resources.ⁱ The results show that **Hawai'i voters overwhelmingly support investments in land, water, wildlife and recreational resources, including addressing wildfire and flood risk.** This support cuts across all major demographic subgroups, including geography and party. Key detailed findings include:

- **Four in five support increasing funding for state government programs to protect land, natural areas, streams, wildlife habitat, reefs and beaches; reduce the risk of wildfire and flooding; and restore and maintain watersheds and neighborhood parks.** As shown in Figure 1, fully 80% of Hawai'i voters support increasing state funding for conservation and environmental priorities, and half (51%) strongly support this proposal.

Figure 1: Support for Increasing Funding for Protecting Land, Water and Wildlife, and Reducing Risk of Flood and Fire

In general, would you support or oppose increasing funding for Hawai'i state government programs to protect land, natural areas, streams, wildlife habitat, reefs and beaches; reduce the risk of wildfire and flooding; restore and maintain watersheds and neighborhood parks?

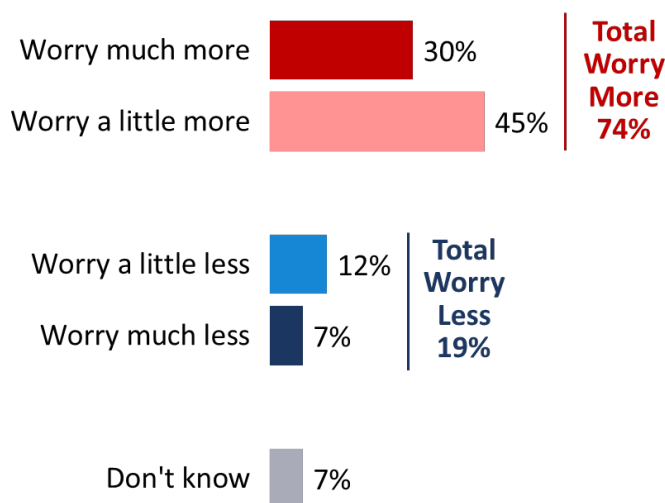


Majority support for the proposal cuts across major geographic and demographic lines, including:

- 92% of Democrats, 71% of independents, and 73% of Republicans;
 - 83% of Native Hawaiian voters, 76% of Japanese American voters, 81% of Filipino American voters, and 88% of white voters; and
 - 77% of Oahu voters, 86% of Big Island voters, 87% of Maui voters, and 88% of voters on Kauai.
- **Underlying support for this policy are near-universally shared beliefs that natural area conservation is essential to quality of life and a shared responsibility to future generations.** Fully 99% of voters agree that “Hawaii’s beaches, reefs and parks are an essential part of Hawaii’s quality of life.” And nearly as many, 97%, agree that it is their “responsibility, or kuleana, to protect Hawaii’s ocean and lands for future generations.”
 - **Three-quarters of Hawai`i voters are more worried about fire than five years ago.** Notably, this concern is even more acute on Maui – 86% worry more than five years ago, and 57% say they worry “much more.” This increased concern leads voters to prioritize investments in projects that will manage natural resources to reduce wildfire risks.

Figure 2: Concern about Fire

Thinking about your own safety, do you personally worry more or less about fires than you did five years ago?



- **Voters see a wide range of conservation investments as high priorities.** As shown in Figure 3 on the next page, more than seven in ten rate a wide range of projects as "very important" targets for investment from additional state funding. Water quality tops the list, followed by protection for beaches and coral reefs, and restoration of wetlands and native forests.

Figure 3: Top Investment Priorities

I am going to read you a list of specific projects and services that could be delivered with additional funding for conservation in Hawai'i. Please tell me how important each one is to you: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important.

Potential Project	Extremely/ Very Important
Ensuring clean water supplies	94%
Monitoring water quality	93%
Protecting and preserving our beaches and coasts	85%
Protecting and restoring coral reefs	84%
Obtaining federal matching funds to protect land, water and wildlife	81%
Restoring wetlands and coastal areas, and reefs that provide wildlife habitat	81%
Restoring lands around our water supplies	81%
Removing and controlling invasive species	80%
Protecting and restoring native forests	80%
Planting native trees	80%
Restoring wetland and coastal areas, and reefs that provide protection against floods and sea-level rise	76%
Upgrading cesspools and septic tanks to reduce water pollution	76%
Providing visitor education to reduce damage to natural and cultural resources	75%
Preventing wildfire	75%
Creating good-paying jobs in natural resources fields such as forestry, habitat conservation and conservation	74%
Reducing the risk of flooding	74%

In conclusion, the survey results show that **majorities of Hawai'i voters, across lines of party and geography, broadly support additional investments in land, water, wildlife and recreational resources, including addressing wildfire and flood risk.** Water quality is a particularly key priority for this investment, along with restoration of beaches, coasts, coral reefs and forests. Moreover, as wildfire risk has become a growing worry, voters also broadly value investments in increasing in wildfire prevention.

ⁱ **Methodology:** From Jan. 5-11, 2024, FM3 completed 802 online and telephone (landline and wireless) interviews with Hawai'i voters, inclusive of an oversample yielding 205 Maui voters. Data have been weighted to reflect the true geographic distribution of voters across the state. The margin of sampling error for the study is +/-4.0% at the 95% confidence level; margins of error for population subgroups within the sample will be higher. Due to rounding, not all totals will sum to 100%.