



Opinion Research
Strategic Communication

Strong Continued Support for Great Lakes Restoration

Findings from February 2016 regional survey

Overview

Our February 2016 survey conducted across the Great Lakes region finds that support for continued Great Lakes restoration funding has grown over the last five years, with over eight in ten residents now voicing their support for continuing this popular program. The urgency of this topic as a political issue has also grown, with majorities saying support for cuts to restoration dollars could make them less likely to support a member of Congress and Presidential candidate.

As we have found in our prior studies, residents find bacteria from sewage overflows and toxic contamination the most concerning threats to the Lakes. Examples of specific efforts to address these threats are seen as good uses of taxpayer dollars. Finally, the importance of the Lakes as a source of drinking water remains the top reason for supporting restoration efforts, and the recent threats to drinking water in Toledo and Flint may aid communications on this topic. A practical reminder that problems will get worse and harder to fix if we wait helps motivate urgency among supporters of Restoration.

BRS conducted a representative sample survey of 1,535 residents of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, New York (outside the New York City metropolitan area), and Erie County, Pennsylvania from February 5-18, 2016. The telephone survey was conducted by live interviewers on cell phones and land lines. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 2.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Key findings from the survey are on the next pages, followed by brief recommendations for communication.

Key Findings

1. More are optimistic about the direction of their states.

Overall, a plurality (46%) of residents in the Great Lakes region rate the direction of their state positively (6-10 on a ten-point scale) while only 34% offer a negative rating (1-4), and 19% are in the middle. This is much more optimistic than they were in 2011, when only 29% rated the direction of their state positively and 45% gave negative ratings.

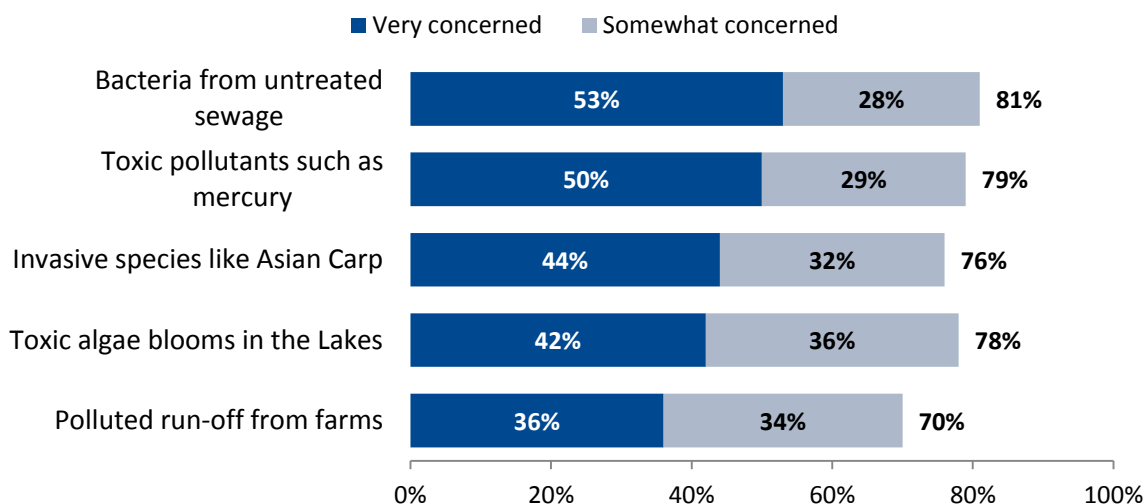
Even so, the ratings vary a great deal from state to state, with Minnesota the most optimistic (69% positive), followed by Ohio (61%) and Indiana (61%). Wisconsin leans positive (47% positive, 32% negative), as do the portions of New York and Pennsylvania that were sampled (47% positive, 33% negative), while Michigan is divided (41% positive, 38% negative) and Illinois residents are strikingly unhappy with how things are going in the state (only 18% positive, 61% negative).

2. Residents are concerned about a number of threats to the Lakes.

Those who live in the region see room to improve the condition of the Great Lakes. About four in ten rate the condition of the Lakes positively, though only 6% say the Lakes are in “excellent” condition while 36% say their condition is “good.” Another third (33%) says the condition of the Lakes is “OK,” while fewer than one in five rate their condition as “poor” (14%) or “very poor” (2%). One in ten does not have an opinion (10%). This is similar to the ratings we recorded in 2011, when 4% of the public rated the condition of the Lakes as “excellent,” 34% as “good,” 42% as “OK,” 14% as “poor,” and 2% as “very poor.”

Prompted with a series of threats to the Great Lakes, residents express high levels of concern about all of them. As we have found in prior years, “bacteria from untreated sewage” (53% “very concerned” 28% “somewhat”) and “toxic pollutants such as mercury” (50% “very,” 29% “somewhat”) generate the most concern, followed by “invasive species like Asian Carp” (44% “very,” 32% “somewhat”). A split sample experiment suggests that the public is somewhat more concerned about nutrient pollution when the outcome is described as “toxic algae blooms in the Lakes” (42% “very concerned,” 36% “somewhat”) than when the pollution is described without illustrating the impact, as “polluted run-off from farms” (36% “very,” 34% somewhat”).

Concern about Problems in the Lakes



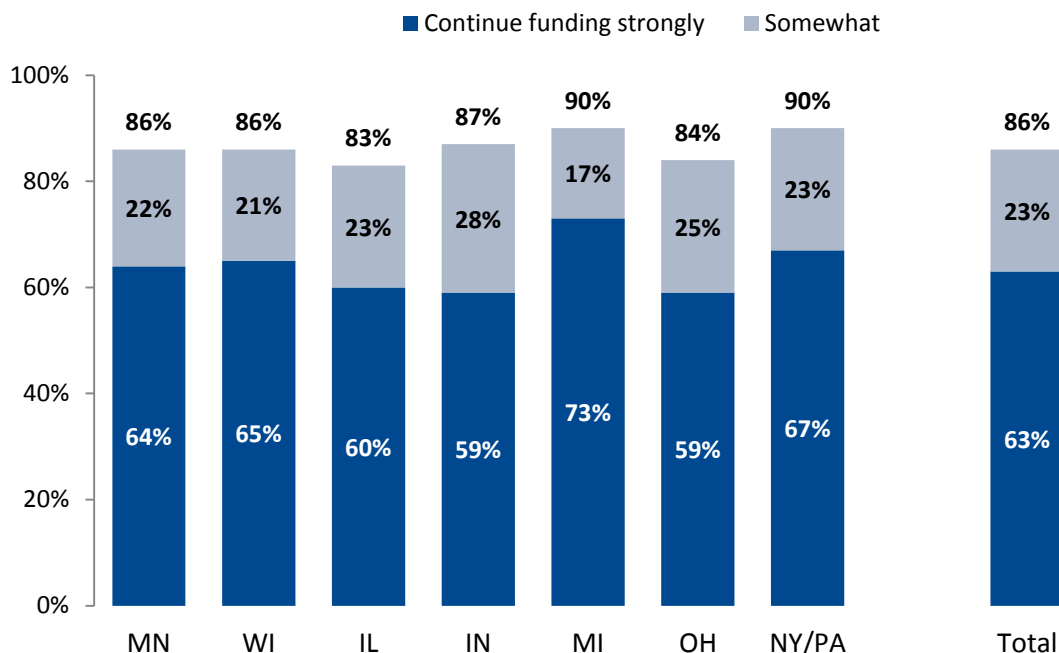
Thinking about the Great Lakes, please tell me how concerned you are about each of the following [RANDOMIZE Q3-6]: very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned or not at all concerned? Q4. Bacteria from untreated sewage; Q3. Toxic pollutants such as mercury; Q6. Invasive species like Asian Carp; Q5B. SPLIT SAMPLE B (n = 770 adults) Toxic algae blooms in the Lakes; Q5A. SPLIT SAMPLE A (n = 765 adults) Polluted run-off from farms

3. An overwhelming majority supports continued Great Lakes restoration funding.

Respondents were told that “Over the last six years, the U.S. federal government has spent over \$300 million a year to improve the condition of the Great Lakes by cleaning up toxic waste and bacteria, reducing run-off pollution from cities and farms, and protecting and rebuilding wetlands.” After hearing this description, 86% in the region say the federal government should continue the funding for Great Lakes restoration, including over six in ten who feel that way “strongly.” Only 11% believe the funding should be reduced. This support is even broader than we found in our 2011 survey, when 75% of voters in the same region supported continuing funding at the level of \$400 million a year.

Support for Great Lakes restoration crosses party lines, with 92% of Democrats, 88% of independents, and 80% of Republicans saying the funding should be maintained without cuts. It also crosses state boundaries, with at least eight in ten supporting continued restoration funding in each of the states, including potential swing states in the Presidential election, such as Ohio (84%), Michigan (90%), Wisconsin (86%), and Minnesota (86%). And regardless of gender, age, race/ethnicity or education level, large majorities support continued funding.

Support for Continued Great Lakes Restoration Funding



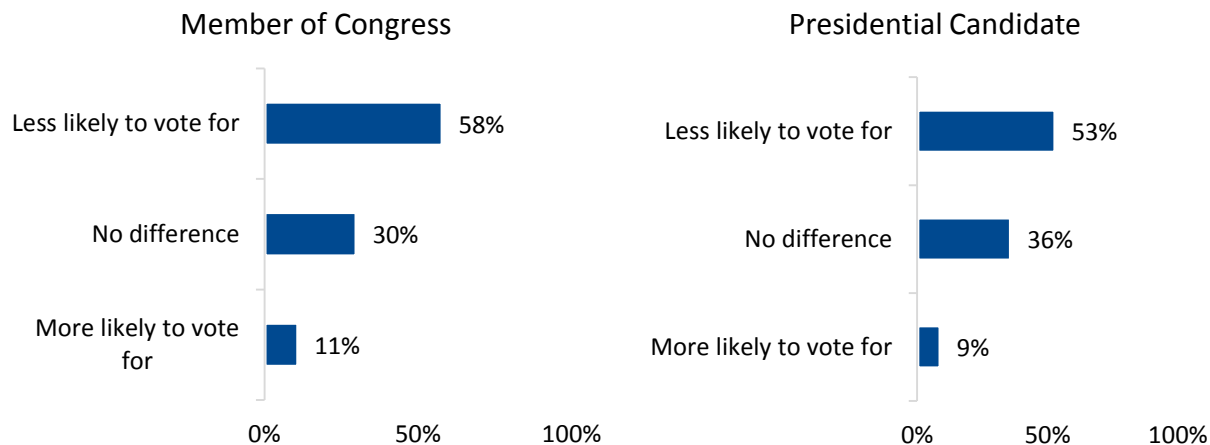
Over the last six years, the U.S. federal government has spent over \$300 million a year to improve the condition of the Great Lakes by cleaning up toxic waste and bacteria, reducing run-off pollution from cities and farms, and protecting and rebuilding wetlands. In your opinion, should the federal government continue or reduce the funding for Great Lakes restoration? [WAIT FOR RESPONSE] Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

4. Opposition to restoration dollars could be costly for candidates.

Our data suggests that Presidential candidates and members of Congress who support cuts to restoration funding may pay a price at the ballot.

- Restoration could be a potentially powerful issue in key House seats if incumbents have supported cuts to funding or challengers look to the Lakes as a way to cut spending. A majority of registered voters (58%) across the region would be less likely to support a member of Congress who voted to cut the funding for Great Lakes restoration – including over six in ten Democrats (64%) and independents (63%) as well as a plurality of Republicans (47%). Overall, only 11% would be more likely to vote for someone who would reduce funding, while 30% say it would make no difference to them.
- The Great Lakes could also become an important issue in the Presidential race. If a candidate for President promised to cut the funding for Great Lakes restoration, a majority (53%) of registered voters would be less likely to support that person, 9% would be more likely to vote for that candidate, and it would make no difference to 36%. Democrats (65%) and independent voters (56%) are especially likely to say a Presidential candidate's view on Great Lakes restoration would matter to their vote, and a third of Republican voters (32%) feels the same way.

Reaction to Candidates Who Support Cuts to Great Lakes Restoration



SPLIT SAMPLE A (n = 676 registered voters) If your member of Congress voted to cut the funding for Great Lakes restoration, would it make you more likely to vote for that person, less likely, or would it make no difference to you?

SPLIT SAMPLE B (n = 691 registered voters) If a candidate for President promised to cut the funding for Great Lakes restoration, would it make you more likely to vote for that person, less likely, or would it make no difference to you?

5. Highlighting the importance of drinking water – including references to Flint’s and Toledo’s problems – connects with the public.

A number of reasons for continued Great Lakes restoration funding are warmly received by the public, with messages focused on drinking water and public health somewhat more persuasive than those focused on the economic importance of the Lakes. Two of the statements most likely to be viewed as convincing point out the importance of this resource as a source of fresh water, particularly drinking water for 30 million people:

- The Great Lakes are the source of drinking water for 30 million people and we need to protect the lakes from pollution to protect the health of people in the region (59% “very persuasive;” and
- “The Great Lakes contain 95% of our country's fresh surface water. We cannot afford to neglect this valuable resource” (55% “very persuasive”).

The survey indicates that it is helpful to link messages in favor of Great Lakes restoration with recent examples of drinking water problems in Flint, Michigan and Toledo, Ohio. We also found strong feelings about the need to upgrade aging water infrastructure:

- “The recent news about lead in the drinking water in Flint, Michigan is just one example of the consequences of our aging water infrastructure; we need to upgrade our water and sewage treatment to ensure safe drinking water and a healthy environment” (55%); and

- “In 2014, an algae bloom caused by runoff pollution in Lake Erie meant half a million people in Toledo could not safely drink or bathe in their tap water; we need to address this and other problems in the Great Lakes” (51%).
- “Our region’s aging water infrastructure is causing drinking water contamination and sewage overflows that close beaches; we need to upgrade our water and sewage treatment to ensure safe drinking water and a healthy environment” (51%).

Statistical analysis shows that enthusiasm for the message about Toledo is highly predictive of support for continued restoration dollars. In addition, another statement that strongly predicts support for restoration is a practical case for acting now:

- “We should act now because problems in the Lakes will only get worse. Pushing our problems off until tomorrow is expensive and counter-productive” (45%).

Three other messages, though still broadly rated as convincing, are not as predictive of attitudes in favor of restoration:

- “The Great Lakes are an American treasure and one of the wonders of the world, and we have a responsibility to keep them healthy” (50%);
- “We need to protect the Great Lakes so our children and grandchildren can experience the Lakes the way we have” (47%); and
- “Keeping the Great Lakes in good shape is essential to the economy in the Midwest, where more than a million jobs are connected to the Great Lakes” (44%).

In general, all demographic groups generally rate the statements about the importance of and threats to drinking water as the most convincing. It is worth noting, as well, that some groups are more likely to report that *all* of the messages are very convincing, including older residents, African Americans, and Latinos – as well as Democrats and independent women.

6. Informing the public of specific restoration projects can show that the program is using its dollars well.

The survey presented three examples of the types of work that the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funds. At least seven in ten view each of the three as “excellent” or “good” uses of federal tax dollars:

- “Cleaned up toxic contamination such as mercury from the mouth of the Ashtabula River near Cleveland, Ohio, which has made the area safe for fishing and boating again” (44% excellent, 37% good);

- “Restored a native dune habitat at a Lake Michigan beach north of Chicago, which improved water quality and allowed the beach to remain open for swimmers” (32% excellent, 44% good); and
- “Removed concrete along the banks of the Kinnickinnic River in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and replaced it with natural vegetation” (28% excellent, 43% good).

Across each state, the toxic clean-up is most likely to be rated as a good or excellent use of federal dollars, followed by dune restoration and concrete removal. This suggests that the key factor for the public is not *where* the restoration project takes place but what action is taken and what the outcome is. Our prior research has suggested that the public is most enthusiastic about specific restoration projects when the outcome (such as making an area safe for swimming or fishing again) is described, rather than explaining the action alone.

7. Few messages resonate with people against continued funding.

Public support for continued restoration funding is not diminished after a series of arguments in favor of cuts. After hearing statements both pro and con, support for continued funding stands at 83%, while opposition is only 16%.

In general, the public does not rate the statements supporting cuts as highly persuasive. Only one message is rated as “very convincing” by more than three in ten in the region; this message focuses on the responsibility of companies to clean up their pollution:

- “Clean-up should be paid for by companies that caused the pollution, not the federal taxpayer” (39% “very convincing”).

Messages emphasizing distrust of the federal government, other priorities for funding, and the need for job creation as reasons to cut funding for restoration, are rated much lower by the public. The next most persuasive message opposing restoration funding talks about needing to stop the source of pollution before spending money on clean-up.

- “Before we spend money cleaning up the Great Lakes, we need to stop the causes of the problems in the lakes, like invasive species and polluted run-off from farms and cities. Otherwise we are just throwing good money after bad” (28%);
- “The federal government cannot be trusted with spending the money for Great Lakes cleanup wisely. It has already spent \$300 million a year for six years and the Lakes are still in trouble” (18%);
- “The federal government should not automatically commit to spending hundreds of millions of dollars a year, with no end in sight, on a program that should be funded by individual states” (16%);

- “The Great Lakes are important, but Congress should not just continue to approve spending \$300 million, year after year, when we have so much federal debt” (16%);
- “The Great Lakes are important, but Congress should not just continue to approve spending \$300 million, year after year, when we have so many other important priorities that need funding” (11%); and
- “Right now, our government should be focused on how to create more jobs, not how to protect more wetlands in the Great Lakes area” (11%);

Republicans are more likely than Democrats and independents to find these opposition messages convincing. However, even Republicans rated the top *pro-restoration* messages about the importance of drinking water as equally or more convincing than any of the opposition messages.

Appendix A: Crosstab Tables

Direction of State

Q1. I would like to know how things are going in your state today. On a ten point scale where one means things are definitely going in the wrong direction and 10 means things are definitely going in the right direction, how would you rate the direction of your state? You can use any number between one and 10.

	1-4 (wrong direction)	5	6-10 (right direction)
Total	34%	19	46
Men	34%	16	49
Women	33%	21	44
18-34	28%	18	54
35-44	30%	19	50
45-54	42%	18	39
55-64	39%	23	37
65+	33%	17	47
Men <45	30%	16	53
Men 45+	38%	16	45
Women <45	26%	21	51
Women 45+	38%	21	38
White	34%	19	46
African American	30%	18	50
Latino	24%	22	55
<College	34%	21	45
College grad	33%	16	49
Post-grad+	37%	18	44
Registered voter	35%	18	45
Voted 2014	37%	17	45
Democrat	33%	19	46
Republican	36%	16	47
Independent	33%	20	45
Democratic men	33%	19	48
Democratic women	34%	18	46
Republican men	38%	11	51
Republican women	33%	22	43
Independent men	33%	17	48
Independent women	33%	23	42
Liberal	36%	17	46
Moderate	28%	25	45
Conservative	37%	14	49
Minnesota	17%	13	69
Wisconsin	32%	19	47
Illinois	61%	19	18
Indiana	19%	19	61
Michigan	38%	20	41
Ohio	19%	19	61
New York/Pennsylvania	33%	19	47

Condition of Great Lakes

Q2. Thinking about the Great Lakes, would you rate their condition as excellent, good, ok, poor, or very poor?

	Excellent/ good	Poor/very poor	Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor
Total	42%	16	6%	36	33	14	2
Men	46%	15	8%	38	32	12	3
Women	37%	17	4%	33	33	15	2
18-34	42%	16	5%	37	35	13	3
35-44	38%	18	7%	31	32	17	2
45-54	43%	13	5%	37	36	12	1
55-64	45%	18	6%	39	31	15	2
65+	42%	14	6%	36	29	11	2
Men <45	42%	17	9%	33	34	15	2
Men 45+	52%	12	7%	45	30	10	2
Women <45	39%	17	3%	36	32	15	2
Women 45+	36%	17	4%	32	34	15	2
White	43%	16	6%	37	32	13	2
African American	33%	12	6%	28	40	8	3
Latino	38%	22	7%	32	24	14	7
<College	39%	17	6%	32	33	15	2
College grad	43%	15	5%	38	33	13	3
Post-grad+	49%	14	6%	42	31	12	2
Registered voter	41%	16	6%	35	33	13	3
Voted 2014	42%	17	6%	36	31	14	3
Democrat	41%	16	6%	35	34	14	2
Republican	45%	15	5%	40	30	12	3
Independent	42%	15	7%	36	33	13	2
Democratic men	44%	13	8%	36	39	11	2
Democratic women	39%	17	5%	34	30	15	2
Republican men	50%	14	7%	42	29	11	3
Republican women	39%	16	2%	37	32	12	3
Independent men	47%	15	8%	39	31	12	2
Independent women	37%	16	5%	32	36	14	2
Liberal	36%	18	4%	32	37	17	2
Moderate	44%	14	6%	38	34	11	3
Conservative	45%	16	7%	38	28	14	2
Minnesota	52%	10	11%	41	32	9	1
Wisconsin	46%	17	7%	39	30	15	3
Illinois	33%	20	4%	29	36	17	2
Indiana	38%	16	5%	32	34	13	3
Michigan	59%	12	7%	52	25	9	3
Ohio	33%	19	5%	28	37	16	3
New York/Pennsylvania	39%	17	5%	34	32	15	1

Concern about Problems in the Lakes

Thinking about the Great Lakes, please tell me how concerned you are about each of the following [RANDOMIZE Q3-6]: very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned or not at all concerned? Q4. Bacteria from untreated sewage; Q3. Toxic pollutants such as mercury; Q6. Invasive species like Asian Carp; Q5B. SPLIT SAMPLE B (n = 770 adults) Toxic algae blooms in the Lakes; Q5A. SPLIT SAMPLE A (n = 765 adults) Polluted run-off from farms

<i>% saying "very concerned"</i>	Bacteria from untreated sewage	Toxic pollutants/ mercury	Invasive species like Asian Carp	Toxic algae blooms in the Lakes	Polluted run-off from farms
Total	53%	50%	44%	42%	36%
Men	48%	46%	46%	40%	34%
Women	58%	53%	42%	45%	38%
18-34	46%	41%	30%	36%	31%
35-44	52%	47%	37%	42%	37%
45-54	51%	50%	48%	41%	36%
55-64	64%	59%	58%	52%	40%
65+	60%	59%	56%	48%	42%
Men <45	45%	42%	40%	37%	35%
Men 45+	52%	52%	53%	42%	34%
Women <45	53%	46%	25%	41%	31%
Women 45+	62%	59%	54%	49%	44%
White	52%	50%	46%	40%	34%
African American	62%	61%	37%	68%	46%
Latino	62%	46%	35%	45%	39%
<College	57%	52%	43%	46%	38%
College grad	49%	46%	42%	36%	32%
Post-grad+	48%	50%	51%	39%	42%
Registered voter	54%	52%	46%	43%	38%
Voted 2014	54%	52%	49%	41%	38%
Democrat	58%	56%	45%	48%	44%
Republican	50%	40%	45%	34%	30%
Independent	52%	51%	44%	43%	35%
Democratic men	49%	50%	45%	46%	37%
Democratic women	64%	60%	45%	49%	49%
Republican men	48%	38%	49%	36%	30%
Republican women	53%	43%	39%	32%	30%
Independent men	46%	49%	45%	37%	35%
Independent women	59%	54%	42%	50%	35%
Liberal	57%	58%	45%	51%	41%
Moderate	52%	48%	42%	37%	39%
Conservative	51%	44%	45%	39%	30%
Minnesota	47%	50%	51%	42%	23%
Wisconsin	49%	43%	46%	36%	33%
Illinois	53%	48%	40%	36%	39%
Indiana	51%	50%	33%	30%	39%
Michigan	54%	55%	56%	43%	36%
Ohio	54%	48%	38%	51%	39%
New York/Pennsylvania	62%	56%	47%	57%	39%

Support for Continued Restoration Funding

Q7. Over the last six years, the U.S. federal government has spent over \$300 million a year to improve the condition of the Great Lakes by cleaning up toxic waste and bacteria, reducing run-off pollution from cities and farms, and protecting and rebuilding wetlands. In your opinion, should the federal government continue or reduce the funding for Great Lakes restoration? [WAIT FOR RESPONSE] Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	Total continue	Total reduce	Continue strongly	Continue somewhat	Reduce somewhat	Reduce strongly
Total	86%	11	63%	23	6	5
Men	84%	13	61%	23	7	7
Women	88%	9	65%	23	5	4
18-34	88%	10	64%	24	5	4
35-44	86%	12	60%	26	5	7
45-54	85%	12	65%	20	7	5
55-64	87%	12	68%	19	6	6
65+	83%	11	61%	23	7	5
Men <45	86%	12	61%	25	5	7
Men 45+	82%	15	62%	20	8	7
Women <45	90%	8	65%	25	5	4
Women 45+	87%	9	66%	21	5	4
White	87%	10	63%	24	5	5
African American	79%	17	54%	25	9	8
Latino	91%	7	75%	16	5	2
<College	84%	13	61%	24	7	6
College grad	89%	10	65%	23	6	4
Post-grad+	87%	8	69%	18	3	5
Registered voter	86%	11	64%	22	6	5
Voted 2014	85%	12	64%	21	7	6
Democrat	92%	7	71%	20	5	3
Republican	80%	17	56%	24	9	8
Independent	88%	9	64%	24	4	5
Democratic men	90%	9	73%	17	5	4
Democratic women	92%	6	70%	22	4	2
Republican men	78%	19	55%	24	10	9
Republican women	82%	14	57%	25	7	6
Independent men	85%	11	59%	26	5	6
Independent women	91%	6	69%	21	3	3
Liberal	93%	6	74%	18	4	2
Moderate	88%	8	65%	24	4	4
Conservative	79%	18	52%	26	9	9
Minnesota	86%	11	64%	22	7	3
Wisconsin	86%	13	65%	21	7	6
Illinois	83%	13	60%	23	7	7
Indiana	87%	10	59%	28	4	7
Michigan	90%	7	73%	17	4	2
Ohio	83%	14	59%	25	6	8
New York/Pennsylvania	90%	8	67%	23	7	1

Examples of Specific Projects

Here are some examples of how federal tax dollars have been spent on improving the Great Lakes. Please tell me if you think each one is an excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor use of federal tax dollars. [RANDOMIZE Q8-Q10] Q8. Cleaned up toxic contamination such as mercury from the mouth of the Ashtabula River near Cleveland, Ohio, which has made the area safe for fishing and boating again; Q10. Restored a native dune habitat at a Lake Michigan beach north of Chicago, which improved water quality and allowed the beach to remain open for swimmers; Q9. Removed concrete along the banks of the Kinnickinnic River in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and replaced it with natural vegetation

<i>% saying "excellent"/"good"</i>	Clean up toxics	Dune restoration	Concrete removal
Total	81%	76%	71%
Men	81%	76%	70%
Women	82%	77%	72%
18-34	84%	82%	76%
35-44	76%	74%	71%
45-54	83%	75%	70%
55-64	83%	76%	69%
65+	79%	72%	65%
Men <45	81%	78%	72%
Men 45+	80%	72%	65%
Women <45	80%	79%	76%
Women 45+	83%	76%	70%
White	83%	77%	72%
African American	75%	69%	65%
Latino	72%	80%	70%
<College	79%	74%	68%
College grad	83%	78%	73%
Post-grad+	86%	81%	75%
Registered voter	82%	77%	70%
Voted 2014	80%	76%	69%
Democrat	86%	83%	79%
Republican	73%	68%	62%
Independent	83%	78%	70%
Democratic men	87%	83%	83%
Democratic women	86%	82%	76%
Republican men	75%	68%	62%
Republican women	70%	68%	63%
Independent men	82%	77%	67%
Independent women	85%	78%	74%
Liberal	86%	84%	78%
Moderate	82%	78%	73%
Conservative	77%	69%	63%
Minnesota	84%	76%	74%
Wisconsin	78%	72%	69%
Illinois	78%	77%	69%
Indiana	79%	76%	69%
Michigan	83%	80%	71%
Ohio	82%	71%	67%
New York/Pennsylvania	87%	81%	81%

Top Messages in Favor of Restoration Funding

Please tell me how persuasive each of the following statements is to you as a reason for spending tax dollars on improving the conditions of the Great Lakes, on a one to ten scale where one means not at all persuasive and ten means very persuasive. [RANDOMIZE Q11-Q18] Q15. The Great Lakes are the source of drinking water for 30 million people and we need to protect the lakes from pollution to protect the health of people in the region; Q11. The Great Lakes contain 95% of our country's fresh surface water. We cannot afford to neglect this valuable resource; Q17B. SPLIT SAMPLE B (n = 770 adults) The recent news about lead in the drinking water in Flint, Michigan is just one example of the consequences of our aging water infrastructure; we need to upgrade our water and sewage treatment to ensure safe drinking water and a healthy environment; Q17A. SPLIT SAMPLE A (n = 765 adults) Our region's aging water infrastructure is causing drinking water contamination and sewage overflows that close beaches; we need to upgrade our water and sewage treatment to ensure safe drinking water and a healthy environment; Q18. In 2014, an algae bloom caused by runoff pollution in Lake Erie meant half a million people in Toledo could not safely drink or bathe in their tap water; we need to address this and other problems in the Great Lakes.

<i>% saying "10 – very persuasive"</i>	Drinking water for 30 million	95% of fresh surface water	Flint/ infrastructure	Infrastructure/ sewage	Algae bloom/ Toledo
Total	59%	55%	55%	51%	51%
Men	55%	52%	50%	43%	44%
Women	64%	58%	61%	57%	57%
18-34	52%	46%	52%	44%	42%
35-44	57%	52%	52%	53%	48%
45-54	58%	56%	52%	49%	52%
55-64	67%	63%	66%	52%	59%
65+	66%	64%	62%	58%	59%
Men <45	49%	46%	50%	40%	40%
Men 45+	60%	59%	50%	47%	49%
Women <45	61%	51%	54%	56%	50%
Women 45+	66%	62%	65%	58%	61%
White	58%	54%	54%	50%	49%
African American	71%	62%	70%	65%	65%
Latino	69%	66%	74%	57%	55%
<College	60%	56%	59%	51%	52%
College grad	58%	53%	49%	48%	47%
Post-grad+	61%	57%	54%	55%	54%
Registered voter	60%	56%	57%	51%	51%
Voted 2014	60%	56%	56%	52%	51%
Democrat	69%	63%	69%	62%	61%
Republican	46%	47%	44%	41%	38%
Independent	61%	55%	52%	49%	51%
Democratic men	65%	56%	62%	51%	52%
Democratic women	71%	67%	74%	69%	67%
Republican men	42%	45%	40%	36%	33%
Republican women	52%	48%	49%	50%	46%
Independent men	57%	55%	48%	45%	46%
Independent women	65%	56%	57%	54%	57%
Liberal	65%	60%	66%	57%	57%
Moderate	61%	54%	54%	53%	52%
Conservative	51%	50%	48%	42%	44%
Minnesota	50%	50%	52%	37%	43%
Wisconsin	53%	51%	51%	38%	46%
Illinois	58%	55%	57%	47%	48%
Indiana	61%	50%	46%	60%	51%
Michigan	67%	65%	60%	63%	54%
Ohio	59%	53%	54%	48%	54%
NY/PA	64%	59%	65%	59%	54%

Other Messages in Favor of Restoration Funding

Please tell me how persuasive each of the following statements is to you as a reason for spending tax dollars on improving the conditions of the Great Lakes, on a one to ten scale where one means not at all persuasive and ten means very persuasive. Remember, you can use any number between one and ten to rate how you feel about a statement. [RANDOMIZE Q11-Q18] Q16. The Great Lakes are an American treasure and one of the wonders of the world, and we have a responsibility to keep them healthy; Q13. We need to protect the Great Lakes so our children and grandchildren can experience the Lakes the way we have; Q12. We should act now because problems in the Lakes will only get worse. Pushing our problems off until tomorrow is expensive and counter-productive; Q14. Keeping the Great Lakes in good shape is essential to the economy in the Midwest, where more than a million jobs are connected to the Great Lakes.

<i>% saying "10 – very persuasive"</i>	American treasure and wonder of the world	Protect for children and grandchildren	Act now, problems will get worse, more costly	Economy, more than a million jobs
Total	50%	47%	45%	44%
Men	48%	46%	43%	41%
Women	52%	48%	48%	47%
18-34	40%	41%	38%	38%
35-44	44%	43%	44%	44%
45-54	50%	45%	46%	41%
55-64	61%	55%	53%	50%
65+	62%	55%	52%	51%
Men <45	40%	39%	40%	37%
Men 45+	56%	52%	47%	46%
Women <45	43%	45%	41%	45%
Women 45+	58%	51%	52%	48%
White	48%	45%	43%	42%
African American	67%	58%	60%	65%
Latino	52%	57%	57%	52%
<College	55%	50%	47%	46%
College grad	42%	43%	41%	42%
Post-grad+	49%	43%	49%	41%
Registered voter	51%	48%	46%	45%
Voted 2014	51%	47%	46%	44%
Democrat	55%	53%	53%	52%
Republican	44%	40%	35%	37%
Independent	51%	48%	48%	43%
Democratic men	53%	50%	49%	47%
Democratic women	56%	54%	56%	55%
Republican men	41%	39%	32%	33%
Republican women	49%	42%	40%	41%
Independent men	50%	46%	47%	40%
Independent women	53%	50%	48%	45%
Liberal	49%	47%	50%	46%
Moderate	51%	51%	47%	45%
Conservative	48%	42%	40%	40%
Minnesota	48%	40%	41%	42%
Wisconsin	48%	42%	39%	41%
Illinois	43%	44%	41%	41%
Indiana	49%	54%	49%	43%
Michigan	59%	55%	53%	54%
Ohio	50%	44%	45%	44%
NY/PA	54%	49%	50%	40%

Top Messages Against Restoration Funding

Please tell me how persuasive each of the following statements is to you as a reason not to spend tax dollars on improving the conditions of the Great Lakes. We'll use the same ten point scale where one means not at all persuasive and ten means very persuasive. You can use any number between one and ten to rate how you feel about the statement: [RANDOMIZE Q19 TO Q24] Q21. Clean-up should be paid for by companies that caused the pollution, not the federal tax-payer; Q22. Before we spend money cleaning up the Great Lakes, we need to stop the causes of the problems in the lakes, like invasive species and polluted run-off from farms and cities. Otherwise we are just throwing good money after bad; Q19. The federal government cannot be trusted with spending the money for Great Lakes cleanup wisely. It has already spent \$300 million a year for six years and the Lakes are still in trouble.

<i>% saying "10 – very persuasive"</i>	Clean up should be paid for by companies caused pollution	Before we spend money, need to stop causes	Federal government cannot be trusted
Total	39%	28%	18%
Men	39%	27%	21%
Women	39%	29%	15%
18-34	30%	20%	13%
35-44	35%	25%	16%
45-54	42%	28%	19%
55-64	44%	36%	19%
65+	49%	37%	26%
Men <45	36%	22%	17%
Men 45+	44%	33%	25%
Women <45	28%	22%	10%
Women 45+	45%	34%	19%
White	38%	26%	18%
African American	51%	42%	20%
Latino	37%	36%	23%
<College	46%	35%	22%
College grad	31%	20%	15%
Post-grad+	29%	19%	11%
Registered voter	39%	28%	18%
Voted 2014	40%	28%	19%
Democrat	39%	28%	14%
Republican	43%	33%	28%
Independent	38%	25%	15%
Democratic men	38%	27%	16%
Democratic women	40%	30%	13%
Republican men	39%	29%	28%
Republican women	49%	39%	28%
Independent men	40%	25%	20%
Independent women	35%	25%	9%
Liberal	34%	25%	10%
Moderate	38%	28%	15%
Conservative	44%	30%	27%
Minnesota	32%	25%	16%
Wisconsin	42%	26%	14%
Illinois	40%	27%	17%
Indiana	39%	33%	22%
Michigan	42%	32%	20%
Ohio	38%	28%	19%
NY/PA	38%	24%	16%

Other Messages Against Restoration Funding

Please tell me how persuasive each of the following statements is to you as a reason not to spend tax dollars on improving the conditions of the Great Lakes. We'll use the same ten point scale where one means not at all persuasive and ten means very persuasive. You can use any number between one and ten to rate how you feel about the statement: [RANDOMIZE Q19 TO Q24] Q23A. SPLIT SAMPLE A (n = 765 adults) The Great Lakes are important, but Congress should not just continue to approve spending \$300 million, year after year, when we have so much federal debt; Q24. The federal government should not automatically commit to spending hundreds of millions of dollars a year, with no end in sight, on a program that should be funded by individual states; Q23B. SPLIT SAMPLE B (n = 770 adults) The Great Lakes are important, but Congress should not just continue to approve spending \$300 million, year after year, when we have so many other important priorities that need funding; Q20. Right now, our government should be focused on how to create more jobs, not how to protect more wetlands in the Great Lakes area.

% saying "10 – very persuasive"

	Federal debt	Individual states	Other priorities	Job creation
Total	16%	16%	11%	11%
Men	18%	17%	11%	12%
Women	14%	14%	10%	10%
18-34	14%	10%	9%	9%
35-44	8%	16%	5%	9%
45-54	17%	16%	10%	11%
55-64	22%	18%	17%	14%
65+	24%	24%	15%	16%
Men <45	13%	14%	8%	11%
Men 45+	24%	22%	15%	14%
Women <45	10%	10%	6%	7%
Women 45+	18%	17%	12%	13%
White	15%	15%	10%	9%
African American	20%	24%	17%	25%
Latino	23%	19%	13%	16%
<College	20%	19%	13%	15%
College grad	10%	12%	9%	7%
Post-grad+	13%	13%	7%	6%
Registered voter	15%	16%	11%	11%
Voted 2014	17%	17%	12%	10%
Democrat	14%	14%	11%	12%
Republican	22%	22%	15%	14%
Independent	13%	13%	7%	9%
Democratic men	11%	15%	15%	12%
Democratic women	16%	14%	8%	13%
Republican men	24%	22%	11%	14%
Republican women	18%	22%	20%	13%
Independent men	17%	15%	9%	11%
Independent women	8%	10%	5%	5%
Liberal	12%	12%	8%	9%
Moderate	13%	12%	8%	8%
Conservative	22%	23%	14%	15%
Minnesota	10%	13%	8%	7%
Wisconsin	14%	16%	8%	6%
Illinois	15%	14%	10%	11%
Indiana	20%	25%	15%	12%
Michigan	17%	16%	13%	13%
Ohio	21%	17%	9%	15%
NY/PA	11%	11%	13%	10%

Support for Continued Restoration Funding After Messages

Q25. Let me ask you again: Over the last six years, the U.S. federal government has spent over \$300 million a year to improve the condition of the Great Lakes by cleaning up toxic waste and bacteria, reducing run-off pollution from cities and farms, and protecting and rebuilding wetlands. In your opinion, should the federal government continue or reduce the funding for Great Lakes restoration? [WAIT FOR RESPONSE] Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	Total continue	Total reduce	Continue strongly	Continue somewhat	Reduce somewhat	Reduce strongly
Total	82%	16	61%	22	8	8
Men	80%	18	61%	19	9	9
Women	85%	13	60%	24	7	7
18-34	86%	13	61%	25	8	5
35-44	82%	15	60%	22	6	10
45-54	81%	17	61%	20	10	8
55-64	83%	15	64%	19	6	9
65+	78%	19	59%	19	9	9
Men <45	81%	17	61%	20	9	8
Men 45+	79%	19	62%	17	9	10
Women <45	88%	10	60%	28	5	5
Women 45+	82%	16	61%	22	8	8
White	83%	15	61%	22	8	7
African American	79%	19	58%	21	9	9
Latino	81%	16	62%	20	10	6
<College	79%	19	57%	21	10	8
College grad	86%	13	64%	23	6	7
Post-grad+	87%	11	68%	20	3	8
Registered voter	82%	16	61%	21	8	8
Voted 2014	82%	16	62%	20	8	8
Democrat	91%	8	72%	19	5	3
Republican	72%	25	49%	23	11	14
Independent	85%	13	61%	23	7	6
Democratic men	91%	7	75%	16	4	3
Democratic women	90%	9	70%	20	6	3
Republican men	70%	27	54%	17	13	15
Republican women	75%	22	44%	31	8	14
Independent men	82%	16	60%	22	8	8
Independent women	88%	9	63%	25	5	5
Liberal	92%	7	74%	18	4	3
Moderate	86%	12	62%	24	7	5
Conservative	71%	27	49%	22	12	15
Minnesota	84%	15	59%	25	8	7
Wisconsin	80%	18	60%	20	8	10
Illinois	80%	17	56%	25	9	8
Indiana	78%	18	54%	24	6	12
Michigan	88%	9	72%	16	7	3
Ohio	83%	16	60%	23	6	10
New York/Pennsylvania	82%	17	62%	19	13	5

Impact of Member of Congress Voting to Cut Restoration Funds

Q26A. SPLIT SAMPLE A (n = 676 registered voters) If your member of Congress voted to cut the funding for Great Lakes restoration, would it make you more likely to vote for that person, less likely, or would it make no difference to you?

	Less likely	No difference	More likely
Registered voters	58%	30	11
Men	56%	30	13
Women	60%	30	9
18-34	59%	31	10
35-44	52%	28	20
45-54	66%	25	8
55-64	56%	33	10
65+	55%	36	7
Men <45	55%	31	15
Men 45+	58%	29	12
Women <45	57%	28	15
Women 45+	60%	32	6
White	59%	30	10
African American	51%	31	17
Latino	51%	30	19
<College	51%	37	10
College grad	64%	23	12
Post-grad+	65%	23	11
Registered voter	58%	30	11
Voted 2014	57%	29	12
Democrat	64%	23	12
Republican	47%	33	18
Independent	63%	30	5
Democratic men	62%	25	12
Democratic women	66%	22	12
Republican men	43%	36	21
Republican women	52%	29	14
Independent men	63%	30	5
Independent women	63%	30	5
Liberal	72%	16	10
Moderate	57%	34	7
Conservative	44%	38	17
Minnesota	55%	37	8
Wisconsin	57%	34	7
Illinois	50%	33	14
Indiana	52%	36	11
Michigan	74%	15	8
Ohio	54%	32	13
New York/Pennsylvania	64%	24	12

Impact of Presidential Candidate Supporting Cuts to Restoration Funds

Q26B. SPLIT SAMPLE B (n = 691 registered voters) n = 691 If a candidate for President promised to cut the funding for Great Lakes restoration, would it make you more likely to vote for that person, less likely, or would it make no difference to you?

	Less likely	No difference	More likely
Total	53%	36	9
Men	54%	37	8
Women	51%	35	10
18-34	48%	35	15
35-44	56%	37	6
45-54	49%	41	9
55-64	51%	37	10
65+	59%	29	6
Men <45	57%	34	8
Men 45+	51%	37	10
Women <45	44%	39	15
Women 45+	55%	35	7
White	54%	36	8
African American	46%	41	12
Latino	49%	33	18
<College	47%	39	11
College grad	55%	36	8
Post-grad+	64%	29	5
Registered voter	53%	36	9
Voted 2014	52%	36	10
Democrat	65%	22	11
Republican	34%	52	13
Independent	56%	36	4
Democratic men	74%	19	7
Democratic women	60%	23	14
Republican men	40%	47	10
Republican women	25%	58	17
Independent men	52%	39	7
Independent women	62%	32	1
Liberal	71%	20	8
Moderate	50%	40	7
Conservative	40%	48	11
Minnesota	55%	32	10
Wisconsin	55%	30	13
Illinois	51%	42	7
Indiana	42%	41	11
Michigan	59%	32	8
Ohio	54%	34	9
New York/Pennsylvania	49%	39	10