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UNH Survey Finds Widespread Support for Protecting the Environment

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(HTTPS://WWW.UNH.EDU/UNHTODAY/NEWS/2017/02/16/UNH-SURVEY-FINDS-WIDESPREAD-SUPPORT-PROTECTING-ENVIRONMENT)

DURHAM, N.H. – Almost three-quarters of Granite State residents surveyed think environmental protection rules should be left as they are or strengthened, according to new survey research reported by the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire.

According to the most recent Granite State Poll, only 20 percent of those surveyed agree with President Trump’s call to abolish the Environmental Protection Agency and eliminate or reduce many of its current rules. Twenty-four percent prefer things as they are and 49 percent say protections should be made stronger.

Overall, 43 percent of survey respondents say they approve and 48 percent disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president. Among those who approve, almost half think environmental protection rules should be kept as they are or strengthened. Support for environmental protection rises to 60 percent among those who are neutral regarding Trump and 99 percent among those who disapprove of his presidency.

“The political drive to reduce environmental protection appears to have little backing among the general public,” said Lawrence Hamilton, professor of sociology and Carsey senior fellow.

Hamilton also found that large majorities (63 to 84 percent) in every category of age, education and gender were in favor of maintaining or strengthening environmental protection rules. Majorities of liberals, moderates and moderate conservatives support environmental protection as do most Democrats, Independents and non-Tea Party Republicans. Even among the most conservative environmental protection still has substantial support, although it falls short of a majority.

“Environmental issues received relatively little attention during the campaign, but a disjunction between public opinion and political leadership could become more salient now that the election is past and policy choices come into focus,” said Hamilton.

The Carsey report can be found here: <https://carsey.unh.edu/publication/public-support-environ-protection> (<https://carsey.unh.edu/publication/public-support-environ-protection>)

The Carsey School of Public Policy conducts research, leadership development, and engaged scholarship relevant to public policy. They address pressing challenges, striving for innovative, responsive, and equitable solutions at all levels of government and in the for-profit and nonprofit sectors.

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