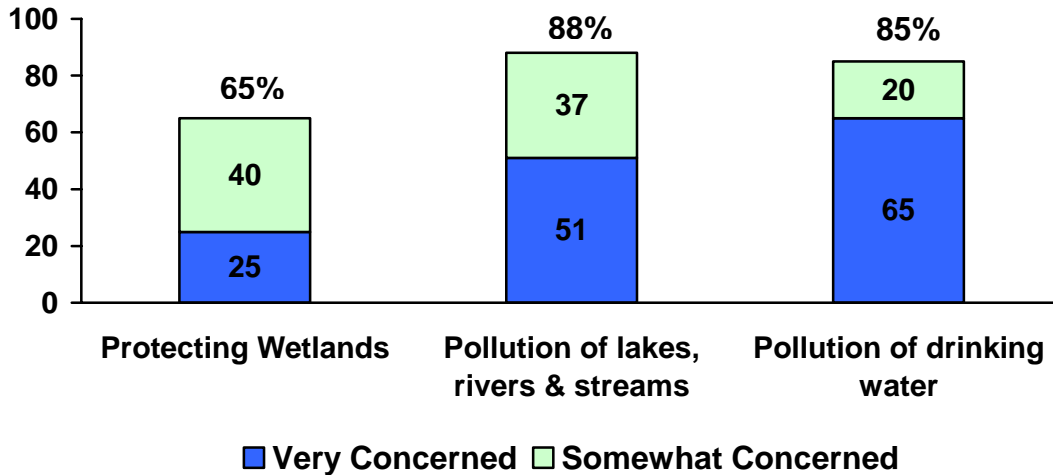


M e m o r a n d u m

To: Earthjustice
From: Christine Matthews, President
Date: January, 2007
Subject: Survey Results among rural voters in Illinois' 15th Congressional District

Bellwether Research & Consulting conducted 300 interviews among rural voters in Illinois' 15th Congressional District. The interviews were conducted in mid-December. The survey has a \pm 5.6% margin of error in 95 out of 100 cases.

In Illinois' 15th Congressional District, rural voters express a great deal of concern about protecting the quality of their drinking water, and lakes, rivers, and streams from pollution. Nearly half (48%) say they fish, and many of them consume the fish they eat. Fully 37% say they are concerned about drinking water straight from their tap.



In this conservative, Republican district (George W. Bush garnered 59% of the vote in 2004 here), the majority of rural voters say the government has not done enough to protect the environment and water from pollution:

55% The government has **not gone far enough with laws to protect the environment** and to keep our water free from pollution.

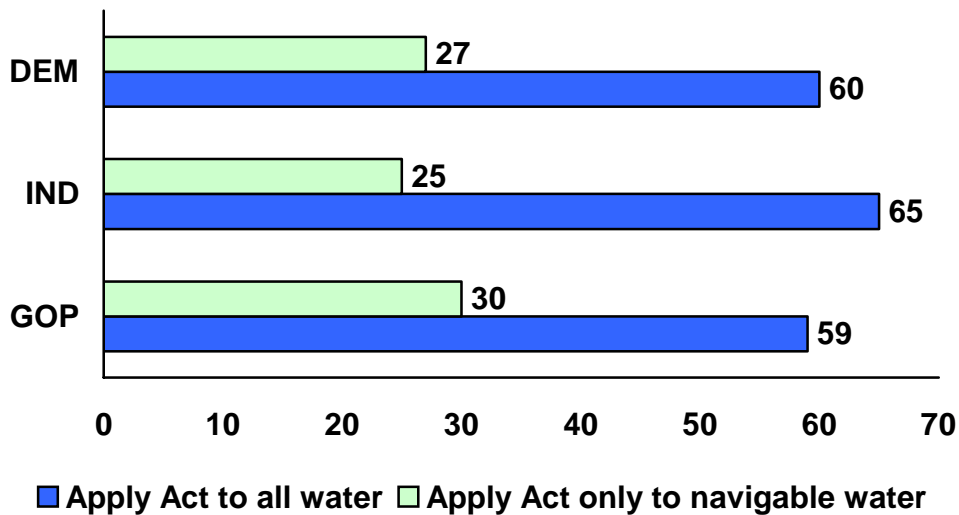
25% The government **has gone too far with laws regulating environmental protection** which has hurt businesses and landowners.

¹ Rural voters in this congressional district were randomly selected from a universe of households defined as “rural” based on the Census Tract of that address. Census Tracts with a plurality of households defined as rural (as opposed to suburban or urban) were included in the sample universe. According to the 2008 Almanac of American Politics, 36% of the population in Illinois' 15th Congressional District is rural.

These voters overwhelmingly favor having the Clean Water Act apply to all bodies of water, and strongly support a candidate who would vote for this legislation. One in four of those interviewed say they own, operate or work on a farm, yet they reject the notion that applying the Clean Water Act to isolated wetlands or other non-navigable waterways would be onerous for landowners, businesses, or developers.

- 59%** (Some/other) people say that the original intent of the Clean Water Act was to protect all bodies of water from pollution, not just those defined as navigable, and that all streams, wetlands, waterways, and bodies of water should be protected from pollution that could contaminate drinking water, foul waters and wildlife habitat, and make rivers, lakes and streams unusable for fishing or swimming.
- 26%** (Other/some) people say that the Clean Water Act should not be expanded to apply to all bodies of water, such as isolated wetlands or other waterways not defined as “navigable” because it would amount to over-regulation by the federal government on private property owners, businesses or developers.

Support for a broader interpretation of the Clean Water Act runs the political spectrum – Republicans are as likely as Democrats and Independents to favor this position.



The majority of Republicans (56%), independents (73%), and Democrats (71%) would be more likely to support a candidate who voted to have the Clean Water Act protect all bodies of water from pollution.

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