

**Ranks as top priority**

**Survey finds 95% support federal farmland protection**

LANCASTER — Despite repeated attacks on government "overregulation" by candidates in the 1980 elections, a new poll of National Wildlife Federation members reveals that most feel there are not enough federal environmental protection laws.

Of the 38,927 NWF members who responded to a poll appearing in the February-March issue of National Wildlife magazine, 62.1 percent felt that we have "too little" environmental regulation. Only 11.5 percent felt we have "too much," while 25 percent responded that we have "just about the right amount."

In addition, the annual survey showed that NWF members feel the federal government should play a stronger role in two other areas—farmland protection and population control.

An overwhelming 95.2 percent said that there should be a national policy to protect prime farmland from being developed into roads, housing areas, and other projects. Only 2.8 percent felt there should be no government policy, and 1.7 percent responded, "don't know." Not all poll respondents answered all questions.

On the issue of population control, 58.9 percent of the respon-

dents said that the federal government should be involved in limiting world population growth. Disagreeing were 30.3 percent, while 9.8 percent said they "don't know."

Environmental regulation, farmland protection, and population growth were three of eight conservation issues covered in the survey of its members by NWF, the nation's largest citizens conservation group.

The other questions concerned public lands use, nuclear power, land transfers, money for wildlife, and transportation. Respondents, who mailed in their ballots at their own expense, were also asked to rank each issue as to its relative importance.

Farmland protection was voted as the number one priority, with nuclear power ranking second.

Here are the questions and answers on the eight issues, followed by their rankings:

**FARMLANDS**

A million acres a year of U.S. prime farmlands are converted to urban, industrial, transportation and water uses. Many experts worry about the wisdom of paving over any more prime, food-producing farmland when the world population is growing faster

than the earth's ability to feed people. But a national policy to protect farmlands might curb industrial growth and possibly limit suburban housing.

Should there be tougher laws and/or financial incentives to protect prime farmlands?

YES: 95.2 percent, NO: 2.8 percent; DON'T KNOW: 1.7 percent.

**MONEY FOR WILDLIFE**

Traditionally hunters and fishermen have supported state wildlife programs, mainly the game species, with license fees and special taxes. Now, many states are raising funds to finance programs for nongame species—songbirds and other creatures not taken by sportsmen. Would you pay an additional small tax on certain items of camping, hiking, bird-watching and bird-feeding equipment to support nongame species in your area?

YES: 81.3 percent, NO: 9.8 percent, DON'T KNOW: 8 percent.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Federal highways are America's largest publicly funded project. Boosters of more highway building say this will create more jobs and help the whole economy. Opponents feel it would be wiser to invest the \$3 billion annual con-

struction budget in rail lines, bus systems and public transportation. In an era of limited budgets, which approach deserves the top priority?

MASS TRANSIT: 78.1 percent. HIGHWAYS: 13.4 percent. DON'T KNOW: 7.7 percent.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS**

Many new federal laws controlling air and water pollution and toxic waste dumping were passed to safeguard the country's environmental quality. But some people complain these environmental rules are too expensive and add up to "overregulation." They want to repeal or relax some of these standards. Others say federal regulations are needed more than ever to protect us from pollution and chemical contamination.

Do you feel we have too much environmental regulation?

TOO MUCH: 11.5 percent. TOO LITTLE: 62.1 percent. JUST ABOUT THE RIGHT AMOUNT: 25 percent.

**USE OF PUBLIC LANDS**

The federal government manages vast areas of publicly

owned land—about 700 million acres in the western states and Alaska. These areas provide extensive habitat for wildlife and have great aesthetic and recreational values. These lands also provide forage for thousands of cattle and sheep, and may contain immense reserves of timber, oil and minerals. When incompatible, should grazing, timber, oil and mineral development have priority over wildlife, recreational and wilderness values?

ALWAYS: 1.5 percent. NEVER: 38.2 percent. IN SOME CASES: 59.5 percent.

**NUCLEAR POWER**

Currently, 70 nuclear power plants provide 12 percent of U.S. electrical output. Supporters say more such plants would reduce our dependence on foreign oil, and they contend nuclear plants pose no more threat to human life than conventional power sources. Opponents worry about their safety and also the nagging problem of nuclear waste disposal. Should we build more nuclear power plants?

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