

NORTH IDAHO VOTERS

WANT **HEALTHY** FORESTS

FORESTS
BENEFIT
IDAHO

90%

AGREE FORESTS PROVIDE NATURAL BEAUTY AND A PLACE FOR RECREATION

92%

AGREE FORESTS PROVIDE HABITAT FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE

92%

AGREE FORESTS HELP TO KEEP THE AIR AND WATER CLEAN

75%

AGREE FORESTS HELP REDUCE THE POLLUTION THAT CAUSES CLIMATE CHANGE

• FOREST HEALTH •

LET'S STEWARD IDAHO'S
FORESTS TOGETHER

2/3

of North Idaho voters see Idaho's forests as an opportunity to help solve climate change

97%

Support conducting large-scale tree planting to restore forests

93%

Support hiring and training young people to work year-round on restoration projects

— 83% AGREE —

OUR FORESTS CAN REMOVE CARBON POLLUTION FROM THE AIR NATURALLY & AT LOWER COSTS THAN OTHER TECHNOLOGICAL APPROACHES

➔ FIRE & FORESTS ➔

91%

of North Idaho voters see catastrophic wildfire as a problem

A MAJORITY AGREE
FOREST CONDITIONS HAVE GOTTEN WORSE

87%

support more controlled burns, alongside other forest treatments, as a solution to catastrophic wildfire in Idaho

NORTH IDAHO VOTERS

WANT HEALTHY FORESTS

The Nature Conservancy in Idaho is working on solutions to protect and restore Idaho's forests while helping to prevent the worst climate change impacts. In June 2021, we conducted a poll of 400 likely voters in North Idaho (Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Clearwater, Idaho, Kootenai, Latah, Lewis, Nez Perce, Shoshone Counties) to better understand how North Idahoans view forest health and climate change.* Below are some key findings from that research.

A strong majority of North Idaho voters think forests are important.

How important to you is each of the following benefits on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not important at all and 10 being extremely important? (% ranking benefits 8-10 in importance)

- Forests provide habitat for fish and wildlife – 92%
- Forest help to keep the air and water clean – 92%
- Forests provide natural beauty and a place for recreation – 90%
- Forests supply materials for use in everyday items like toilet paper, furniture, and lumber – 78%
- Forests help reduce the pollution that causes climate change – 75%
- Forests provide good jobs and keep rural economies strong – 74%

Likewise, a majority recognize that forest conditions have gotten worse in the past 10 years and forests face many challenges.

Over the past ten years or so, do you think the overall condition of forests in Idaho has gotten...

- Better – 19%
- Same – 30%
- Worse – 54%

I am going to read you a list of challenges facing Idaho's forests. Please tell me whether you consider each one to be a very serious problem, a somewhat serious problem, not much of a problem, or not at all a problem. (% somewhat serious or very serious problem)

- Catastrophic wildfire – 91%
- Insects and disease that kill trees – 89%
- Irresponsible recreation in forests – 82%
- Drought – 81%
- Cutting down forests to clear land for homes and buildings – 74%
- Lack of forest management – 72%
- Climate change – 61%

There is strong support for forest management efforts and policy measures to improve forest health.

The following are some specific measures being discussed to help restore and preserve Idaho's forests. After hearing each one, please tell me whether you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose the measure. (% strongly or somewhat support)

- Conduct large scale tree planting to restore or re-establish forests – 97%
- Hire and train young people to work year-round on projects to restore forests – 93%
- Allow increased management on federal forest lands, including thinning, controlled burns, and logging – 86%
- Provide information and technical assistance to forest landowners interested in adopting climate-friendly forest management practices – 86%
- Provide incentives to help protect forests at risk of development – 81%
- Pay forest landowners to voluntarily manage their lands in ways that address a changing climate – 65%

Controlled burns are a popular management practice to improve forest health and manage wildfire risk.

Controlled burns are when a fire is intentionally ignited in specific areas to clear out underbrush so that subsequent fires burn less intensely, and the health of the forest is maintained. Knowing this, do you have a positive or negative image of controlled burns in Idaho's forests?

- 90% Positive
- 7% Negative

Many experts believe that more controlled burns in Idaho's forests – as part of a broader strategy which includes other types of forest treatments – could reduce the number of future, uncontrolled wildfires. Knowing this, would you support or oppose increased use of controlled burns in Idaho's forests?

- 87% Support
- 10% Oppose

In some instances, these controlled burns could increase smoke in your local area for a planned amount of time. Knowing this, would you support or oppose increased use of controlled burns in Idaho's forests?

- 84% Support
- 13% Oppose

Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement.

- When it comes to reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfires, prevention is key. Smart planning and preparation now is a better investment than costly emergency response and clean-up after a disaster strikes. Investing in natural strategies, like forest restoration and controlled burning, to prevent fires is common sense. – 96% Agree

A majority of North Idaho voters agree climate change is happening.

When it comes to your views about climate change, do you think it is happening, or do you think it is not happening?

- 63% Happening
- 28% Not Happening

A strong majority agree that nature can help solve climate change.

Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

- Thousands of Idahoans rely on our mountains, lakes, and forests for fishing, camping, hunting, or simple relaxation. Restoring and conserving Idaho's forests not only helps reduce the pollution that causes climate change but ensures people can continue to enjoy nature too. – 94% Agree
- Nature provides the simplest solution of all to climate change – our forests can remove carbon pollution from the air naturally and at lower costs than other technological approaches. We can cut or remove greenhouse gas emissions simply by protecting and restoring Idaho's forests and natural landscapes. – 83% Agree
- We need to protect Idaho's forests for our kids and grandchildren – and we need to slow the impacts of climate change. Unless we act now, many of our beautiful natural areas will disappear before our children and grandchildren have a chance to enjoy them. – 77% Agree
- Climate change is threatening the health of our communities. From increased wildfire smoke to drought, the things we rely on – clean air, water, and food – are at risk. Protecting our land and water will help keep us all healthy. – 76% Agree

Do you see forests as an opportunity to help solve climate change – yes or no?

- 65% Yes
- 25% No

*GS Strategy Group conducted this poll on behalf of The Nature Conservancy in Idaho. Interviews were completed with respondents using a mixed methodology—20% online, 30% landline, and 50% cellphone. The margin of error for the survey is +/- 4.90% at the 95% confidence level.