

**TO: All Interested Parties**  
**FROM: Hart Research Associates and New Bridge Strategy**  
**DATE: August 24, 2020**  
**RE: Key Findings from National Survey on Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge**

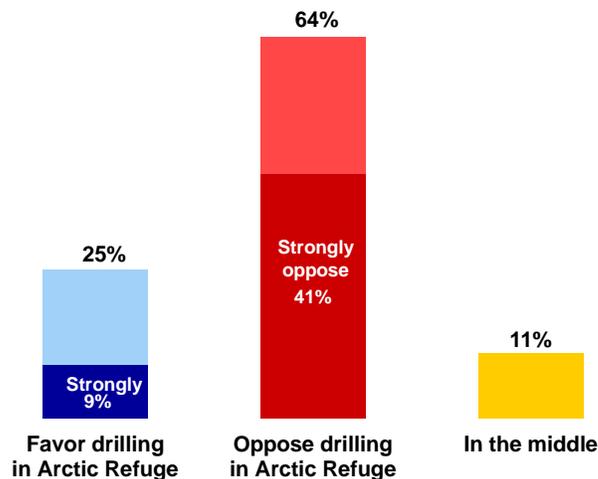
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A new survey conducted by Hart Research (D) and New Bridge Strategy (R) on behalf of the Arctic Refuge Defense Campaign among voters nationally\* finds overwhelming opposition to opening the Arctic Refuge to oil drilling and a strong endorsement of candidates who wish to protect the Arctic Refuge from such drilling.

The key findings from this research are outlined below.

- **About two in three voters oppose the Trump administration’s moves to open the Arctic Refuge to drilling.** Fully 64% say they oppose allowing companies to bid on drilling leases, including a 41% plurality who *strongly* oppose this. By comparison, just 25% favor it, including 9% who strongly favor it. This “intensity gap” matters, as it shows that those who oppose drilling care much more deeply than those who support it.

### **Broad and Deep Opposition To Drilling in the Arctic Refuge**



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\* Methodology details: A national online survey of 1,352 voters conducted online July 29 to August 4, 2020. The survey included oversamples of voters under age 30, Latinx voters, and Black voters, each of which was weighted down to their appropriate share of the national electorate. The credibility interval for the full sample is  $\pm 2.99$  percentage points, with higher tolerances for subgroups of the sample.

## Hart Research Associates / New Bridge Strategy

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- **Independents and Democrats are tremendously opposed, while Republicans are, at best, divided.** Nearly nine in 10 Democrats oppose drilling in the Arctic Refuge, as do two-thirds of independents. Republicans are nominally in favor, though underlying this is a substantial ideological divide within the GOP.

	<b>Favor Drilling</b> %	<b>Oppose Drilling</b> %	<b>Differential</b> ±
Democrats	7	87	-80
Independents	17	67	-50
Republicans	50	36	+14
Non-conservative Republicans	39	43	-4
Conservative Republicans	53	33	+20

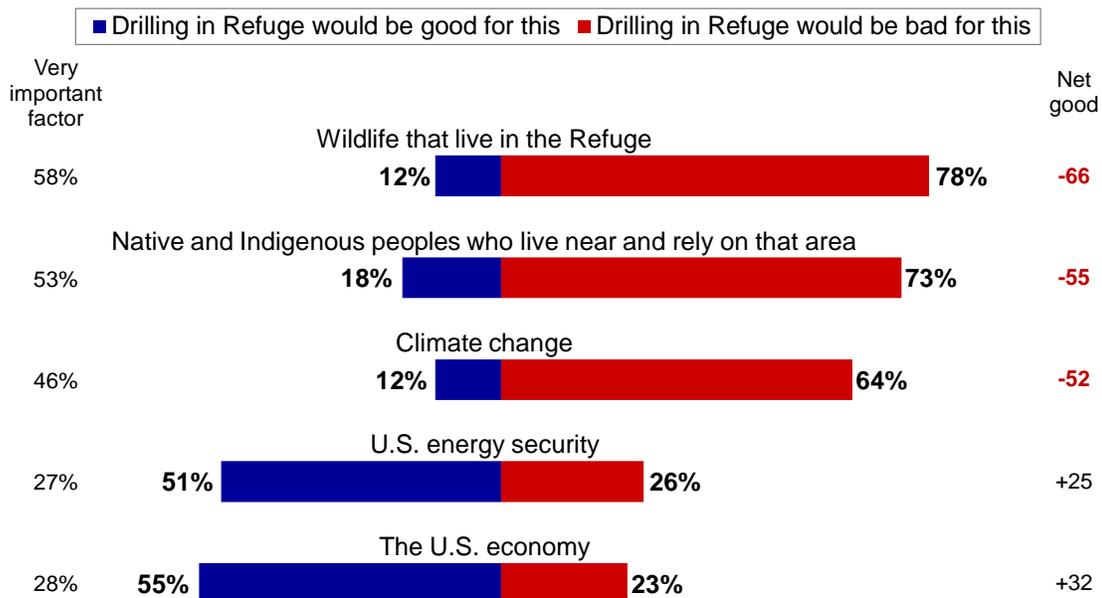
- **Several other key subgroups register strong opposition to drilling in the Arctic Refuge.** While opposition spans most of the electorate, it is notable among several audiences:
  - ✓ Black voters: 75% oppose
  - ✓ Latinx voters: 73% oppose
  - ✓ Suburban women: 72% oppose
  - ✓ Voters under age 30: 70% oppose
  - ✓ Blue-collar workers: 67% oppose
  - ✓ Union households: 61% oppose
  - ✓ White voters without a college degree: 60% oppose
  - ✓ Small town and rural voters: 58% oppose
- **There is substantial political upside for candidates who want to protect the Arctic Refuge from drilling, and only nominal downside.** More than six in 10 (63%) voters say they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who says we should protect the Arctic Refuge by preventing drilling, while only 19% say they would be less likely to vote for such a candidate. And, again, the intensity is entirely with the protection side here: 83% of those who oppose drilling would be more likely to vote for a protection-oriented candidate, while just 45% of those who favor drilling would be less likely to vote for the same candidate. In other words, there is substantially more political upside than downside to protecting the Arctic Refuge.
- **Corporations should note that this issue has the real potential to impact their public image.** The survey included two questions that get at the corporate side of this debate:
  - Three in four (74%) voters support the decision by several major financial institutions to not invest in drilling in the Arctic Refuge, compared with 26% who oppose this decision. Even 58% of Fox News viewers endorse banks' decision on this.

- Oil companies themselves should tread carefully. Only 18% of voters say they would feel more favorable toward a company that bids on a drilling lease; more than three times more voters (61%) say they would feel *less* favorable toward such a company.

Any corporate reputational advantages to be gained from this issue clearly rest on the side of protection rather than on the side of drilling.

- **The downsides to drilling in the Arctic Refuge matter substantially more to voters than any perceived upsides.** We gave voters five factors that could play into their thinking on this issue, and then asked whether they think the outcome of drilling would be positive or negative for each factor.

### Factors That Voters View as Most Important and Most Damaging



The results are clear, as illustrated above. Voters care most about the effects drilling would have on wildlife in the Arctic Refuge, Indigenous and Native peoples near the Arctic Refuge, and climate change—and in each case overwhelming majorities say drilling would be bad for that factor. At the same time, bare majorities say drilling would be good for the U.S. economy and energy security, but that those factors are far less personally important to them. Said another way: a great many voters care deeply about the impact that drilling would have on wildlife, Indigenous and Native people, and climate change *and* say that impact would be negative; only a relative few care deeply about the impact on the economy and energy independence *and* say that impact would be positive.

- **These results are set against a backdrop of deep disagreement with the Trump administration on environmental issues.** Even before we raise the idea of drilling in the Arctic Refuge, voters make clear that they are not on the same page as the Trump administration when it comes to these types of issues: approximately six in 10 say they disagree with Donald Trump's policies related both to drilling for oil and gas on public lands (57% disagree) and to climate change (61% disagree). Notably, disagreement is even higher among key swing groups, such as independents (61% disagree on public lands, 69% disagree on climate change) and suburban women (67% disagree on public lands, 70% disagree on climate change).