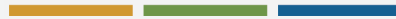




WALTON FAMILY
FOUNDATION



2025 Natural Solutions Poll

Walton Family Foundation

 **AUGUST 2025**

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Methodology

This poll was conducted between August 9-11, 2025 among a sample of 2,202 adults. This survey used a split-sample approach. Respondents were randomly assigned to receive one of two different versions of two questions. Version A was shown to n=1,097 respondents, and Version B was shown to n=1,105 respondents. Results for each version are reported separately.

The interviews were conducted online and the data were weighted to approximate a target sample of adults based on age, gender, race, educational attainment, region, gender by age, and race by educational attainment. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.

Key Takeaways

1

Simple and Relatable Terms Resonate Most

Americans are more supportive of natural solutions when described in informal, relatable language. Phrases like “working with the power of nature” and “natural restoration” are preferred over terms like “nature-based solutions,” which may read as formal or technical.

2

Natural Solutions are Strongly Supported When Linked to Community Benefits

Wetlands are widely seen as effective for protecting water and communities, with the “handyman” metaphor resonating slightly more than “Swiss Army Knife.” Solutions that connect wetlands to a tangible benefit are well-received, with wetland-related actions consistently rated as high priorities.

3

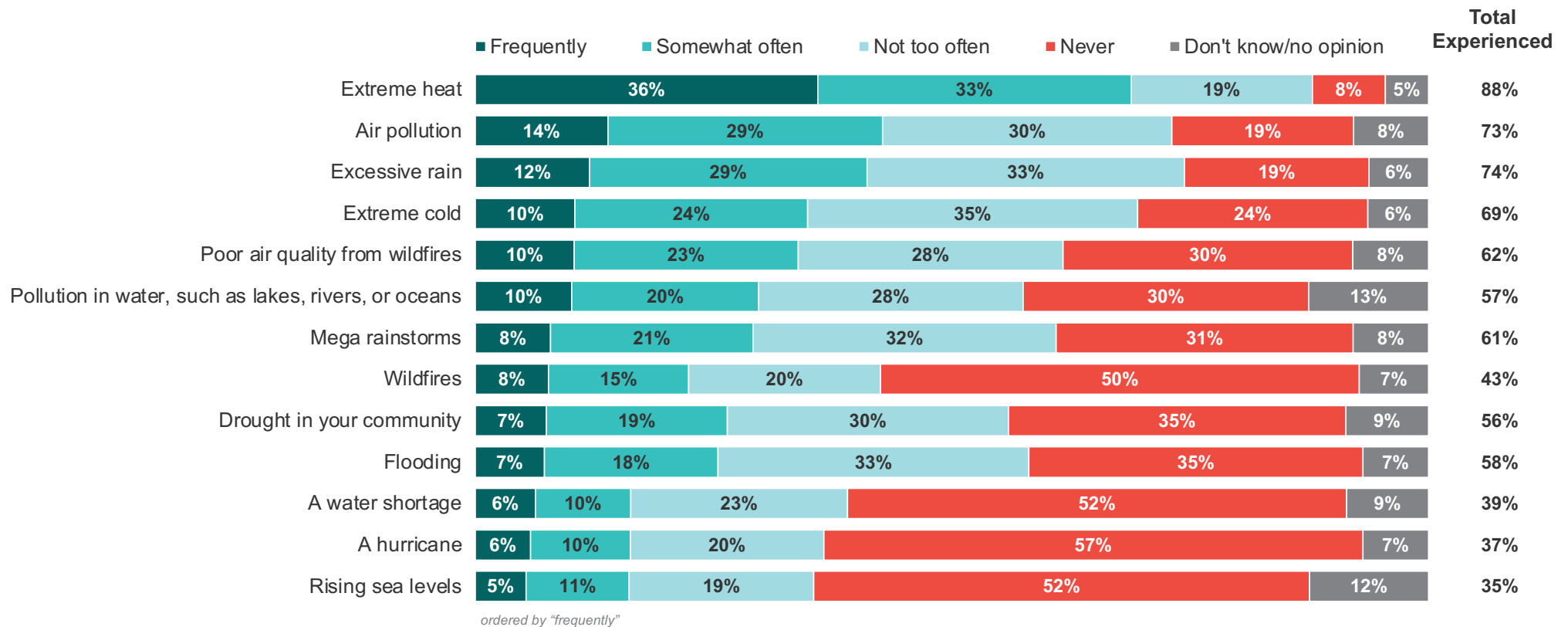
Extreme Weather is Top of Mind but Concerns About Implementation Remain

Two thirds of Americans believe extreme weather is more frequent, with most having experienced events like extreme heat, air pollution, and excessive rain. While support for natural solutions is strong, a new concern has emerged: over a third worry that implementing these solutions could require government intervention on private lands, highlighting the need to properly prepare to address this issue in messaging.

2025 NATURAL SOLUTIONS POLL

Americans are most likely to have personally experienced extreme heat, air pollution, and/or excessive rain in the past year. Over half have experienced 9 of the 13 climate change effects listed.

In the past year, how often, if at all, have you personally experienced the following?



2025 NATURAL SOLUTIONS POLL

Experience of the following effects of climate change is consistent across party lines and felt by Americans across population densities.

In the past year, how often, if at all, have you personally experienced the following? // *Total Experienced*

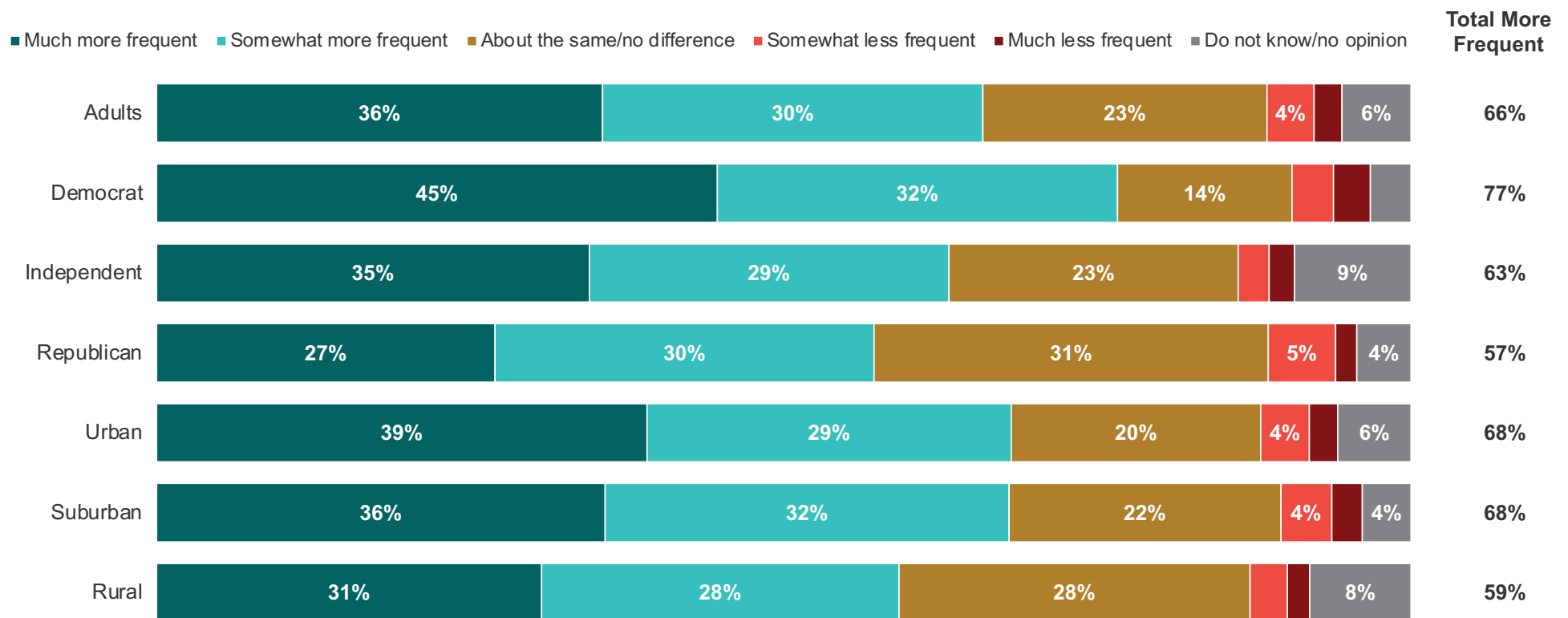
	Adults	Democrat	Independent	Republican	Urban	Suburban	Rural
Extreme heat	88%	89%	86%	88%	87%	89%	87%
Excessive rain	74%	75%	72%	76%	76%	72%	78%
Air pollution	73%	79%	70%	70%	77%	74%	67%
Extreme cold	69%	69%	68%	71%	71%	68%	71%
Poor air quality from wildfires	62%	66%	57%	62%	66%	61%	57%
Mega rainstorms	61%	61%	60%	62%	61%	57%	68%
Flooding	58%	61%	53%	60%	63%	54%	59%
Pollution in water, such as lakes, rivers, or oceans	57%	65%	50%	57%	65%	55%	52%
Drought in your community	56%	59%	50%	58%	58%	55%	56%
Wildfires	43%	47%	37%	43%	48%	41%	38%
A water shortage	39%	42%	36%	39%	49%	35%	34%
A hurricane	37%	38%	32%	40%	41%	33%	37%
Rising sea levels	35%	40%	30%	36%	43%	35%	27%

ordered by "total experienced"

2025 NATURAL SOLUTIONS POLL

Two in three Americans believe extreme weather has become more frequent over the past ten years; felt most by urban and suburban adults.

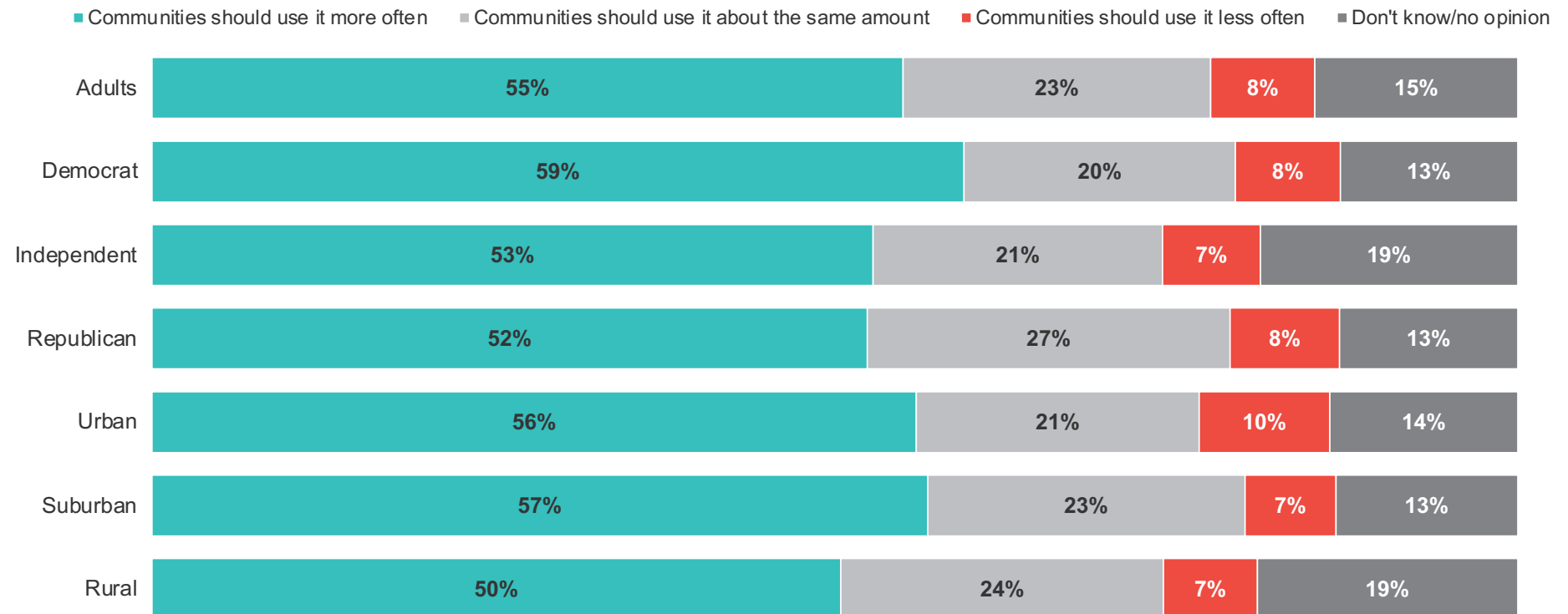
Do you think instances of extreme weather have become more frequent or less frequent over the past ten years?



2025 NATURAL SOLUTIONS POLL

Half Americans agree that communities should use natural solutions more often, with similar agreement across party lines and population densities.

Based on what you've just read, do you think communities should use wetland restoration and protection as a natural solution to extreme weather more often, less often, or about the same as they do now? (see notes for full question)



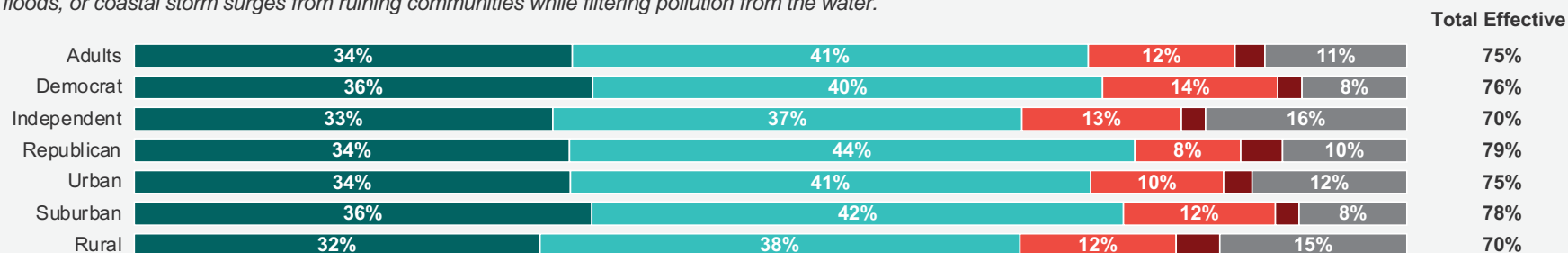
2025 NATURAL SOLUTIONS POLL

Americans are slightly more inclined to view the longer “handyman” message about wetlands to be more effective in describing what they do.

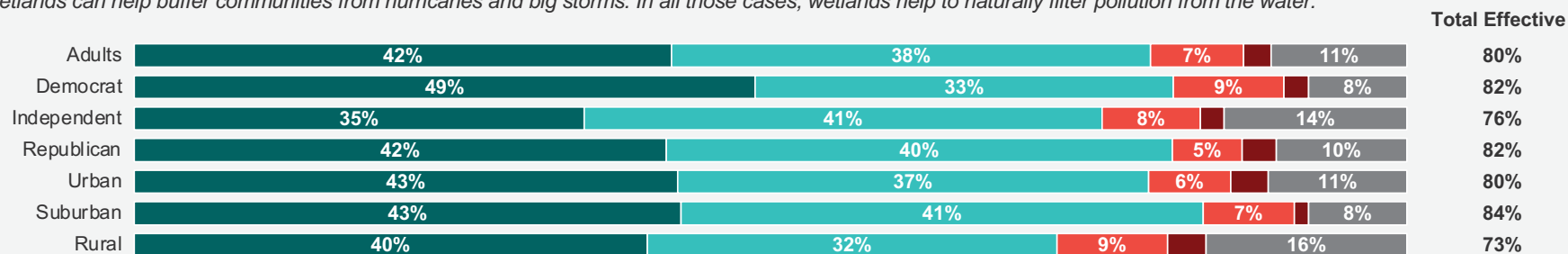
Here are two ways to explain wetlands to people who might not be familiar with them. How effective is each description in explaining what wetlands are and what they do?

■ Very effective ■ Somewhat effective ■ Not too effective ■ Not at all effective ■ Don't know/no opinion

Wetlands are like nature's Swiss Army Knife for protecting water and communities in the face of climate change. Depending on the landscape around them, they can help prevent wildfires, floods, or coastal storm surges from ruining communities while filtering pollution from the water.



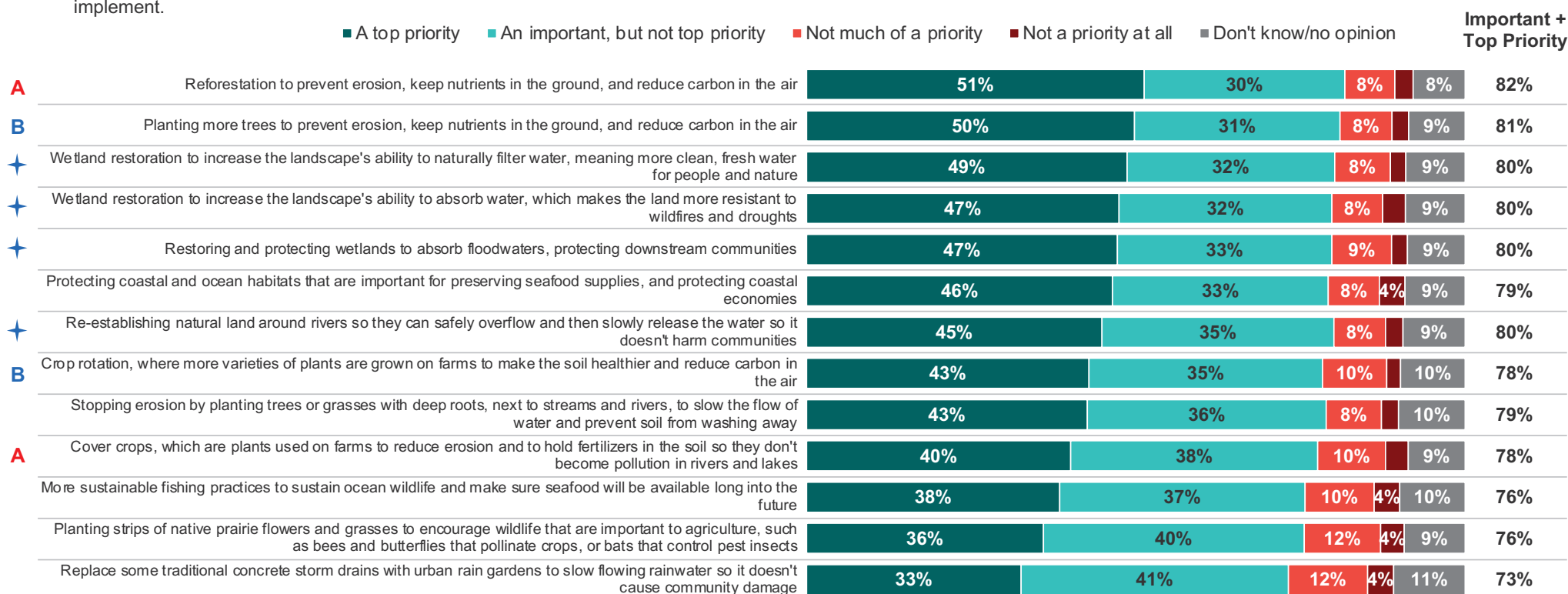
Wetlands are like nature's on-call handyman for protecting water and communities in the face of climate change. For people experiencing drought and excessive heat, wetlands can help store water, preventing wildfires. For people experiencing flooding, wetlands can help hold excess water so it doesn't hurt communities. For people who live in coastal areas along the ocean, wetlands can help buffer communities from hurricanes and big storms. In all those cases, wetlands help to naturally filter pollution from the water.



2025 NATURAL SOLUTIONS POLL

Americans view reforestation and wetland restoration as top priorities for governments to implement to reduce the impact of extreme weather and climate change.

Next, please consider each of these examples of natural solutions that reduce the impact of extreme weather and climate change. Natural solutions are ways to work with the power of nature to protect natural systems and communities. For each example, please indicate how much of a priority you think it should be for your state/local government to implement.



ordered by "a top priority"

2025 NATURAL SOLUTIONS POLL

All solutions receive strong bipartisan support with only modest variation between groups. Urban and suburban adults are slightly more supportive of some solutions than rural adults.

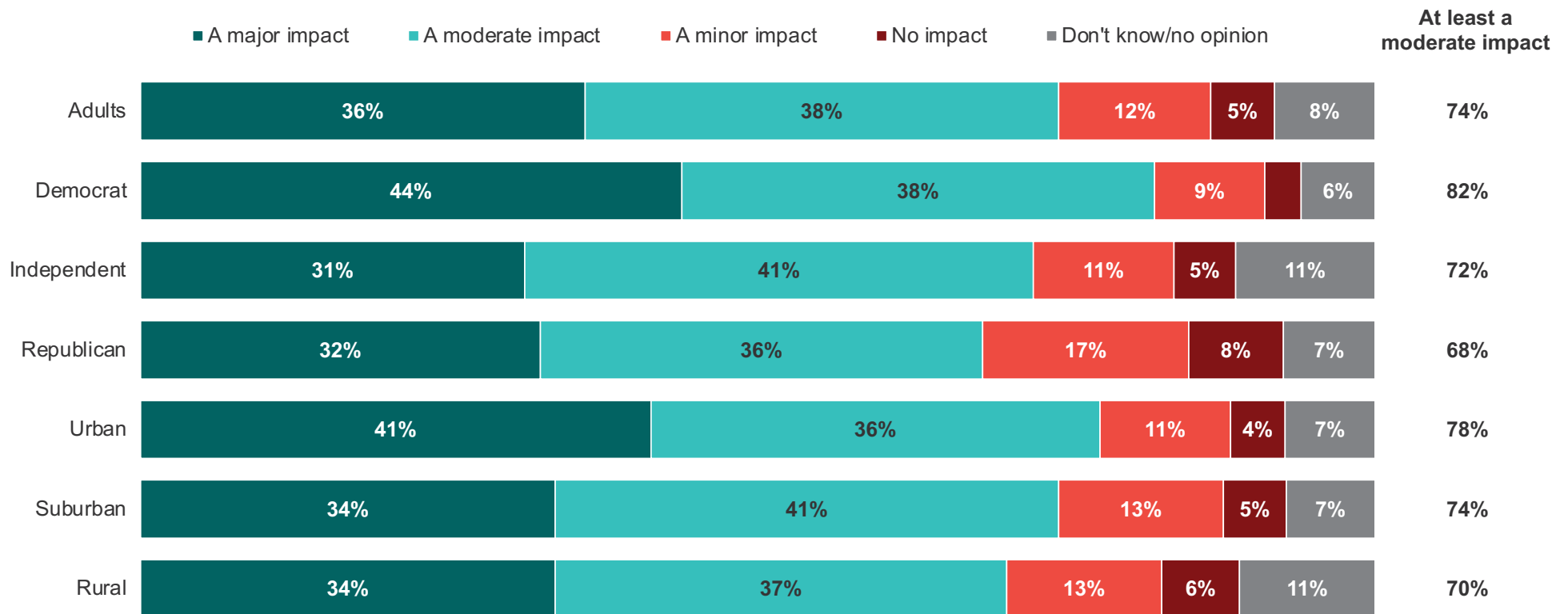
Next, please consider each of these examples of natural solutions that reduce the impact of extreme weather and climate change. Natural solutions are ways to work with the power of nature to protect natural systems and communities. For each example, please indicate how much of a priority you think it should be for your state/local government to implement. // *A top priority + An important, but not top priority*

		Adults	Democrat	Independent	Republican	Urban	Suburban	Rural
A	Reforestation to prevent erosion, keep nutrients in the ground, and reduce carbon in the air	82%	86%	75%	83%	80%	84%	79%
B	Planting more trees to prevent erosion, keep nutrients in the ground, and reduce carbon in the air	81%	84%	78%	81%	79%	83%	79%
+	Wetland restoration to increase the landscape's ability to naturally filter water, meaning more clean, fresh water for people and nature	80%	83%	77%	80%	80%	82%	76%
+	Re-establishing natural land around rivers so they can safely overflow and then slowly release the water so it doesn't harm communities	80%	80%	77%	83%	80%	83%	76%
+	Restoring and protecting wetlands to absorb floodwaters, protecting downstream communities	80%	84%	75%	80%	81%	81%	77%
+	Wetland restoration to increase the landscape's ability to absorb water, which makes the land more resistant to wildfires and droughts	80%	82%	76%	81%	81%	81%	75%
	Protecting coastal and ocean habitats that are important for preserving seafood supplies, and protecting coastal economies	79%	83%	75%	79%	79%	82%	75%
	Stopping erosion by planting trees or grasses with deep roots, next to streams and rivers, to slow the flow of water and prevent soil from washing away	79%	83%	75%	78%	80%	81%	74%
B	Crop rotation, where more varieties of plants are grown on farms to make the soil healthier and reduce carbon in the air	78%	84%	73%	79%	78%	80%	76%
A	Cover crops, which are plants used on farms to reduce erosion and to hold fertilizers in the soil so they don't become pollution in rivers and lakes	78%	84%	69%	79%	80%	77%	76%
	More sustainable fishing practices to sustain ocean wildlife and make sure seafood will be available long into the future	76%	80%	70%	77%	78%	77%	71%
	Planting strips of native prairie flowers and grasses to encourage wildlife that are important to agriculture, such as bees and butterflies that pollinate crops, or bats that control pest insects	76%	80%	71%	76%	77%	77%	71%
	Replace some traditional concrete storm drains with urban rain gardens to slow flowing rainwater so it doesn't cause community damage	73%	78%	69%	72%	78%	73%	67%

2025 NATURAL SOLUTIONS POLL

Three quarters of Americans believe natural solutions will have at least a moderate impact on reducing the impacts of extreme weather and climate change.

How much of an impact do you think the previously mentioned natural solutions would have on reducing the impacts of extreme weather and climate change?



2025 NATURAL SOLUTIONS POLL

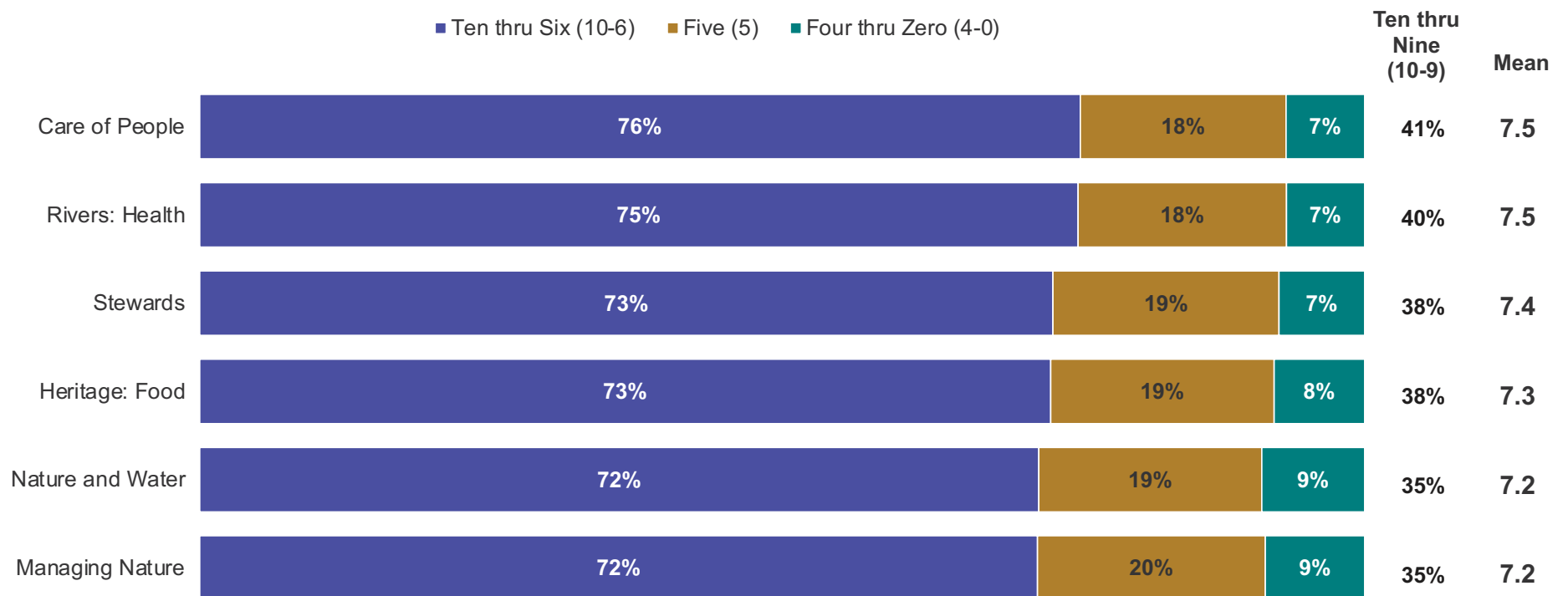
Message Testing Statements:

<i>Labels</i>	<i>Statements</i>
Care of People	Taking care of nature is a way to take care of people. Nature provides the fundamental needs of human life, such as clean air and water and food production. Healthy natural systems support livelihoods, contribute to our economic stability, and provide spaces for recreation and entertainment. If we don't take care of nature, we won't have the necessities for future generations.
Rivers: Health	Safeguarding our rivers and lakes is about more than keeping America beautiful. Most of America's drinking water comes from our rivers, so it is essential to our health that we do a better job of managing and protecting water.
Stewards	For too long, people have tried to control nature instead of respecting the systems that sustain life. When we care for the natural world, it becomes more capable of caring for us. In the past, we replaced rivers with concrete channels, paved over wetlands, or built on top of ecosystems, but now we're shifting toward a deeper understanding: that our role is not to dominate nature, but to partner with it. This means being responsible stewards to actively protect and restore the systems that support clean water, healthy air, fertile soil, and thriving communities. It's about using our knowledge, tools, and choices to help nature do what it does best.
Heritage: Food	We need to work together to protect our heritage and preserve our way of life now and in the future. Unless we find solutions to protect water, we will not have enough food and safe drinking water now and in the future. If we act together, we can make sure that people and nature can thrive together. We believe that when people take care of nature, nature takes care of people.
Nature and Water	People feel the effects of climate change and extreme weather through water. Rivers flood faster, storm surges hit harder, and coastlines take a beating from waves and erosion. But nature has tools we don't. Forests, wetlands, and healthy soil can slow water down and protect communities. That's why natural solutions are one of the best ways to reduce water-related risks.
Managing Nature	Nature-based solutions are a lens through which we solve problems related to water, climate, and more. When we help restore nature, it can help address all of these problems and take care of us. In the 20th century, managing nature was about engineering, and sometimes, it was about dominating nature with concrete. Now in the 21st Century, we are trying to understand how natural systems work and restore those natural ways, so that nature can do what it does best. Working with the power of nature is the best way for communities to be resilient, and to protect water, so people and nature can thrive together.

2025 NATURAL SOLUTIONS POLL

Americans view the “Care of People” and “Rivers Health” messages as the most convincing, ranking them an average of 7.5 on a scale of 0-10.

On a scale of 0 to 10, how convincing do you believe the following statements are as a reason to support taking action on water and environmental change? (0 = Not at all convincing, 10 = Very convincing)



2025 NATURAL SOLUTIONS POLL

“Care of People” and “Rivers Health” unite audiences with practical, people-focused messages that resonate across party lines and community types.

On a scale of 0 to 10, how convincing do you believe the following statements are as a reason to support taking action on water and environmental change? (0 = Not at all convincing, 10 = Very convincing) // Showing 9 through 10

	Adults	Democrat	Independent	Republican	Urban	Suburban	Rural
Care of People	41%	47%	36%	38%	44%	40%	37%
Rivers: Health	40%	48%	35%	38%	40%	42%	38%
Heritage: Food	38%	45%	31%	38%	39%	39%	35%
Stewards	38%	44%	32%	37%	38%	39%	36%
Nature and Water	35%	43%	29%	33%	37%	37%	31%
Managing Nature	35%	40%	29%	35%	36%	36%	32%

ordered by “9 through 10”

2025 NATURAL SOLUTIONS POLL

Concerns of public and private land use emerges as a top concern across all groups. Very few view natural solutions as too expensive or a poor use of taxpayer funds.

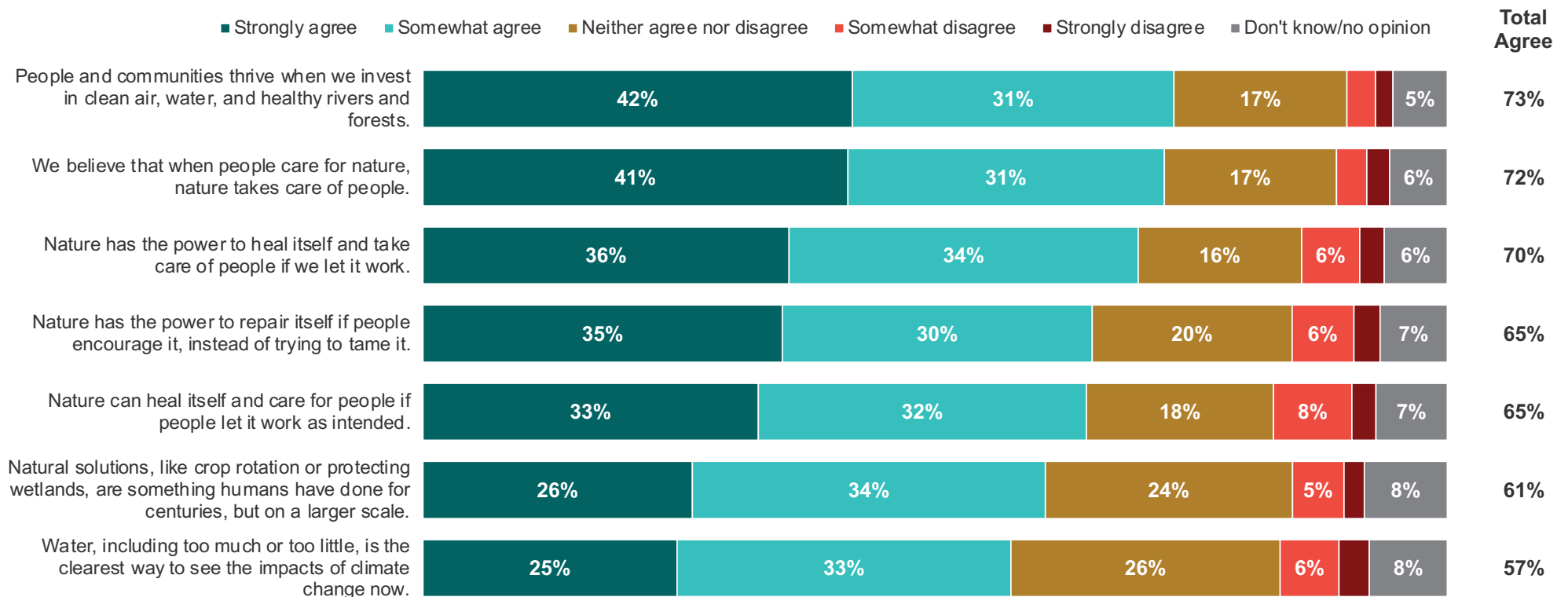
Which of the following, if any, is your single largest concern about natural approaches to fighting extreme weather? Please select only one.

	Adults	Democrat	Independent	Republican	Urban	Suburban	Rural
Natural solutions require a mix of public and private land to be effective, so the government might need to force private landowners, including farmers, to make these changes	34%	40%	32%	28%	34%	35%	29%
It would be better for humans to step back and stop trying to change nature	23%	19%	21%	28%	21%	23%	24%
Natural solutions work too slowly and have a minimal impact to make a difference	10%	12%	8%	11%	11%	11%	9%
Natural solutions only work on a large scale, so they are too expensive	5%	6%	4%	5%	4%	5%	7%
Natural solutions are a poor use of limited taxpayer funds	4%	4%	4%	5%	7%	3%	3%
Don't know/no opinion	17%	13%	25%	15%	17%	15%	22%
I am not concerned about natural approaches to fighting extreme weather.	7%	6%	7%	7%	6%	7%	6%

2025 NATURAL SOLUTIONS POLL

Messages that highlight both human and nature’s wellbeing resonate most, whereas those that focus only on nature drive less connection.

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?



2025 NATURAL SOLUTIONS POLL

Republicans also resonate with messages focused on nature's capacity for self-healing. Rural Americans feel less connected to all statements, regardless of focus.

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

	Adults	Democrat	Independent	Republican	Urban	Suburban	Rural
A People and communities thrive when we invest in clean air, water, and healthy rivers and forests.	73%	77%	69%	73%	76%	76%	65%
We believe that when people care for nature, nature takes care of people.	72%	75%	68%	74%	73%	74%	69%
Nature has the power to heal itself and take care of people if we let it work.	70%	67%	66%	76%	71%	71%	67%
Nature has the power to repair itself if people encourage it, instead of trying to tame it.	65%	63%	62%	71%	67%	66%	62%
B Nature can heal itself and care for people if people let it work as intended.	65%	61%	63%	71%	65%	68%	60%
Natural solutions, like crop rotation or protecting wetlands, are something humans have done for centuries, but on a larger scale.	61%	63%	54%	65%	60%	65%	54%
Water, including too much or too little, is the clearest way to see the impacts of climate change now.	57%	65%	54%	53%	61%	58%	52%

ordered by "total agree"

2025 NATURAL SOLUTIONS POLL

Americans across groups most strongly gravitate towards the phrase “working with the power of nature” over the phrase “natural solutions”.

Based on what you just learned, which of the following phrases or explanations best describes the concepts discussed in the previous questions? Please select the one that best fits.

	Adults	Democrat	Independent	Republican	Urban	Suburban	Rural
Working with the power of nature	30%	29%	30%	32%	29%	30%	32%
Natural restoration	23%	25%	23%	21%	22%	25%	21%
Nature-based solutions	19%	21%	16%	19%	18%	21%	16%
Natural solutions	17%	18%	15%	19%	21%	15%	17%
Don't know/no opinion	10%	6%	14%	9%	10%	7%	14%
Other, please specify	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%



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