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New Polling in District 40 Shows Public Lands Have Incredibly Strong Bipartisan Support in Orange County

In the newly re-drawn CD-40, registered voters across the party spectrum expressed broad support for public lands and pro-public lands members of Congress

ORANGE COUNTY, CA — A new poll out today revealed that public lands are extremely important to voters across the political spectrum in California's new 40th Congressional District (CA-40). Public lands polled as an important issue both in voters' personal lives and when thinking about their member of Congress. The survey showed protecting public lands is an important issue for voters of all party persuasions. They regularly visit these places and are concerned about their maintenance and accessibility.

The poll, conducted by North Star Opinion Research, surveyed 400 registered voters in the new CA-40, which spans the Orange and Riverside County foothills from eastern Mission Viejo and southern Corona to Murrieta. North Star Opinion Research is a national public opinion research firm that conducts surveys and focus groups for associations, non-profits, corporations, and Republican candidates for office at all levels.

"Supporting policies that protect public lands, and opposing policies that harm them, unites Californians across the political spectrum," said **Dan Judy, Vice President, North Star Opinion Research**. "Republicans, Independents and Democrats alike all visit public lands. This survey confirmed that public lands are one of the rare issues bringing Americans together. Public lands are broadly popular: 88% of voters are more favorable to a member of Congress who supports funding to take care of these places."

Among the key findings of the poll are the following:

- 65% of CA-40 voters visit public lands at least a few times per year.
- 87% of voters oppose proposals to sell off public lands to private interests and cut off use.
- 80% of voters say it is a bad idea to reduce funding and staffing for public lands, including 68% of Republicans and 82% of independents.
- 79% of voters, including 70% of Republicans and 80% of independents, say that protecting and preserving public lands and access is an important issue for their vote for Congress this year.
- 88% of voters are more favorable to a member of Congress who supports funding to take good care of our public lands, including facilities and park rangers.

“Southland residents highly value their public lands as the pressures of urban life and urban infrastructure limit opportunities to enjoy nature,” said **Melanie Schlotterbeck, Conservation Consultant for Hills For Everyone and Power in Nature Southland Regional Lead**. “Opportunities for recreation are both limited and prized by recreational enthusiasts. The stunning San Mateo Canyon Wilderness is just one of those locations where visitors can enjoy breathtaking views, see the headwaters of a coastal watershed, and see wildlife like deer, cougars, and grey foxes.”

CA-40 is known for natural beauty and rolling foothills, like those found in San Mateo Canyon Wilderness and Cleveland National Forest’s Trabuco District, which contain the headwaters of Trabuco Creek and a population of Southern steelhead trout. Nestled within the Santa Ana Mountains are other significant public lands including Casper’s Wilderness Park and O’Neill Regional Park, which protect lands via the Orange County park system and provide a home to the state-threatened mountain lion, and Coal Canyon Ecological Preserve and southern portions of Chino Hills State Park, which have the northernmost stand of tecate cypress (found in only 20 places worldwide).

“Mountain biking in Orange County is one of the greatest experiences anyone can have,” said **David Browning, President, Orange County Mountain Bike Association (OCMTBA)**. “That’s why members of OCMTBA are passionate about keeping public lands protected and trail systems accessible for everyone to enjoy. We helped fight off Congress’ proposed public lands sell-off last year, opposed the firing of land managers, and we’re still standing up against the rollback of the Roadless Rule and other attempts to take away access to our backcountry.”

This survey of 400 registered voters in California’s 40th Congressional District was conducted June 16-22, 2026. The margin of error for the full sample is $\pm 4.9\%$.

For more information, see [here](#).

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About the Power in Nature Coalition

Power in Nature is a statewide coalition of over 500 community groups, environmental and conservation organizations, land trusts, Indigenous organizations, and Tribal members dedicated to advancing California's 30×30 commitment. The Power in Nature coalition has identified more than a hundred potential 30×30 projects across the state and works on a broad range of issues, including biodiversity protection, climate resilience, equity, recreation, outdoor access, and social justice. For more information, visit PowerInNature.org.

About North Star Opinion Research

North Star Opinion Research is a national public opinion research firm based in Alexandria, VA. Founded in 1991, the firm conducts surveys and focus groups across the country for associations, non-profits, corporations, and Republican candidates for office at all levels. Roll Call, a widely read newspaper on Capitol Hill, calls the firm "one of the best in the nation," and the firm has been recognized by the bipartisan American Association of Political Consultants as its "Pollster of the Year" as well as winning the "Public Affairs Campaign of the Year" award in 2012.