



## AZA Omnibus Survey Consumer Engagement Around Wildlife Conservation

*Methodology: 12-question online survey among 1,002 adults in the U.S. (aged 18+), weighted to ensure national representation across gender, region, education, income, race/ethnicity. The survey was conducted March 8-12, 2018 with a margin of error of +/- 3.07 at the national level with a 95% confidence level.*

### KEY FINDINGS

#### **Americans greatly underestimate the number of endangered species being protected today under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).**

- Americans say the number of species being protected under the ESA is 100 (median), while the actual number is 1,459<sup>1</sup>.
  - Younger Americans (ages 18-34) underestimate the most, saying that only 80 species are being protected under the ESA.

#### **Americans have difficulty identifying endangered species.**

- Americans are more likely to believe two types of endangered animals – Saola and Vaquitas – are types of food rather than endangered animals.
  - Saola: 39% thought it was a type of food vs. 32% endangered animal
  - Vaquita: 40% thought it was a type of food vs. 36% endangered animal
- Only half of Americans recognize cheetahs are endangered (53%) – and only around one-fourth (28%) recognize giraffes are currently endangered.
- Meanwhile, half of Americans (49%) believe the bald eagle is endangered, and over half (58%) believe Humpback whales are endangered – even though these species have been taken off the endangered list.
- Three in five Americans believe the Monarch butterfly is either endangered or used to be endangered (63%) – but it never has been.

#### **Americans are MOST surprised to know that giraffes and hummingbirds are endangered.**

- Americans are most surprised to learn giraffes (28%) and hummingbirds (28%) are endangered.
- Slightly fewer Americans are surprised to learn that salmon (19%) and cheetahs (17%) are also endangered.
  - Younger Americans (ages 18-34) are especially surprised to learn that the cheetah is endangered (28% vs. 17% total Americans).
- Americans were not as surprised to learn sea lions are endangered (8%).

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, [Environmental Conservation Online System](#) (2018)

**Nine in ten Americans are willing to take steps to help save animals from extinction. However, Americans are split on how to help.**

- Nearly nine in ten Americans (87%) are willing to take steps to help save animals from extinction; two out of five (37%) are extremely willing.
  - Young Americans (ages 18-34) are significantly more likely than the average American to be extremely willing to take steps to help save animals from extinction (54% vs. 37% of total Americans).
- But Americans are split on the most effective way to help.
  - Most believe donating to a wildlife conservation organization is most effective for saving animals from extinction (39%).
  - Fewer – around one in five – believe making their yard more animal-friendly (18%) or contacting an elected official to encourage protection of endangered animals (17%) are the most effective methods.
  - Younger Americans (ages 18-34) are more likely to believe visiting or volunteering at a local zoo or aquarium is effective in helping to save animals from extinction (20% vs. 13% of total Americans).

**Americans willing to help save animals from extinction would donate \$15, volunteer 8 hours of free time, or travel 300 miles each month to help.**

- Americans willing to take steps to save animals from extinction (87%) would:
  - Donate \$15 a month to a wildlife conservation organization
  - Volunteer 8 hours a month at local zoos and aquariums
  - Travel 300 miles to see animals in their wild habitat managed by a conservation organization.
- Younger Americans who are willing to save endangered animals from extinction would go to even greater lengths to help save endangered species.
  - Those 18-34 are more willing to visit or volunteer at a local zoo or aquarium to help save animals from extinction (39% vs. 27% total Americans) and are willing to volunteer 10 hours a month (vs. 8 hours of total Americans) at a local zoo or aquarium.
  - They are also willing to donate \$25 a month (vs. \$15 of total Americans) to help save animals from extinction.

**Two in five Americans believe the government has recently reduced support for environmental protection and wildlife conservation – and they are not happy about it.**

- Americans are more likely to think the federal government recently reduced support than increased support for environmental protections (41% reduced vs. 30% increased), and wildlife conservation (38% reduced vs. 30% increased).
- Americans who feel the government has reduced support for these areas are extremely unhappy about it.
  - 83% are unhappy, and 56% are extremely unhappy, about reduced support for environmental protection.
  - 88% are unhappy, and 60% are extremely unhappy, about reduced support for wildlife conservation.

**However, most Americans have never taken action to stop the federal government from reducing environmental protections or wildlife conservation.**

- Thirty-five percent of Americans have taken actions to help stop the federal government from taking steps to reduce either environmental protections or wildlife conservation, compared to 59% of 18-34 year olds.
- Those who have taken action to stop the federal government from reducing environmental protections are most likely to have contacted their U.S. Senators or Representative (43%) or signed a petition (43%).

**Although younger Americans are more optimistic about the federal government's recent actions around environmental protections or wildlife conservation, they have taken action to stop reduced government support.**

- Younger Americans (ages 18-34) are more likely than average to believe the federal government has increased support for environmental protection (44% vs. 30% total Americans) and wildlife conservation (47% vs. 30% total Americans).
- However, younger Americans are more likely to have taken actions to help stop the federal government from taking steps to reduce environmental protections (22% vs. 10% total Americans) or wildlife conservation (19% vs. 10% of total Americans).