

Key Findings

INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

the polling company™, inc. conducted a telephone survey of 500 registered Republicans in Ohio who are likely to vote in the November 2006 general elections on behalf of **Oceana**.

Interviews were conducted June 22-25, 2006 at a Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) facility using live callers. Respondents were randomly selected from a list of registered voters and screened for likelihood to vote in the November 7, 2006 general election for federal and statewide offices. Per the client's instruction, voters were classified as living in Republican, Democratic, or Swing United States Congressional Districts.¹

The original survey instrument contained 22 questions, including 9 demographic inquiries, and was approved by authorized representatives of **Oceana** prior to commencement of data collection.

The margin of error for the survey is $\pm 4.38\%$ at a 95% confidence interval, meaning that the data obtained would not differ by any more than 4.38 percentage points in either direction had the entire population of Republican likely voters in Ohio been surveyed. Margins of error for subgroups are higher.

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Nine-in-Ten Call for Safeguarding Oceans and their Inhabitants.

By overwhelming margins, Ohio Republicans declared that it was "important to protect" both the "*health of the oceans*" (90% agree vs. 6% disagree) and "*marine mammals such as dolphins and whales*" (90% agree vs. 7% disagree). This concurrence was as strong as it was broad, as every major demographic and attitudinal group agreed with the notions, and a majority of respondents held their opinions with intensity, e.g., "strongly agreeing."

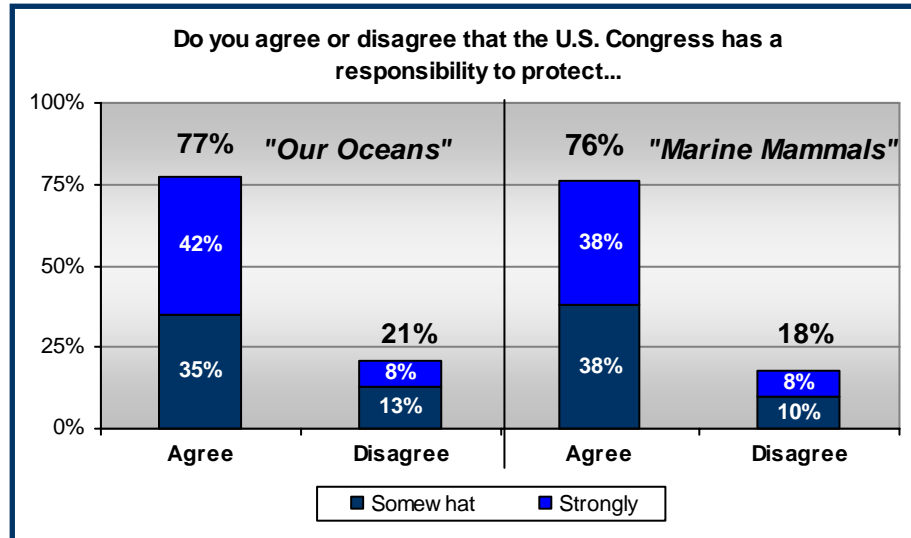
Still, a look at the cross-tabs was telling:

- Voters aged 45-54 were more likely than most to agree that it was important to protect both our oceans and the dolphins and whales that call them home.
- Parents (especially moms) were especially enthusiastic in their advocacy of this goal.

¹ Republican United States Congressional Districts in Ohio include 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 12, and 16; Democratic Districts include 3, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 17; Swing Districts include 2, 6, 14, 15, and 18.

The Duty to Protect Our Shining Seas Falls in Part to Congress.

After being queried on the general “importance” of defending the world’s oceans and marine animals, Ohio Republicans were asked directly about whether and to what extent Congress has a role in keeping each of them safe from harm. In response to two separate questions, more than three-quarters of the voters that were surveyed unequivocally declared that Washington must be involved in preserving “our oceans” (77%) and “marine mammals, such as dolphins and whales” (76%). As illustrated in the nearby graph, intensity was split.



Approximately one-in-five respondents did not believe it was the job of Congress to keep our oceans (21%) and sea creatures (18%) safe. This seems a remarkably low number for a Republican sample, given the natural predisposition against congressional control on most issues.

Analysis of the crosstabular data yielded the following:

OH Republicans More Likely than Most to Say it is the Responsibility of Congress to Protect...

"Our Oceans" (77% Overall)

- Women, especially those with children
- Voters aged 45-54
- Self-identified moderates
- Those who live in Swing Districts
- Voter who feel Republicans in Congress were doing a fair/poor job of protecting the environment

OH Republicans More Likely than Most to Say it is the Responsibility of Congress to Protect...

"Marine Mammals" (76% Overall)

- Women
- Parents
- Voters aged 18-34 or 45-54
- Self-identified moderates
- Voter who reported that Republicans in Congress and their own member of Congress were doing a fair/poor job of defending the environment

It would have been easy for these Republican voters to “pass the buck” on marine protection to a body other than the U.S. Congress, including the private sector or individuals themselves, or to claim that there are more pressing matters that demand congressional consideration this year, e.g., the economy, the war on terror, illegal immigration. However, they chose to put defense of the oceans and marine mammals squarely within Congress’ purview, which reinforces the high level of importance Republican voters place on these precious, shared resources, and the unique character they assign to the oceans and those that call it home.

Buckeye GOPers Demonstrate Overwhelming Support for the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

Nearly eight-in-ten (79%) Republican voters statewide in Ohio pledged their support for the federal law that requires the government to “*protect marine mammals, such as dolphins and whales, from harm by human activities.*” Backing of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, which was signed into law in 1972 and prohibits, with few exceptions, the capture or kill of all marine mammals in U.S. waters or by U.S. citizens, was more than six-times its opposition, which stood at a paltry 12%.

Survey respondents were queried separately on their agreement with a specific provision of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) that “*requires commercial fishing operations to reduce their catch, injury, and kill of dolphins and whales to insignificant levels.*” This segment of the MMPA was also overwhelmingly embraced by Ohio Republicans, as more than three-quarters (76%) of them supported it.

Though overall backing of this specific provision was slightly lower than support for the MMPA overall, the intensity of voters’ opinions was greater in response to this second question. A full 43% “strongly” endorsed restrictions on commercial fisherman compared to 33% who did so “somewhat.”

<i>Under current federal law, known as the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the government is required to protect marine mammals such as dolphins and whales, from harm by human activities. Knowing this, do you support or oppose this law?</i>	
79%	TOTAL SUPPORT (NET)
41%	Strongly Support
38%	Somewhat Support
12%	TOTAL OPPOSE (NET)
6%	Somewhat Oppose
6%	Strongly Oppose
<i>The Marine Mammal Protection Act includes a provision that requires commercial fishing operations to reduce their catch, injury, and kill of dolphins and whales to insignificant levels. Knowing this, do you support or oppose this law?</i>	
76%	TOTAL SUPPORT (NET)
43%	Strongly Support
33%	Somewhat Support
15%	TOTAL OPPOSE (NET)
9%	Somewhat Oppose
6%	Strongly Oppose

Examination of the crosstabs revealed the following:

OH Republicans More Likely than Most to...

Support the MMPA (79% Overall)

- Voters aged 45-54
- Blacks
- Self-identified moderates
- Women with children
- Middle-income households (\$30,000-\$69,000)
- Respondents living in GOP or Swing Districts more likely than those living in Dem Districts (81%-74%)
- Voter who felt Republicans in Congress were doing a fair/poor job of protecting the environment

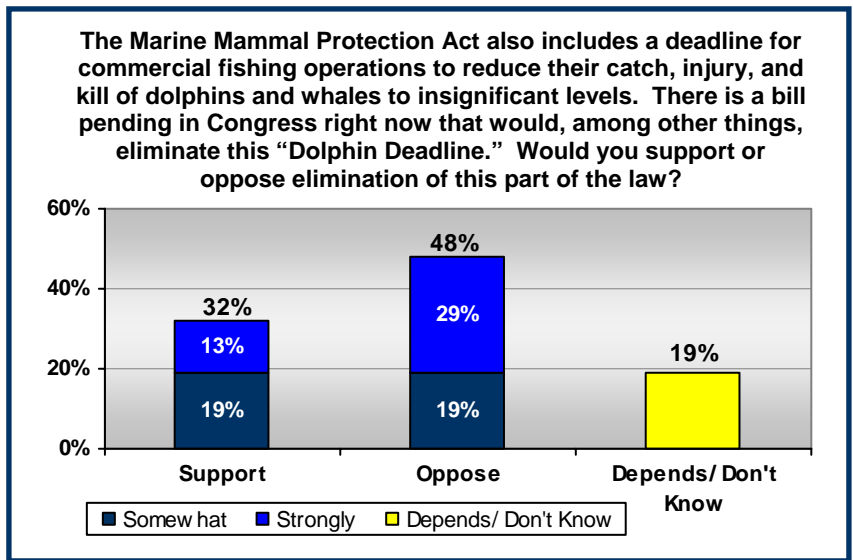
OH Republicans More Likely than Most to...

Support the Commercial Fishery Provision of the MMPA (76% Overall)

- Voters aged 45-64
- Blacks
- Self-identified moderates
- Parents (especially moms)
- High income households (\$70K+)
- Voters who said Republicans in Congress were doing a fair/poor job defending the environment

A Plurality of Republican Voters Deem the “Dolphin Deadline” an Essential Part of the MMPA.

Ohio voters not only supported requiring commercial fisheries to reduce their impact on marine mammals, **they also advocated enforcing this provision of the MMPA according to a firm deadline.** By a 16-point margin, respondents opposed Congress eliminating the “Dolphin Deadline” from the Marine Mammal Protection Act (48%-32%). The strength with which GOP voters held this opinion was palpable, as a full 29% “strongly” rejected the notion. A sizeable 19% were unsure or required additional information before rendering a decision, suggesting there is room for movement with a concerted and fact-laden education effort.



This result is all that much more notable considering that this survey was likely the first introduction of this complex and virtually unknown issue to most voters *and* that many Republicans are, by nature, opposed to the federal government’s involvement in most matters. That a plurality advocated keeping a regulation in place, and did so with measurable intensity, underscores the critical nature of this issue, even to land-locked Republicans living in Ohio.

Evaluation of the crosstabs indicated the following groups stood out from Republican voters overall:

OH Republicans More Likely than Most to...

Oppose Eliminating the Dolphin Deadline
(48% Overall)

- 45-64 year olds
- Self-identified moderates
- High-income households (\$70K+)
- Those who felt Republicans in Congress were doing a fair/poor job protecting the environment

OH Republicans More Likely than Most to...

Support Eliminating the Dolphin Deadline
(32% Overall)

- 18-34 year olds
- Blacks
- Self-identified conservatives more likely than moderates (34%-24%)

KEY CONCLUSION

“Dolphin Deadline” is an Acceptable Form of Regulation to Ohio Republicans

Many Republican voters are congenitally disposed to reduce or prevent regulations and other forms of government intrusion, often believing that things function more smoothly with the Congress and the White House just leave them alone. That said, many of them, including in Ohio, make an exception when such legislation is designed to protect the powerless and when such protection calls for the type of oversight authority and resources that the Congress can bear. The so-called “Dolphin Deadline” appears to be one of those cases, as Ohio Republicans rejected its elimination and are unequivocally supportive of both the ends (protection of marine mammals) and the means (Congressional action)