

July 2022

Wisconsinites' Perceptions on Climate Change

Wisconsin Conservation Voices

Research Goals

1. Map Wisconsinites' internalized narratives and deeply held values shaping attitudes around climate change



Sample

- Registered voters in Wisconsin
- 1,553 respondents
- Fielded from June 27 – July 8, 2022

Methodology

- Online survey with typed responses
- Combination of open and closed questions

Key Takeaways

1

Wisconsinites expressed a deep appreciation for the state's outdoors, food and people. They say they most enjoy the weather, lakes, forests, and four-season activities.

Across vote choice, family is the top value. Honesty and freedom follow.

2

Nearly 8 in 10 Wisconsinites believe in climate change, and 6 in 10 believe we must do everything we can to avoid the worst impacts.

When asked open-ended questions, Wisconsinites associate climate change with the weather, particularly rising temperatures.

3

When asked open-ended questions, Wisconsinites blame the government and politicians, particularly Republicans, for standing in the way of action on climate change.

A quarter of young Wisconsinites blame "all of us," and are also more likely than older generations to believe "all of us" are harmed, rather than pointing to marginalized people.

4

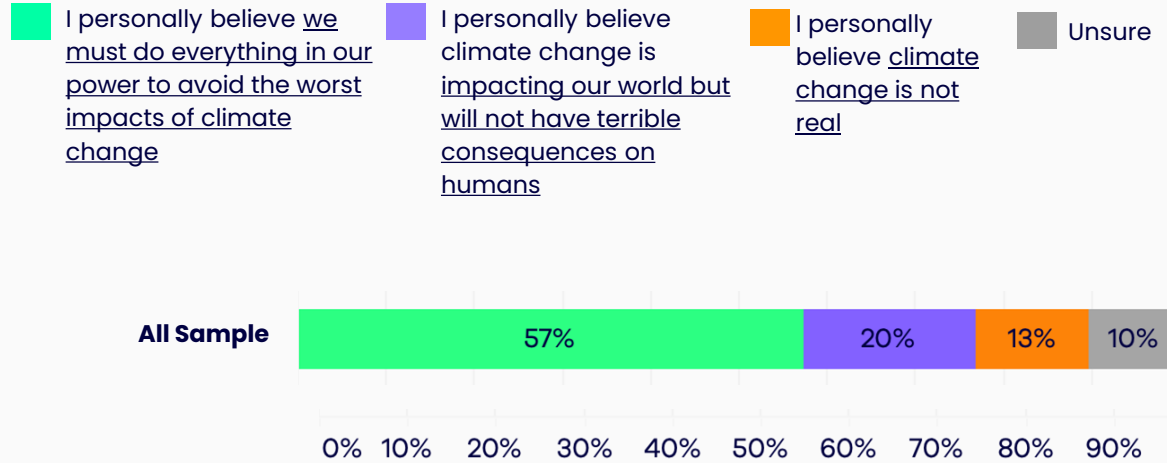
Water issues are top of mind as serious problems in Wisconsin. Air pollution from wildfires and severe flooding remained at the bottom of the list.

No matter their belief in climate change, a strong majority of respondents support government action.



**Nearly 8 in 10
Wisconsinites believe in
climate change, and 6
in 10 believe we must do
everything we can to
avoid the worst
impacts.**

[Climate Segmentation] Which of the following statements comes closest to your views? [Closed end]

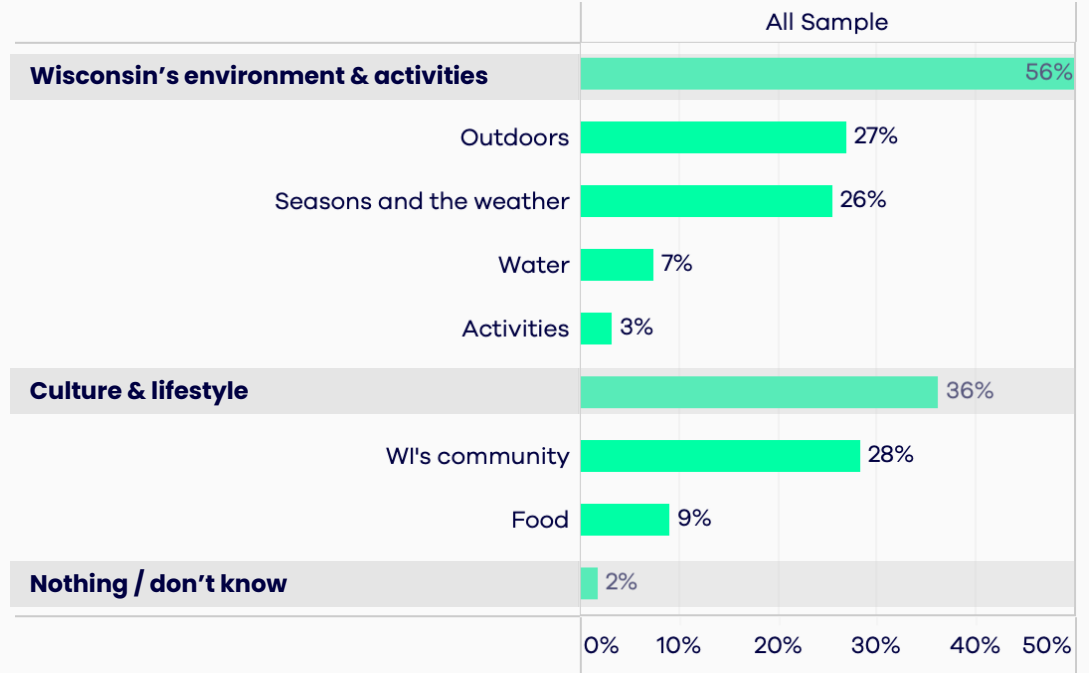


What is the **emotional connection**
Wisconsinites have to the state and
its environment?



Across vote choice, over half of Wisconsinites mention liking their state's outdoor environment and a third mention its culture & lifestyle.

[WI Pride] If an out-of-state friend were to ask you what you like most about Wisconsin, what would you tell them? [Open ended]

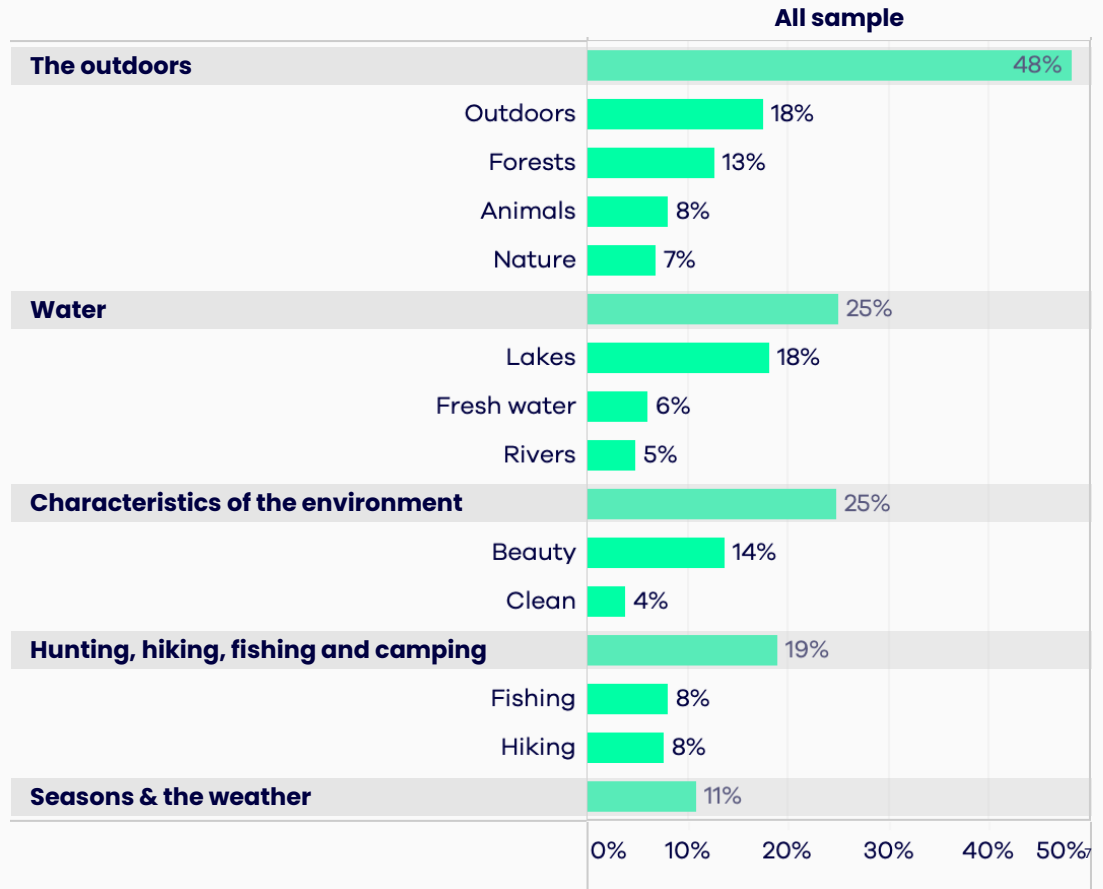


Half of respondents mentioned the outdoors, including forests, animals and nature.

1 in 4 mentioned water, focusing on lakes.

“Beauty” is a word mentioned most often by respondents to describe what they enjoy most, followed by “clean.”

[Environment connection] What are some things you enjoy most about Wisconsin's natural environment? [Open-ended]

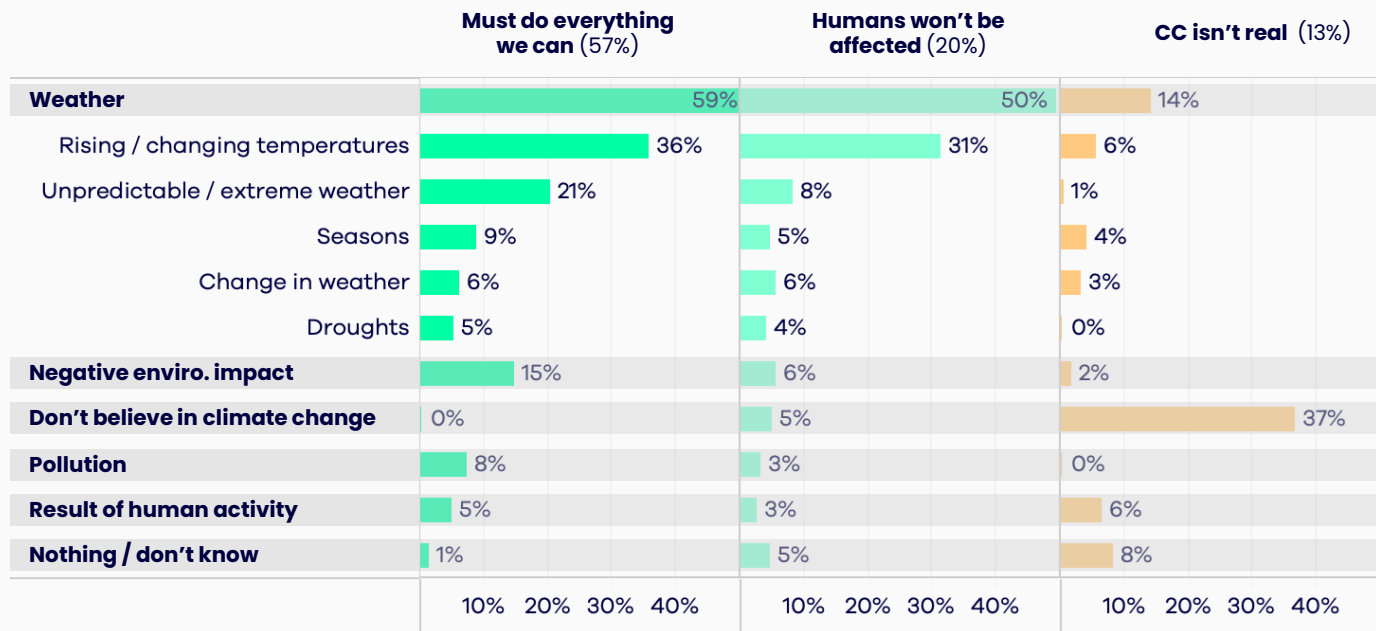


What are Wisconsinites'
**perceptions about climate
change** in Wisconsin?



Perceptions of climate change by belief in it

[Climate change - belief] When you hear “climate change,” what do you think about? [Open-ended]



In their own words, people who have observed changes to Wisconsin's environment mention urbanization, loss of nature, water issues and pollution as the most top of mind.

Government and politicians, particularly Republicans, are who people most blame, unaided, when asked who is standing in the way of action on climate change.



Water issues are top of mind as serious problems that worry Wisconsinites.

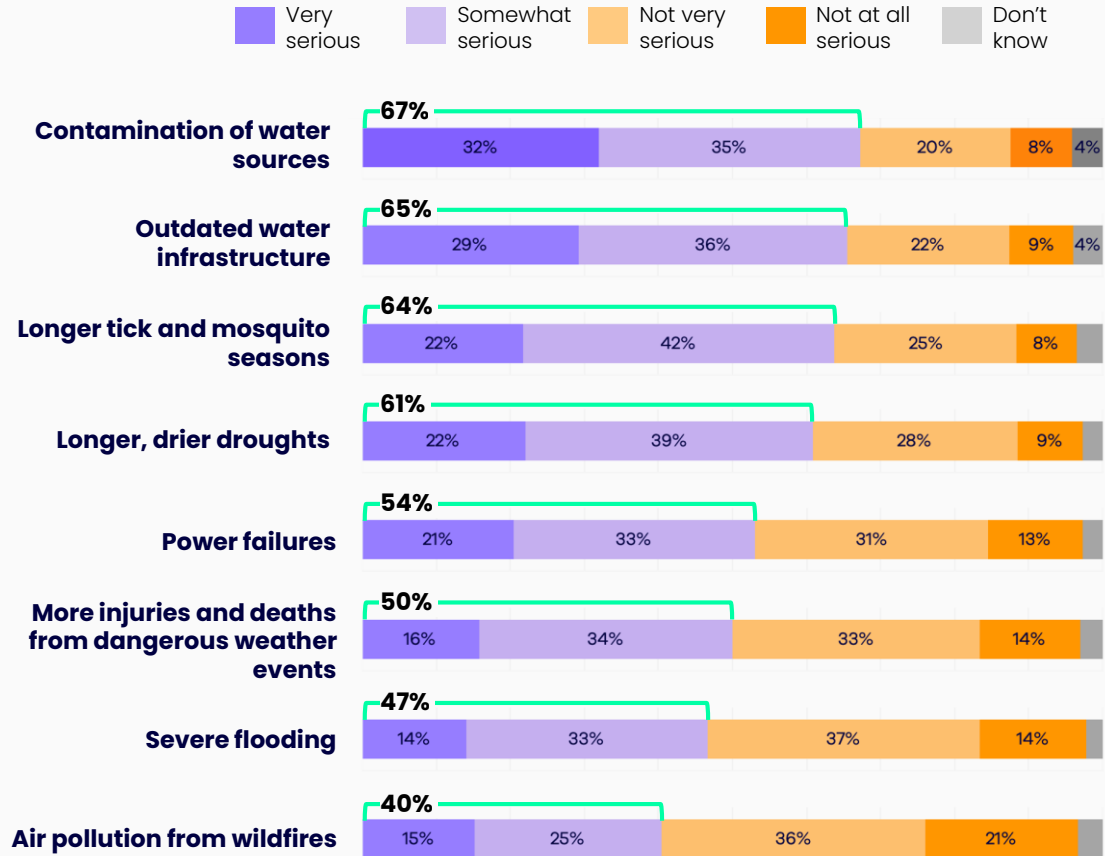
No matter their belief in climate change, a strong majority of Wisconsinites support government action.



Nearly a third of Wisconsinites view contamination of water sources and outdated water infrastructure as 'serious' climate-related issues.

Severe flooding and wildfire air pollution were last on the list.

[Climate issue problem grid] In your opinion, how serious of a problem are the following issues in Wisconsin? [Close-ended]

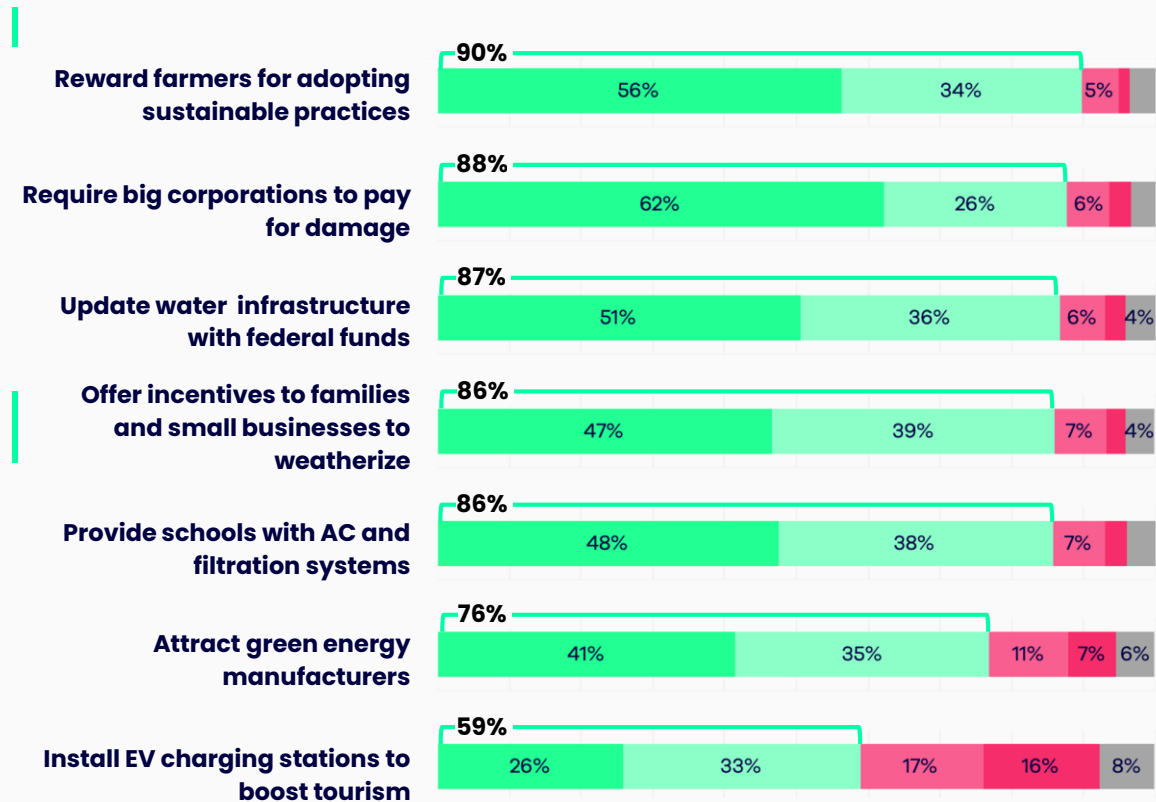


Support for government actions is high across vote choice, with little strong opposition. Installing EV chargers had less support, but may be a result of how the question was asked, connecting charging stations to tourism.

6 in 10 Wisconsinites strongly support requiring big corporations to pay for environmental damage they cause.

[Actions Grid] How much do you support or oppose Wisconsin's government taking the following actions in our state? [Close-ended]

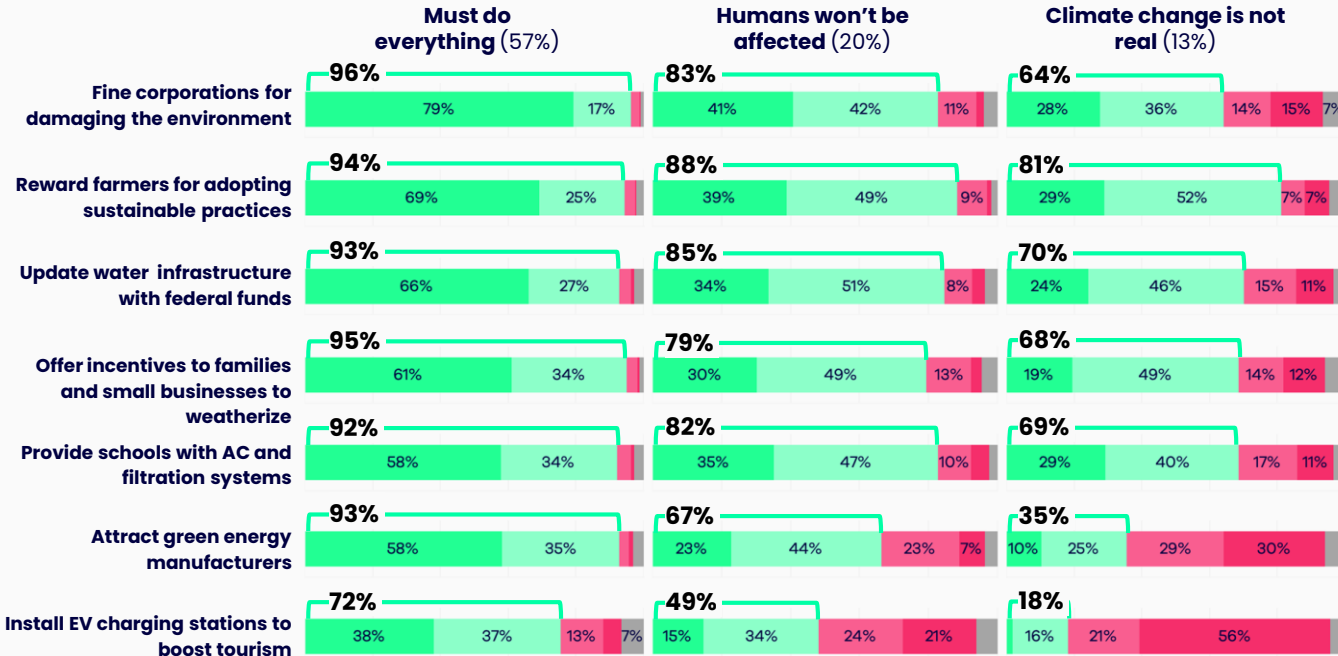
■ Strongly support
 ■ Somewhat support
 ■ Somewhat oppose
 ■ Strongly oppose
 ■ Don't know



Among those who don't believe in climate change, a strong majority still support all suggested government actions, except attracting green manufacturing and installing EV chargers.

[Actions Grid] How much do you support or oppose Wisconsin's government taking the following actions in our state? [Close-ended]

■ Strongly support
 ■ Somewhat support
 ■ Somewhat oppose
 ■ Strongly oppose
 ■ Don't know





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