

# Protected Lands in Pike County

Survey Conducted May – September, 2017



Full data set available online: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-CX2WQXY98/>

The “Protected Lands in Pike County” survey was emailed to 3,280 registered high propensity voters in Pike County; promoted through five press releases with associated posts on the Conservancy’s website; three reminder emails; and social media posts.

290 respondents completed the survey; 273 self-identified as Pike County residents. 38% identified as Republican; 33% as Democrat; and 27% as Independent. 31% identified as Conservative; 37% as moderate; and 23% as Liberal.

Of the respondents, 54% were male, and 44% were female.

## Key Trends:

- 69% of respondents “strongly support” continuing to fund the Scenic Rural Character Conservation Program (SRCP); 17% “somewhat support.”

*When asked about the type of projects that SRCP has funded or could continue to fund:*

- 77% of respondents rated “Protecting sources of clean drinking water” as extremely important, and 74% rated “helping maintain the excellent water quality in streams, lakes and creeks” as extremely important.
- The next three highest-rated responses for “extremely important” were “Protecting fish and wildlife habitat” (62%); “Protecting natural areas” (58%); and “Protecting working farms and providing locally-grown food” (57%).
- Lowest-rated were “Creating and expanding local parks” (34% rated extremely important, 13% rated not important); “Developing new, or improving existing trails and access for hiking and biking (30% rated extremely important, 10% rated not important); and “Protecting the traditional economic base in Pike County by keeping this area attractive for tourists (36% rated extremely important, 10% rated not important)
- When asked the question, *Those efforts to conserve working farms, wildlife habitat, and other natural areas are created in agreement with local communities, private land owners and others. Some people have said that later decisions to fund a new courthouse and other public needs, including infrastructure, have incurred debt and therefore county funds should not be used for conservation. Having heard this, would you approve or not approve the county using funds for open space protection?* 78% responded with “strongly approve” or “approve.”
- When asked to choose between two statements, 42% agreed with the first statement: *I want to protect the county’s rural character and quality of life. A new bond should be approved and the bond funds should be prioritized to be expended.* 26% of respondents agreed with the second statement, *I think that the County has many needs, not just land conservation. Constructing the courthouse and other public needs, such as bridges and dams, have incurred debt and may incur debt in the future, and we need to be cautious right now before we authorize any more bonds on behalf of the county.*
- In a subsequent question, the statement with which 72% of respondents “strongly agree” was: “Having clean water to drink is vital. By protecting land around rivers, lakes, and streams, we can prevent polluted runoff from flowing into our local water supplies.”

- Second, with 56% of respondents in strong agreement, was “We owe it to our children and grandchildren to maintain the scenic and rural character of Pike County.”
- 56% of survey respondents feel that there is enough protected land in Pike County, while 38% feel there is not enough. 74% of respondents stated that they use parks or state-owned areas in the county for enjoyment and recreation, while 54% have *not* had a license to hunt or fish in the last three years.
- When asked to rate their opinion of Pike County Scenic Rural Character Preservation Program, 67% rated the program as “very favorable” or “somewhat favorable.” For the Pike County Planning Commission, 41% rated “very favorable” or “somewhat favorable,” while 31% rated “neutral.” For the Delaware Highlands Conservancy, 70% rated “very favorable” or “somewhat favorable.” For the Pike County Conservation District, 65% rated “very favorable” or “somewhat favorable.”

**For complete data, detailed survey responses, trends, and comments from respondents, please visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-CX2WQXY98/>.**