



CONSERVATION IN ACTION:

Civic Engagement Highlights and Impact



PHOTO: SANJIB BHATTACHARYA

2024

Executive Summary

Since 1936, the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) has focused on encouraging Americans from all walks of life to advocate for wildlife and their habitats and continue the tradition of providing opportunities for our supporters to speak up on issues that matter to them. We also are committed to civic engagement more broadly and regularly conduct activities to ensure all Americans make their voices heard by participating in the civic process, particularly by exercising their right to vote.¹

Regardless of the media landscape, NWF has expanded its outreach with trusted, nonpartisan information to help communities make informed decisions at the ballot box. Through a combination of digital tools, partnerships, and educational campaigns, we reached thousands of voters across the country about the importance of participation, and deepened our commitment to civic leadership in the conservation movement.

1. Note: NWF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. As such, NWF is nonpartisan and does not coordinate with, support, or oppose any candidates for public office or political party.

2024 Key Highlights

Microsite Launch

In June 2024, the National Wildlife Federation launched a dedicated microsite—[NWF.org/Democracy](https://www.nwf.org/Democracy)—to serve as a centralized hub for nonpartisan, civic engagement tools and resources, rooted in our conservation mission.

The site helps visitors understand how participating in democracy ensures they have a say on issues impacting their daily lives, including clean water, climate, public lands, wildlife, and the economy.





What the Microsite Offers

- A clear explanation of why a healthy democracy is essential to environmental progress
- A look back at NWF's long-standing civic engagement legacy, dating back to the 1930s
- Step-by-step guides on how to register, vote early, vote by mail, or plan for Election Day
- Links to tools for finding polling places, previewing ballots, and sharing voting resources
- Year-round actions to defend democracy

This platform serves as both an educational resource and an action center—equipping visitors from communities everywhere to engage as informed voters and make sure their voice is heard on important issues.

IMPACT

- Microsite launch was promoted via social media posts on **Facebook, Twitter/X, LinkedIn, and Threads**
- Campaign content generated a combined **9,454 impressions** across platforms
- Achieved an **average engagement rate between 1.5% and 2.4%**, with strong interactions during the launch week and civic holidays

[VISIT THE MICROSITE](#)

Leadership Video

NWF President and CEO Collin O'Mara delivered a public video message featured prominently on our Democracy & Conservation microsite to underscore the importance of civic engagement. His message served as both inspiration and a call to action.

Collin's message anchored our digital campaign and highlighted how defending democracy is essential, ensuring that everyone has a say on important issues like the environment.

IMPACT

- Emphasized the vital link between **civic engagement and a wide array of issues including wildlife protection**, the environment, climate, and the economy
- Reaffirmed **NWF's role as a nonpartisan source of trusted voter education** in a time of growing misinformation
- Called on the public to go beyond just voting by helping others make a plan to vote, volunteering as poll workers, and taking leadership roles in their communities

[WATCH VIDEO MESSAGE](#)

Civic Engagement Toolkit

To support the broader community in uplifting democracy, NWF developed a comprehensive Civic Engagement Toolkit designed for nonprofits, coalitions, and community leaders.

Shared through national coalitions and networks, the toolkit served as a key resource for amplifying pro-democracy messaging throughout the 2024 election season and beyond.

[VIEW DIGITAL TOOLKIT](#) 

Core Resources Provided

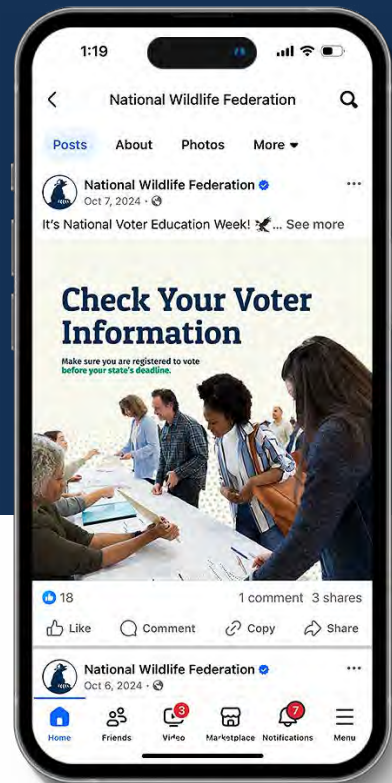
1. **Ready-to-use social media content** on voting, democracy, and important issues like the environment
2. **Extensive talking points and messaging guidance** to help organizations craft original content for emails, blogs, Op-Eds, public events, and conversations with supporters

Key Themes

- The importance of civic engagement to give the public a say on issues such as the **wildlife, water, climate, and more**
- Specific messages for reaching **youth, rural communities, faith-based audiences, hunters and anglers, and Indigenous communities**
- Strategies for **combating election disinformation**
- Also connecting civic action to **environmental justice and scientific integrity**

Toolkit Reach (Aug–Nov 2024)

- **196 unique visitors** accessed the toolkit online
- **70 total shares**, mostly on Facebook
- Content from the toolkit generated **over 20,000 social media impressions**
- The most-shared content focused on **National Voter Education Week**, followed by posts related to wildlife, rural outreach, and youth voting





Voter Outreach & Tools

To ensure the public had the tools they needed to participate confidently in the 2024 election, the National Wildlife Federation provided streamlined, nonpartisan digital resources and direct outreach through partners and related educational campaigns.



Vote.org Partnership: Streamlining Voter Access



To make voter registration and ballot planning more accessible to all, NWF partnered with **Vote.org** to embed their trusted tools directly into our website. This provided a seamless way for our audience to take civic action without leaving our platform.

These tools were shared primarily through email campaigns rather than paid advertising, meaning the results reflect high levels of trust and intentional engagement.

IMPACT

- **258 recipients** used the “Check Your Registration” tool to verify their status
- **64 people** successfully registered to vote through the embedded tool
- **79 absentee ballot requests** were submitted using the platform
- **65 users were new to NWF**, demonstrating the power of organic reach through web traffic, word-of-mouth, and search visibility

The Rising American Electorate



NWF partnered with the **Climate Action Campaign** on a comprehensive Voter Registration and Get Out the Vote initiative. Focused on engaging the Rising American Electorate (young people and communities of color) and low-turnout voters. It utilized phone banking, mail, and text messages over several weeks to reach voters.

IMPACT

- NWF sent direct mail to **~2,300 unregistered young voters and voters of color** across the 6 target states
- Of those who received the mail piece:
 - **12% registered to vote**, compared to 7% in the non-mailed control group
 - **3.6% registered as a direct result** of the mailer
- A typical and strong return for voter registration mail
 - **Over 50%** of the newly registered voters turned out to vote in the 2024 election, resulting in **144 new voters**

Targeted Texting Campaigns: Reaching Young Voters



To engage young voters, NWF launched a texting campaign to test the use of video via SMS communications to youth voters (under 35) from outside of NWF’s existing list in partnership with an outreach firm.

This initiative reflects NWF’s commitment to expanding the electorate by meeting voters where they are—on their phones, in their communities, and aligned with the issues they care most about.

IMPACT

- Sent **40,156 personalized texts** to low-turnout voters under age 35 in Georgia and New York
- Focused on voters who skipped 2022 midterms so they might reengage
- Each message included a **“Pledge to Vote” link**, resulting in **471 confirmed clicks**
- Texting campaign helped reach a segment of the electorate often overlooked by traditional outreach, reinforcing the connection between civic participation and issues affecting voters’ everyday lives and communities



Affiliate & Regional Partnerships

In 2024, the National Wildlife Federation provided funding, technical support, and strategic guidance to a growing number of state and regional partners. These collaborations helped strengthen nonpartisan voter engagement efforts rooted in broad conservation values and community leadership.



West Virginia Rivers Coalition (WVRC)



WVRC expanded civic outreach across the state in partnership with local organizations.

IMPACT

- Developed a **statewide GOTV toolkit** with social media graphics, captions, and short videos for use by local groups
- Produced a **video series** featuring West Virginia conservation leaders encouraging everyone to vote
- Hosted **2 virtual phone banks** and **3 text banks**, connecting with voters across the state
- Reached voters directly through **9,606 calls** and **46,146 text messages**

Planning & Conservation League (California)



This campaign focused on engaging young voters through digital storytelling.

IMPACT

- Created **20+ unique social media graphics** using local wildlife and landscape imagery
- Published **27 total posts** across Instagram, Facebook, X (Twitter), and LinkedIn
- Reached over **2,099 impressions** and engaged a growing youth-focused audience with messages underscoring the importance of having a say on various issues

Montana Wildlife Federation (MWF)



MWF integrated voter outreach into on-the-ground events and reached diverse communities across Montana.

IMPACT

- Hosted **voter registration tables** at packed public events on grizzly bear and wolf recovery
- Conducted a **PSA and podcast campaign** on civic engagement with an estimated reach of **100,000 listeners**
- Partnered with **Western Native Voice** to support Indigenous voter registration drives
- Promoted civic action via **social media**, email newsletters, and a **print magazine cover feature** in October 2024

Coalition, Water & Agriculture Centered Outreach



NWF partnered with local groups in several states to connect civic participation with various issues such as water protection and land management.

IMPACT

- Partnered with the **Choose Clean Water Coalition** (CCW) and the **Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed** (CDRW) to support updates to their civic engagement toolkit for 2024
- Toolkit content was shared by **over 8 organizations**, generating **89 shares** and **20,596 impressions**
- In **Minnesota**, 3,067 members received a pro-ballot measure email supporting **Amendment 1**, authorizing state lottery funds for conservation
- This email alone led to **110 pledges to vote**, demonstrating strong alignment between environmental messaging and civic action

[VIEW 2024 TOOLKIT](#)

Ballot Initiative Education

In 2024, aligned with our state affiliates, the National Wildlife Federation provided nonpartisan education and engagement around several state ballot initiatives with direct implications for conservation, wildlife, water security, and environmental justice. In each case, NWF strategically informed voters about measures aligned with our mission and values.



"Yes" on Prop 4 (California) – Clean Water & Wildfire Resilience



Proposition 4 secured \$10 billion for California wildfire prevention, clean drinking water, and protection of iconic landscapes and wildlife.

IMPACT

- Coordinated with the Yes on Prop 4 coalition on messaging in support of the measure. This effort was aligned with the Planning and Conservation League
- As part of messaging, highlighted Prop 4 at NWF's 9th annual **P-22** Festival in Los Angeles, reaching hundreds of attendees
- **Op-ed published** by NWF's Fabiola Gomez in a local newspaper
- Sent educational emails to **over 54,000 California NWF supporters**
- **1,300 of NWF's supporters signed a pledge** to vote Yes on the measure
- **WIN: 59.8% of California voters** supported the measure

"Yes" on Amendment 1 (Minnesota) – Dedicated Conservation Funding



Amendment 1 authorized continued use of Minnesota's lottery funds for environmental and conservation projects.

IMPACT

- Building on the great work of the Minnesota Conservation Federation, sent targeted emails to **3,067 NWF members in Minnesota**
- Featured quotes from the affiliate's executive director to highlight local leadership
- **110 NWF supporters pledged to vote** in favor of the amendment
- **WIN: Amendment 1** passed successfully, ensuring long-term conservation investments



The Annual P-22 Day Festival is a tribute to P-22, Los Angeles's favorite celebrity mountain lion. It's a celebration of people, music, food, wilderness, animals, advocacy, ingenuity, and community.



"No" on Initiative 2117 (Washington) – Defending Climate & Conservation Funding



Initiative 2117 sought to repeal funding for programs reducing pollution, protecting salmon habitat, and supporting Tribal-led environmental restoration.

IMPACT

- Sharing the position of **Conservation Northwest** and other local organizations, looked at ways to support critical education about policies implicated by the measure
- Elevated a guest blog from Paula Swedeen, Senior Policy Director at Conservation NW
- Shared digital and email messaging to **14,540 NWF supporters in Washington**
- Helped educate on the environmental consequences of the initiative and urged to NWF members a "No" vote
- **WIN:** Voters ultimately rejected the measure with **61.9% voting "No"**


"No" on Proposition 127 (Colorado) – Science-Based Wildlife Management



Proposition 127 aimed to ban the hunting of mountain lions, bobcats, and lynx in Colorado, despite the state's reliance on regulated hunting as a tool for population management and ecosystem balance.

IMPACT

- Like the **Colorado Wildlife Federation**, opposed the measure
- Created an educational **blog post** explaining the science behind responsible predator management
- Emails and event promotions reached over **3,500 NWF supporters in Colorado**
- **WIN:** Public education efforts contributed to defeating the measure with **54.7% voting "No"**



National Civic Education Campaign

To inspire civic participation and make the voting process accessible to all, NWF aligned its public outreach with key national voting holidays and events throughout the 2024 election season. Our goal was to educate, engage, and equip our members with clear, nonpartisan information—when it mattered most.

Email Campaigns



NWF sent five major Get Out the Vote (GOTV) emails throughout the fall, timed with national civic holidays and state-specific deadlines.

IMPACT

- Each email reached around **600,000 members**
- Open rates ranged from **35% to 44%**, consistently above industry benchmarks
- Emails were redesigned using a **newsletter-style format**, helping readers easily navigate multiple action options like registering to vote, checking deadlines, or becoming a poll worker
- Topics included:
 - National Poll Worker Recruitment Day
 - National Voter Registration Day
 - Early Voting Deadlines
 - Election Day Planning
 - Last-Minute Voting Reminders

Social Media Impact



Our social media campaign reinforced email and SMS messaging with dynamic, platform-tailored posts across five channels.

IMPACT

- Campaigns were synchronized with major voting holidays:
 - National Voter Registration Day (Sept 17)
 - National Voter Education Week (Oct 7-11)
 - Vote Early Day (late October)
 - Election Day (Nov 5)
- Engagement rates on civic content reached:
 - **Up to 6.3% on Instagram**
 - **5.75% on LinkedIn**
 - Strong reach on Facebook and Twitter/X, particularly high traction on early voting and ballot content
- Threads and Instagram expanded reach to younger and more diverse audiences
- Content included videos, infographics, voting plan prompts, and toolkit shares

SMS Campaign



For the first time, NWF added text messaging to its GOTV strategy, delivering time-sensitive reminders directly to supporters' phones.

IMPACT

- Sent **3 targeted SMS messages** to **8,000 opted-in supporters**
- Texts were sent on National Voter Registration Day, Early Voting week, and Election Day
- Included reminders, personalized links, and an invite to a **GOTV webinar**
- Minimal opt-outs reflected high alignment with our audience's civic engagement values



Through an integrated strategy across email, text, and social, NWF helped thousands participate in the democratic process, making sure their voices were heard on important issues.



Presentations & Webinars

As part of our commitment to education and capacity-building, the National Wildlife Federation hosted and co-led a series of civic engagement presentations throughout 2024. These events helped strengthen the civic literacy of our affiliates, partners, and grassroots audiences, offering tools to confidently participate in and lead nonpartisan democracy work.



Divides to

ine 4 5

NWF delivered 9 civic education events in 2024, including both in-person panels and virtual trainings designed to demystify election processes and underscore the importance of civic action.

Formats Included

- Live virtual trainings with national and state-based partners
- Webinars on combating election disinformation
- In-person sessions at major conferences and annual gatherings

Key Topics Covered

- **Disinformation and Media Literacy:** How to identify and counter misleading narratives that threaten elections, science, and more
- **Voter Planning:** Tools for making a plan to vote and supporting others in doing the same
- **Case Studies:** Real-world examples of successful nonpartisan civic engagement by state partners
- **Water & Democracy:** Connecting public participation to coalition-based outreach
- **Youth Voter Engagement:** Strategies to inspire and mobilize younger generations around conservation and civic leadership

Featured Sessions

- **Choose Clean Water Conference (May 2024)** – “Clean Water and a Healthy Democracy” explored how voting rights and water justice intersect
- **NWF Annual Meeting (June 2024)** – “Wildlife and Our Democracy” panel spotlighted nonpartisan civic engagement success stories and tools
- **Virtual Briefings** – Covered timely topics like election integrity, addressing concerns, and preparing for post-election scenarios
- **Affiliate Trainings** – Hosted in partnership with the Virginia Conservation Network and Florida Wildlife Federation to equip local groups with messaging tools and voter education best practices

Total Attendance

- Over **50 partner organizations and affiliates** participated, spanning multiple states and regions



PHOTO: CHOOSE CLEAN WATER

Key Takeaways

Our 2024 civic engagement efforts highlighted how conservation and democracy are deeply connected—and that people are ready to act when given the tools, context, and support they need. Here's what we learned:



Affiliate Momentum is Growing

Civic engagement is increasingly a priority for NWF state affiliates. Many are already leading the charge and simply need access to resources, training, and funding to scale their efforts.

Voter Education Works

When framed around a wide range of issues people care about — like clean water, wildlife, and climate, the economy, and more — civic engagement becomes personal, relevant, and urgent.

Visible Leadership Drives Engagement

When national and local leaders show up for democracy, communities follow. Public-facing support from executives and grassroots voices inspired others to take action.

Toolkits Empower Local Action

Ready-to-use messaging and adaptable templates helped partners quickly activate their communities and make voting more accessible to new audiences.

Planning Early Pays Off

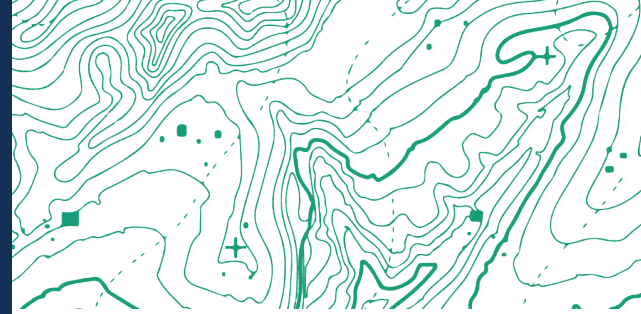
Aligning our campaigns with national civic holidays and voting deadlines helped maximize our reach, improve message clarity, and reduce last-minute stress.

Partnerships Amplify Impact

Collaborating with coalitions, affiliates, and national partners expanded our audience and strengthened our message, building collective power across movements.

Looking Ahead

As we look to 2025 and beyond, the National Wildlife Federation remains committed to strengthening civic participation.



We aim to:

- Increase funding and support for affiliate-led civic engagement projects
- Expand resources and outreach for youth, rural voters, frontline communities, and more
- Elevate trusted messengers and partners doing nonpartisan democracy work across the country

Together, we can protect democracy—and defend our natural world.



Visit [NWF.org/Democracy](https://www.nwf.org/Democracy) to learn more and get involved.



PHOTO: JOHN ROLLINS