

## DO'S & DON'TS:

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# How to Successfully Communicate Nature-Based Solutions

Key Lessons from Opinion Research with American Voters and Elites



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### ✓ Call this concept "nature-based solutions"

Respondents of the survey overwhelmingly believed that "nature-based solutions" best describes the concept. Importantly, most voters just do not think in terms of "infrastructure."

### ✓ Use nature-based solutions as complementary to engineering solutions

We consistently saw a more positive response when we talked about the way nature-based solutions could complement and work with engineered solutions or existing man-made infrastructure.

### ✓ Use examples in explaining the concept of "nature-based solutions"

Voters essentially required hearing an example or two in order to better grasp this concept.

### ✓ Talk about communities; NOT cities

We heard quite clearly that "community" is often a more applicable term than is "city." Everyone in our focus groups thought of themselves as living in a community.

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### ✗ Don't talk about "resilience" except with thought leaders

Resilient implies that something negative has happened and the community is "bouncing back" from that negative event. Therefore, some respondents point to the fact that there is an implicit negative association with "resilience."

### ✗ Don't say "green"

We continue to see that many voters think of "green" as over-used and related to marketing products.

### ✗ Don't talk about how government agencies or entities could use this approach - instead focus on how it affects communities

The mention of "government agencies" could derail some more conservative voters who see it through a "big government" lens of concern. Keeping the focus on how it affects communities appears to be more important than focusing on the entity implementing these solutions.