Effective Conservation Messages
(for your neighbors)

Brook McDonald
President/CEO

We Save Land. We Save Rivers.
NE IL Open Space Protection

- Since 1993, more than $1.3 billion have been approved by NE Illinois voters to preserve and protect open space and natural areas.
- 35/40 passed (88%)
- Protect 40,000 acres
- ~250,000 acres in Chicago region

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### Track Record of the Concept:
75% long-term approval rate, good times and bad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Passed (%)</th>
<th>Created Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>$800 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>$300 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>$13.2 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>$300 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>$9.6 billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TCF Referenda Experience

- Organized and managed 13 successful open space referenda since 1997
- Referenda raised more than $750 million to protect 30,000 acres and help implement agency plans
- Conducted more than 20 polls in last 20 years gauging public interest and support for open space preservation, testing messages.

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NE Illinois Polling Data

- Interviewed 12,000 high frequency voters in DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Will, Grundy and DeKalb Counties (Lake and McHenry)

- Goals of the poll:
  - Craft a “yes voter profile” for target marketing
  - Identify the “hot buttons” and key messages
  - Identify core supporters, core opponents and swing voters; which election cycle
  - Test/Craft the ballot language and $ request

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YES Voter Profile

- Women more than men ("soccer moms")
- Educated with children
- Ages 35-55
- Concerned with quality of life issues impacting their family/children
- Includes Democrats, Independents, Republicans
- Avoid male Republicans 65 older??????

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Old Key Messages- Urgency

- Land is being developed at an all time high rate of speed with plans underway for even more. This is the time to plan for a balance between green space and development before the land is too expensive or gone.

The time to act is now.

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Message Formula

- **Problem** - loss of open space - fast!
- **Urgency** - must act now!
- **Benefits** - Use of Funds, Quality of life messages
- **Call to Action** - vote yes before we lose the opportunity, we must act now!

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Top Concerns

Before Recession
- Growth Issues: Controlling Growth and Development, Alleviating Traffic Congestion, Preserving Open Space Lands and Natural Areas - 39%
- Economic Issues: Holding Down Taxes and Government Spending, Economic Growth and Job Development - 30%
- Improving Education - 12%
- Fighting Crime and Drugs - 12%
- Other - 7%

Now
- Economic Issues - 64%
- Education - 16%
- Growth Issues - 9%
- Crime and Drugs - 5%
- Other - 6%

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Still Strong Quality of Life Messages

• “Conserving open space lands plays a very important role in preserving our quality of life.”

• Before - 86% Agree (59% Strongly)

• Now - 82% Agree (56% Strongly)

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Quality of Life Messages!

- Conserving open space lands plays a very important role in preserving our quality of life.
- Open space lands along rivers and streams protect water quality and our drinking water sources.
- Open space improves our air quality.
- Open space preserves wildlife habitat.
- Open space creates opportunities where people can enjoy the outdoors- KIDS.

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## Words to Use and Avoid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bad Words to Avoid</th>
<th>Good Words to Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Land, air and water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecosystems</td>
<td>Natural areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity / endangered species</td>
<td>Fish and wildlife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulations</td>
<td>Safeguards/protections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riparian</td>
<td>Land along lakes, rivers and streams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquifer</td>
<td>Groundwater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watershed</td>
<td>Land around rivers, lakes and streams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental groups</td>
<td>Conservation groups / organizations protecting land, air, and water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural land</td>
<td>Working farms and ranches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban sprawl</td>
<td>Poorly planned growth/ development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Infrastructure</td>
<td>Nature-based solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecosystem services</td>
<td>Nature's benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape-scale conservation</td>
<td>Large, connected natural areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conservation in a New Era: Public Opinion Strategies
Best Words, Phrases

- Clean **water**- water quality
- **Wildlife** Habitat, protect wildlife habitat
- Preserve our **way of life** (rural)
- Clean **air**, breathe clean air
- Healthy **communities**, build healthy communities
- Preserve land for **future generations**
- Kids and families **outside in Nature**

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There's a CLEAR REASON to vote YES on the Open Space Referendum.

Punch 222 on April 13th.

The Forest Preserves protect our drinking water from pollution.

Protect our drinking water naturally – vote YES on Question 222. Area rivers, streams, and our aquifer are susceptible to pollution and run-off. But there's a natural way to protect the quality of our water now and in the future.

The Forest Preserve Open Space Referendum preserves and protects our water from contamination. A top priority is to acquire land adjacent to area rivers, streams, and our aquifer to shield them from the polluting effects of too much development and traffic.

Our small change can make a big difference in protecting our family's health. For just 25 cents a month, we can help keep our drinking water clean and safe. It's a lot less expensive than buying bottled water or paying for a costly clean up of polluted rivers and streams.

The Open Space Referendum is also the cheapest flood insurance money can buy. Every year, the flooding in our area seems to get worse. One of the reasons is sensitive wetlands and watershed areas are drained to make way for development, eliminating our area's natural defense to flooding.

OUR SMALL CHANGE can make a big difference in the quality of our water. Vote YES for Open Space on April 13th – PUNCH 222.
In Kane County,
we have some of the
purest rivers and streams
in Northern Illinois.

On Tuesday, April 5th, we can vote to keep it that way.

We can't put a price on clean, clear rivers, streams and lakes.
But for just $3.30 a month—only 11 cents a day—we can make sure our
drinking water sources and waterways are clean.

By voting YES for the Kane County
Forest Preserve Referendum, we can
keep pollution and overdevelopment
from clouding our drinking water.

Being able to expand our Forest
Preserves will also allow us to protect
the wetlands that provide a natural
barrier to flooding—it's the cheapest
flood insurance money can buy.

For more information, log-on to
www.kaneopenspace.org.

On Tuesday, April 5th, vote YES on the Forest Preserve Referendum.
It's a small price to pay today to protect what's great about Kane County for the future.
Control Flooding Naturally.

Vote YES on Open Space. Punch 153.

Voting YES on Open Space will keep our heads above water.

Every spring, our area's flooding problems seem to get worse. But there's a natural solution.

Part of the reason our flooding problems seem to get progressively worse is because of too much growth and development. As watersheds are drained to make way for new development, it takes away much of nature's defense against rising floodwaters.

At just $1.75 a month, the Forest Preserve Open Space Referendum is the cheapest flood insurance you can buy. A top priority of the Forest Preserves will be to protect and preserve wetlands, watersheds and greenways. This will help provide a natural barrier between rising floodwaters and our homes.

On April 13th, help keep our heads above water -- vote YES on Open Space. By acting now to protect natural areas, like watersheds and greenways, we can keep Kane County from being swamped by flood waters as well as unmanaged growth and traffic.

On April 13th, Vote YES on Open Space.

Punch 153.
We have a chance to stop two floods at once.
Clean, pure drinking water for just 
4 CENTS A DAY.

If they go, our air quality leaves with them.

We Save Land. We Save Rivers.
We need to move fast to preserve open space and protect our quality of life.

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Aurora, IL 60507-7638

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Our community’s ability to enjoy the Fox River could be on the line.
The quality of life we enjoy in DuPage County is priceless.

On November 7th, we can protect it for just 80¢ a month.
The answer to protecting our quality of life is PURE & SIMPLE.
You Can’t Put a Price on a Day Like This...

BUT IT’S YOURS FOR ONLY 25 CENTS.
On April 13th, give yourself some breathing room
Summary

• Stay out of the weeds!
• Talk to people at a level where THEY are at, not where you are at or where you want them to be.
• Quality of Life!
• Context of “community.”

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