

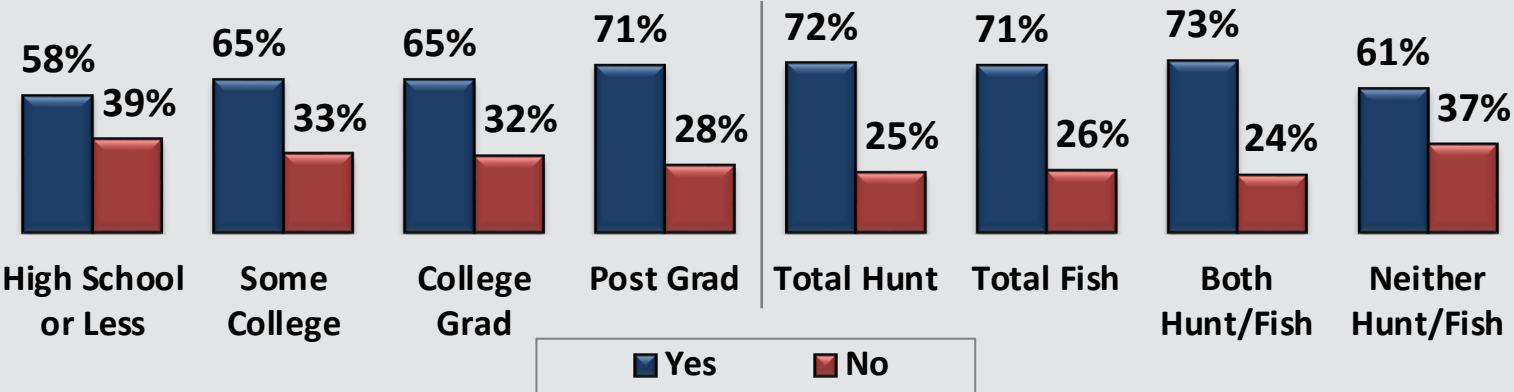
Outdoor Recreation in the West

Most Westerners consider themselves to be conservationists and say it's important to ensure conservation efforts get children into the outdoors and provide opportunities for hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation. The vast majority of Westerners want to ensure lower income and communities of color are connected to the outdoors. There are some concerns about crowding at recreation sites especially among those in cities and suburban areas.

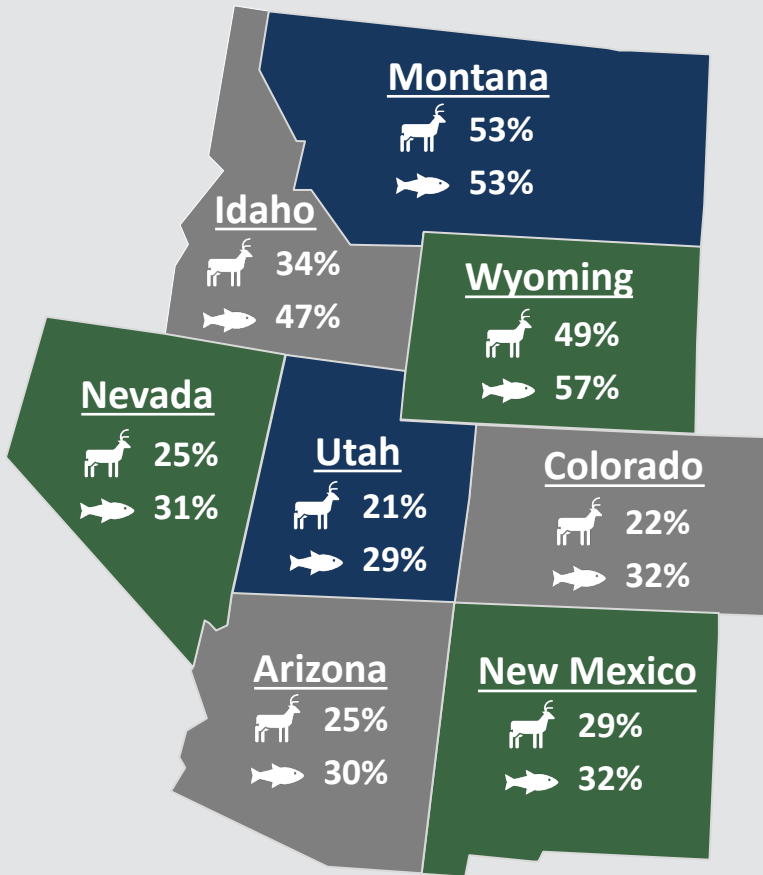
Most Western voters consider themselves to be conservationists. Nearly two-thirds of voters (65 percent) describe themselves as a conservationist. Wyoming and Montana boast the greatest proportion of conservationists (74 percent and 73 percent, respectively), but the lowest proportion of conservationists is still a substantial 63 percent in Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. Higher educated voters and sportsmen are more likely to consider themselves to be a conservationist.



Identify as Conservationist




Across the West, voters who are hunters or anglers are more prevalent in Montana and Wyoming. Sub-groups who are more likely to be sportsmen include Native Americans (61 percent), rural residents (49 percent), men (48 percent), conservatives (46 percent), Republicans (45 percent) and small town voters (44 percent).




Overall for West

37% Total Hunter/Angler



27% Hunter



33% Angler



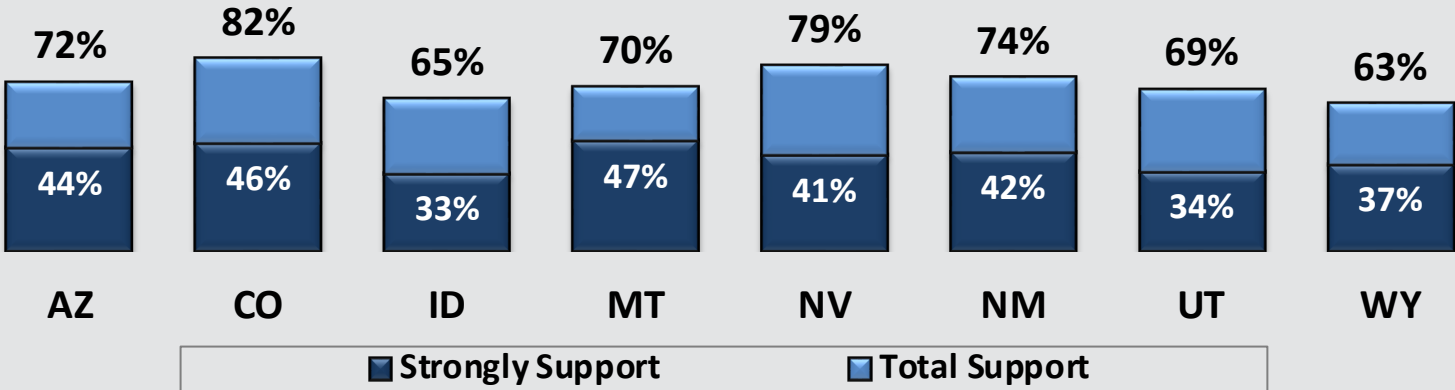
Providing opportunities for hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation is viewed as an important reason to engage in conservation. Almost eight-in-ten (78 percent) say that this goal is an important reason to conserve land, waters and wildlife habitat. Virtually all hunters and anglers deem this conservation goal to be important (97 percent and 92 percent, respectively). More than two-thirds of non-sportsmen (69 percent) also say this is an important goal for a conservation effort.

Even more Westerners say that getting kids into the outdoors is an important conservation goal. There is a nearly universal view that providing “opportunities for children to explore and learn about nature” is an important conservation goal (93 percent say it is important overall), with a majority in every state describing it as “very important.”



Western voters also say that connecting lower income or communities of color to the outdoors is important. Almost three-quarters (74 percent) say it is “very important” (42 percent) or “somewhat important” (32 percent) “to conserve natural areas that connect lower income or communities of color which have historically lacked access to the outdoors.” There is majority agreement across all states that this is an important conservation goal.

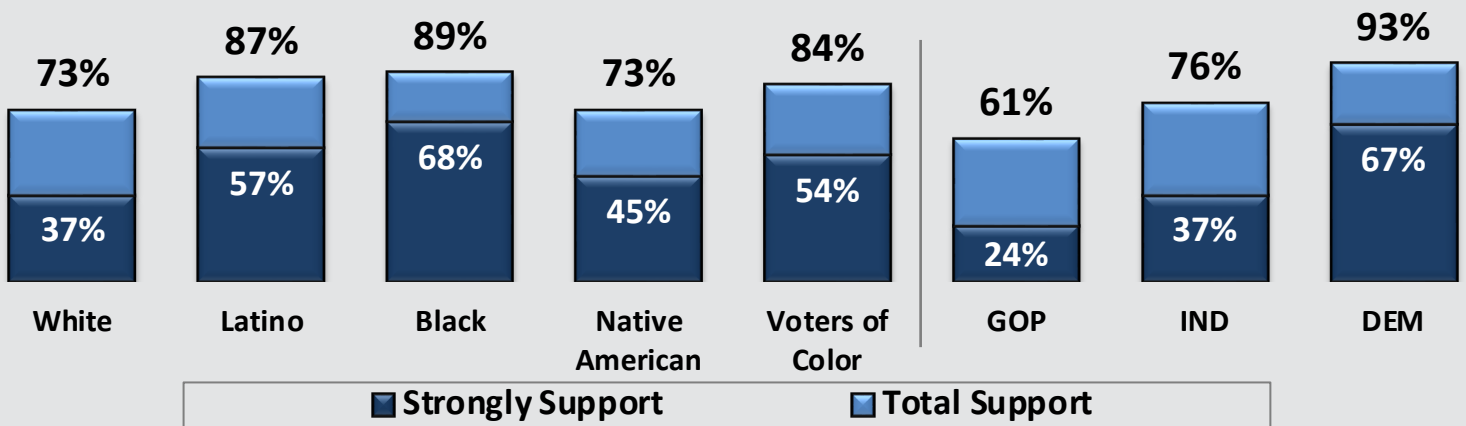
Conserving Natural Areas Connecting Lower Income/Communities of Color



Consistent with their expressed priority, voters continue to overwhelmingly support funding that ensures access to public lands for lower-income people and communities of color. In 2021, 73 percent supported “directing funding to ensure adequate access to parks and natural areas for lower-income people and communities of color that have disproportionately lacked them.” Now, in 2023, that support has increased to more than three quarters (76 percent), with a plurality (41 percent) strongly supporting the funding allocation. Only 22 percent express opposition. A majority in every state and across race, ethnicity, and party lines favor the proposal, with especially strong support among voters of color.

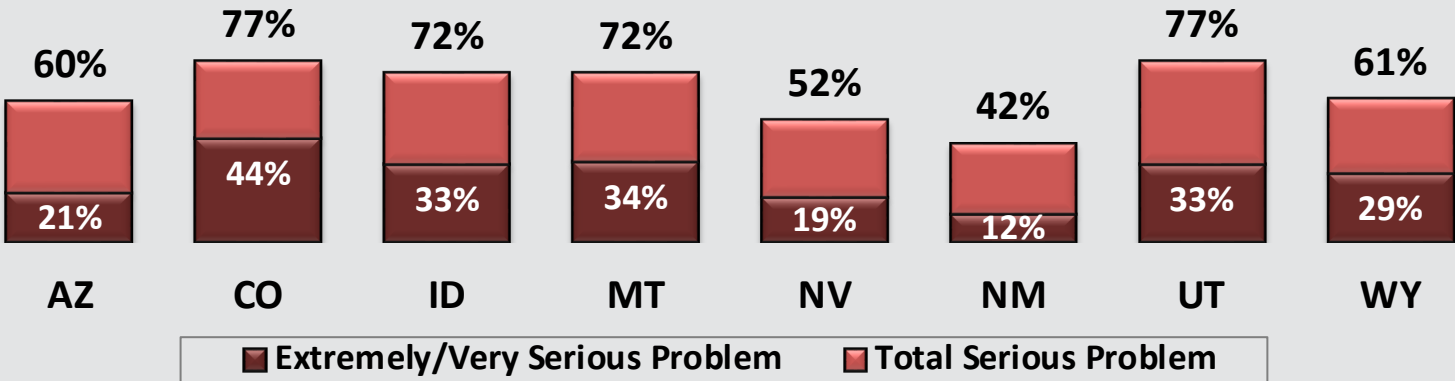


Ensuring Access to Natural Areas for Lower Income/Communities of Color



Crowding at outdoor recreation sites is viewed as a serious problem by nearly two-thirds of Western voters. Fully 65 percent say that “crowding and more people at outdoor recreation sites like trails and parks” is a serious problem. Concern is highest in Colorado and Utah (both 77 percent), followed closely by Idaho and Montana (72 percent).

Crowding at Outdoor Recreation Sites



The population size of an area predicts greater concern about crowding. Concern is higher among residents of big cities (67 percent) and the suburbs (69 percent), than among those who live in small towns (58 percent) or rural areas (60 percent).

