



UTAH

Some of the region's most active outdoor recreationalists, Utah voters want to protect and retain public lands.

On Water

- While Utah voters are not as concerned about their water supply as some of their neighbors in the West, it is still seen as a problem. Seventy-four percent (74%) say “inadequate water supplies” are a serious problem, with one-in-three saying it is an extremely serious or very serious problem.
- Similarly, the condition of rivers and streams in the state is also on their radar as three-quarters regard the “low levels of water in the state's rivers” (76%) as a serious problem, as well as “pollution of the state's lakes and rivers” (75%).
- More than half (54%) of Utah voters agree that the increasing number of extreme weather events such as wildfires and droughts is the result of climate change.

Connection to Conservation:

- Two-thirds (60%) of Utah voters say they are conservationists. Majorities of Republicans, Independents, and Democrats all share this self-description.
- Voters in Utah are some of the most active in the outdoors – the most apt to hike regularly of any state (66% - and the same number are regular campers). Fully 91% engage in at least one outdoor recreation activity on a regular basis, and half (50%) engage in three or more activities in the outdoors regularly.
- Forty-four percent (44%) of Utah voters are hunters or anglers.
- The vast majority (81%) of voters in the state intend to visit a national park sometime in 2013.
- Utah voters spend a lot of time enjoying the natural beauty of their state, but they still worry that children in the state do NOT spend enough time outdoors. Fully 82% of voters in the state view children not spending enough time outside as a serious problem.

On Public Lands:

- Voters in Utah are avid supporters of public lands, with 74% believing public lands in the state support the economy, provide recreation opportunities and enhance quality of life, rather than being a fiscal burden and preventing creation of jobs in traditional industries.
- By a nearly unanimous margin (96% agree/3% disagree), Utah voters say that public lands are an essential part of the state's economy.
- Utahans also see public lands as a job creator in the state, with 77% of voters agreeing that national parks, forests, monuments, and wildlife areas help attract high quality employers and good jobs to Utah.
- A majority of Utah voters oppose selling some federal public lands as a way to reduce the nation's budget deficit (37% support/57% oppose).
- Support for selling off public lands is further diminished when voters are presented with arguments on both sides of the issue. After hearing a simulation of the debate on this issue, just 26% of Utah voters support selling some public lands, while 67% oppose it.

On Energy Development:

- Voters in Utah want their state to encourage the use of renewable energy in the state, as well as use of natural gas. When asked for the two energy sources they want to see encouraged, 47% prefer wind power followed by solar power (39%), and natural gas (39%).
- Conversely, they would discourage the use of nuclear (37%) and coal (24%).
- By a strong consensus (62%), voters say environmentally sensitive places on public lands should be permanently protected from drilling.

On the Politics of Conservation:

- Conservation is a winning issue that crosses party lines in Utah. Forty seven percent (47%) of voters would view a Republican elected official who spoke out in support of protecting public lands more favorably. The same number (47%) would view a Democratic elected official more favorably if they spoke in support of public lands.
- That said, most in the state acknowledge this is not an issue to which they are paying close attention. One-half (51%) of voters in Utah are not sure of the position their Member of Congress has taken on protecting land, air, and water.

