

Jobs and Conservation

Western voters view a good economy and environmental protections as compatible; perceive public lands as “essential” to their state’s economy.



We can protect land and water and have a strong economy with good jobs at the same time, without having to choose one over the other.

Sometimes protections from land and water and a strong economy are in conflict and we must choose one over the other.

Voters in six Western states overwhelmingly side with the view that we can protect land and water and have a strong economy at the same time, without having to choose one over the other (78%), rather than believing these two goals are sometimes in conflict and we must choose one over the other (19%). The response from Western voters is consistent with the 2011 survey when 74% said the economy and environmental protections are compatible, and 24% thought we need to choose one over the other.

This strong rejection of pitting the economy against the environment is evident in every state and across the political spectrum.

GOP	INDEPENDENT	DEMOCRAT	TEA PARTY	NOT TEA PARTY
76%	75%	84%	74%	80%
21%	21%	14%	23%	17%

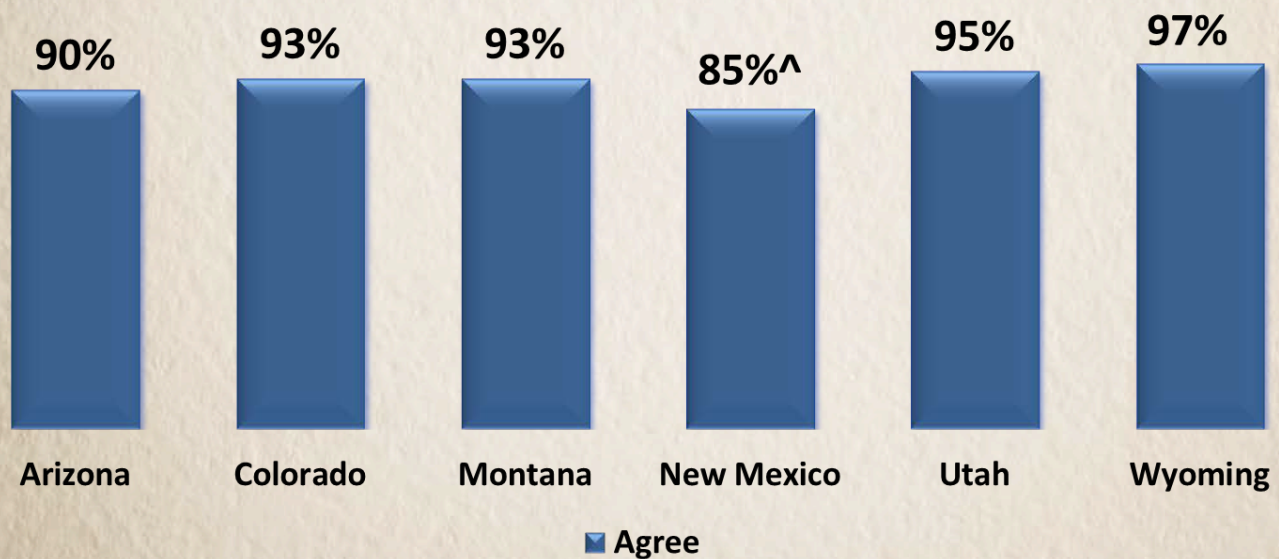
In fact, when asked whether environmental regulations have a positive or negative impact on jobs in their state, voters are more likely to say they have a positive impact (47%) rather than a negative impact (30%). Another 18% believe they have no impact on jobs. This dynamic is evident in every single state.

Voters also view the presence of public lands in their state as a job creator. There is nearly unanimous agreement that “national parks, forests, monuments, and wildlife areas are an essential part” of their state’s economy. More than 85% of voters in every state agree with the importance of public lands to their economy.



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Agreement that Public Lands Essential to their State’s Economy



This agreement with the importance of public lands to their state's economy is shared across virtually every sub-group examined in the survey. That includes such diverse groups as:

SUB-GROUP	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL AGREE
Latino	65%	91%
White/Anglo	68%	92%
City	65%	88%
Rural	66%	93%
Tea Party Supporter	60%	89%
Occupy Wall St.	80%	92%

Voters clearly do not like the idea of commercial activities on public lands affecting their access to or experience on public lands. Fully 69% agree that “We should not allow private companies to develop our public lands when their doing so would limit the public's enjoyment of - or access to - these lands” (44% strongly agree). More than three-in-five in every state agree with this statement.

That said, when commercial activities are defined as accessing natural resources, voters are conflicted. Less than half (47%) agree that “we need to allow companies greater access to our natural resources, by ensuring them the ability to extract resources from our public lands,” while a nearly equal number (50%) disagree.

69% agree that “We should not allow private companies to develop our public lands when their doing so would limit the public's enjoyment of - or access to - these lands”

For the complete 2012 Conservation in the West Poll findings and more information visit: www.stateoftherockies.com.

To contact the Survey Firms: Lori Weigel/Public Opinion Strategies: lori@pos.org
 Dave Metz/Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Assoc.: dave@fm3research.com

For information about The State of the Rockies Project and Colorado College contact: Leslie.Weddell@ColoradoCollege.edu