

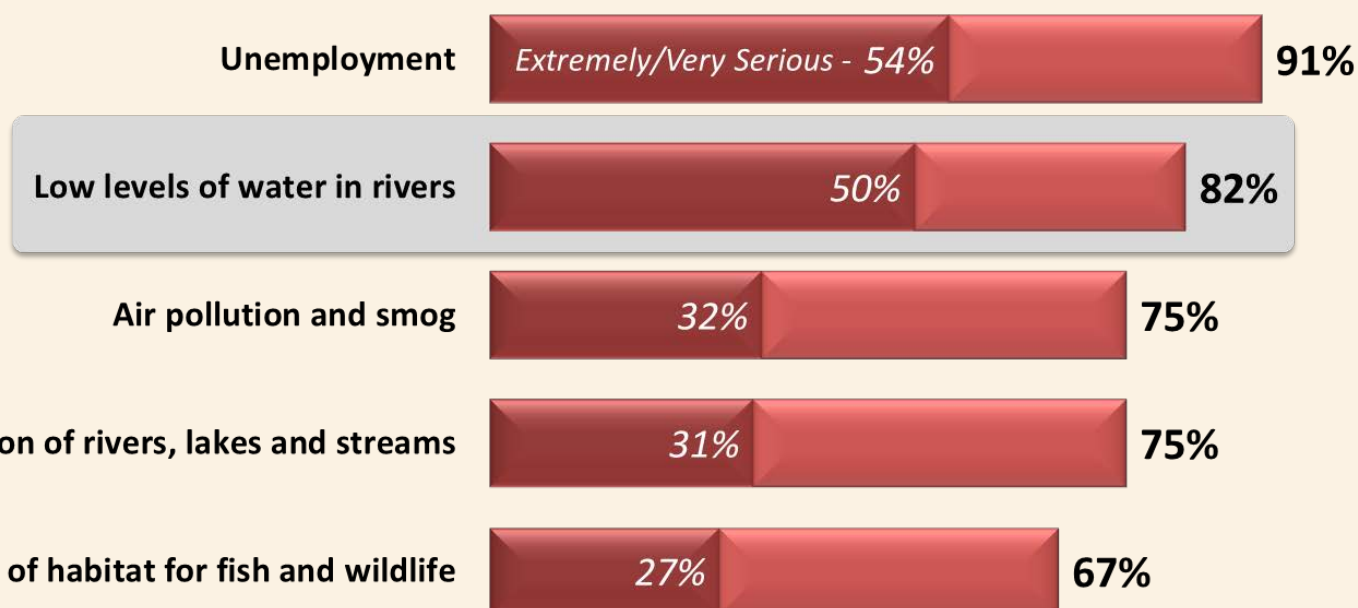
# Water

*"A man from the West will fight over three things: water, women and gold, and usually in that order." - Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona*

**The low level of water in rivers is seen as a serious problem in this region, second only to the economy as a problem.**

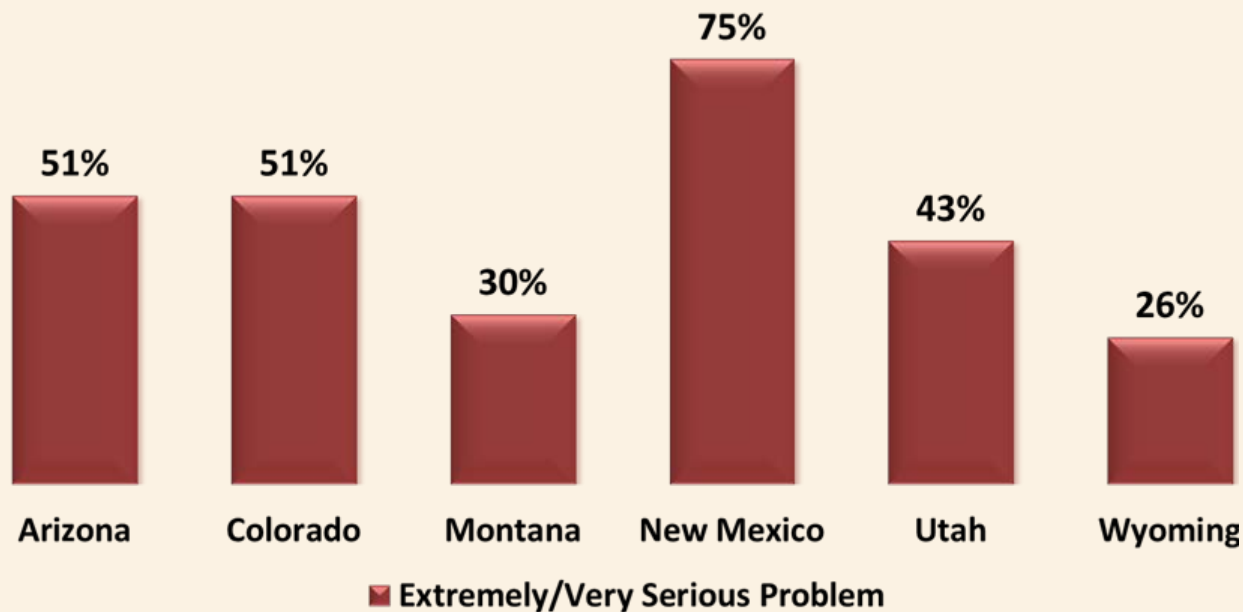
Overall, the low level of water in rivers is viewed as a major problem, second only to "unemployment" which tends to be the most dominant economic concern for voters. More than four-in-five in the region categorize the low level of water in rivers as a serious (82%) problem, with half (50%) saying it is extremely or very serious.

## Issues Ranked By Extremely/Very Serious Problem



However, there are some clear differences by state, with New Mexicans expressing the strongest concern about rivers of any state in the region.

### Low Levels of Water in Rivers By State



*Voters in three key states in the region reject diversions of river water to more populated areas, instead preferring to focus resources and energy on conservation and recycling of water.*

When it comes to addressing water shortage situations, more than three-quarters of voters in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming, express a preference for state water officials to invest time and resources in finding ways to use the current water supply more wisely, rather than diverting more water from rivers in less populated areas of the state.

Using our current water supply more wisely, by encouraging more water conservation, reducing use, and increasing recycling of water

<u>Colorado</u>	<u>Utah</u>	<u>Wyoming</u>
78%	76%	75%

Diverting more water from rivers in less populated areas of the state to communities where more people live

14%	12%	13%
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The rejection of diversion is strongly held across all three states and in every type of community in those states, with even urban voters who are most likely to benefit preferring conservation and other means (74%). Moreover, this issue stands out for having very little partisan dynamic – 74% of Republicans, 75% of Independents and 86% of Democrats in these states prefer conservation.

We have seen from other research in the West that voters tend to think diversions are, expensive, harmful to wildlife and even the economies of rural areas, and are perceived as more of a band-aid solution rather than a long-term fix.

Water is clearly not an issue that is going away. That said, voters in three of these Western states are very clear in directing their officials away from river diversions as a way to solve water woes.

