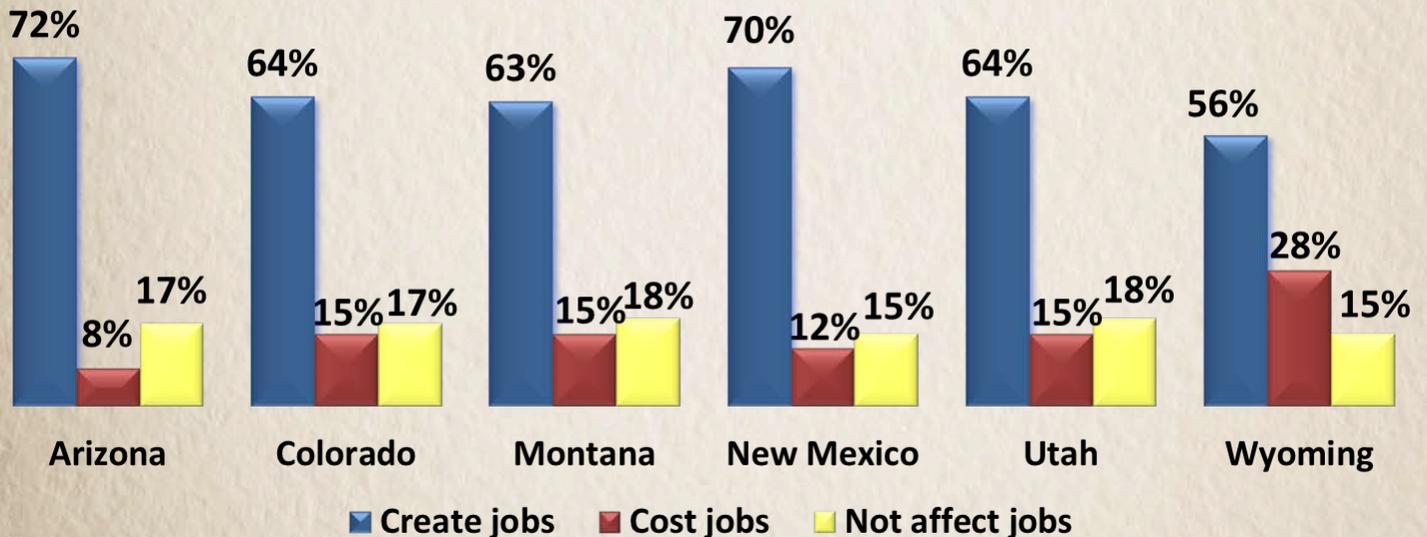


Energy

Western voters view renewable energy as a job creator; would opt to encourage more wind and solar broadly, and specifically in two key states.

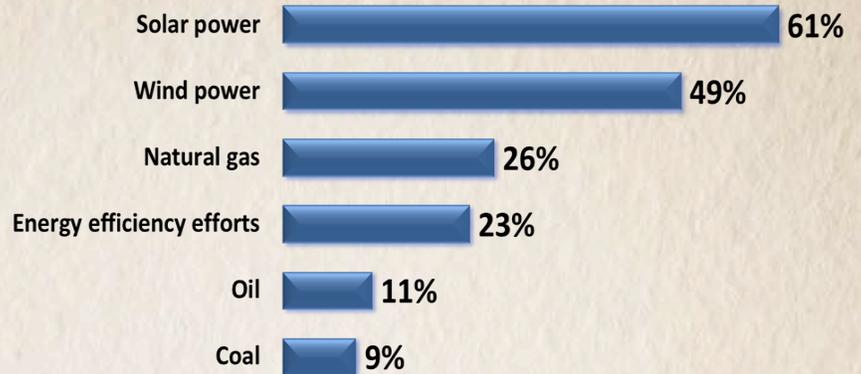
There is a strong view among voters in these Western states that renewable energy is a job creator. Fully 68% say that increasing the use of renewable energy in their state will create jobs, while just 13% think it will cost their state jobs and another 16% do not think it will have an impact on jobs. A majority of voters in every state – including states with traditional energy sectors like Wyoming and Montana – believe renewable energy is a boost for the job situation in their state:

Increasing the Use of Renewable Energy's Impact on Jobs in State



Notably, this view of renewable energy as a job creator has not changed in the last year, when 67% said renewable energy is more likely to create jobs in their state (January 2011).

When offered the opportunity to choose the energy mix for their state, Western voters say they would primarily encourage the use wind and solar. Respondents were asked to select among six options for the two types of energy they would encourage in their state. As the graph indicates, voters tend to gravitate toward solar followed by wind and then natural gas:

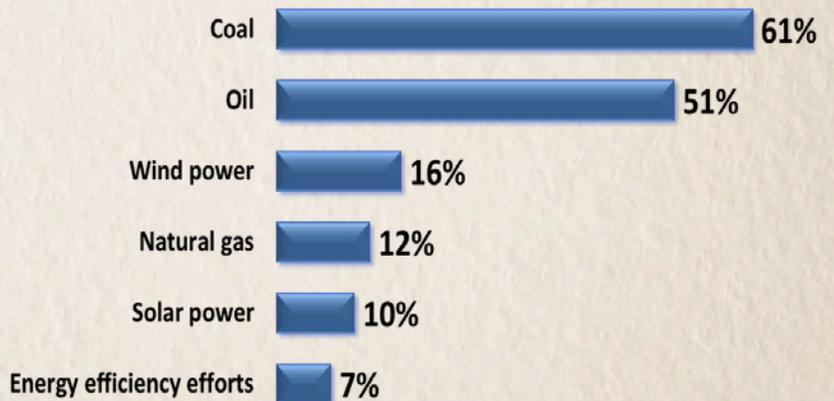


Combination of Respondents' Top Two Choices

There are distinctions in these preferences as states in the Southwest are much more likely to cite solar as their first preference. For example, 74% of Arizonans and 66% of New Mexico voters choose solar. Conversely, Montana and Utah residents are more likely to point to wind as the energy source they would encourage (55% each).

Conversely, across the region, voters are more apt to discourage the use of coal and oil:

States in the Southwest are much more likely to cite solar as their first preference



Combination of Respondents' Top Two Choices

Specific policies to encourage increasing the use of renewable energy are also supported at the state level.

- Three-quarters (75%) of Montana voters support increasing the renewable energy standard in their state. Fewer than one in five opposes increasing the amount of the “electric supply that comes from clean, renewable energy like wind, solar, and geothermal from the already-achieved standard of ten percent to a standard of twenty-five percent by the year 2025.” The increase in the standard is supported by more than seven-in-ten voters in every region of the state and by a majority of Republicans (55%), Independents (78%) and Democrats (93%) in the state.
- New Mexico voters overwhelmingly support continuing the state’s renewable energy standard of 20 percent from renewable sources by the year 2020. Fully 71% of voters indicate they would tell their State Legislator to maintain the current standard knowing it was put in place to help create clean energy jobs, promote energy independence and provide locally created energy, while 24% would opt to reduce the standard in order to help bring down electricity rates.
- Latino voters are especially likely to side with maintaining the current standard (78%). In fact, majorities of nearly all key sub-groups – including Independents (73%), Republicans (54%) and Democrats (83%) would tell their Legislator to keep the standard in place.

Three-quarters
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Montana
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in
their state



- On the energy efficiency front, a solid majority of Utah voters (76%) supports “requiring developers to meet updated standards to reduce energy waste and reduce home owners’ utility bills, even if it increases the price of brand new homes by somewhere between” \$1,000-\$8,000.

Support is broad-based and widespread throughout the state, including among...

- Men (73% support) and women (78%);
- Voters of all age groups including voters under age 35 (80%);
- Republicans (71%), Independents (76%) and Democrats (87%);
- Anglers (77%) and hunters (73%); and
- More than 75% in every major area of the state.

Voters in these six states do not perceive increasing the use of renewable energy as negatively affecting the reliability of their electric system. Respondents were asked “if we reduce the portion of our state's electricity needs which come from coal-burning power plants and use more solar, wind and other renewable sources over the next few years” did they think this would make the electricity system more reliable (31%), less reliable (21%), or not have much impact (42%). Voters in every state are most likely to believe increasing renewable energy use will have almost no impact on electricity reliability.



Voters in these six states do not perceive increasing the use of renewable energy as negatively affecting the reliability of their electric system

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

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