

NEW MEXICO



State residents demonstrate the most concern in the region about rivers and water supplies; strong affinity to and support for retaining public lands.

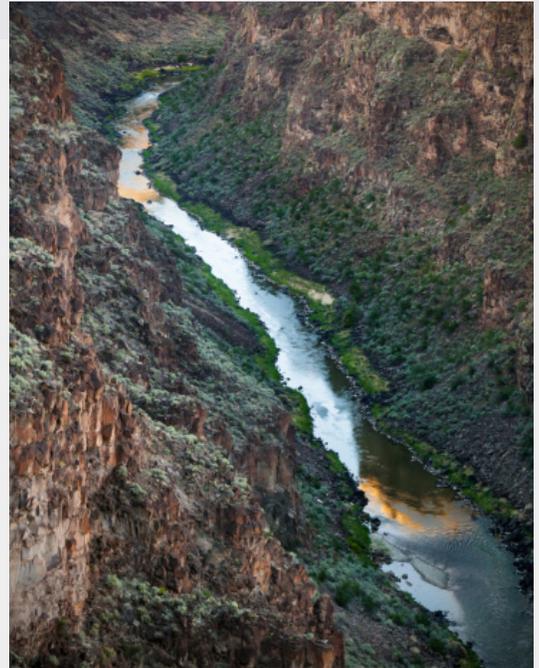


New Mexicans' Connection to Conservation:

- Two-thirds (67%) of New Mexico voters consider themselves conservationists. A majority of voters throughout the state and across party lines hold this view.
- New Mexicans are very active in the outdoors. Half (50%) of New Mexico voters are regular hikers or campers, and more than one-in-three engage in other outdoor activities such as bird watching or boating.
- Forty-one percent (41%) identify themselves as a hunter or angler.
- Two-thirds (67%) plan to visit a national park in the next year.
- Despite their high level of outdoor activity, 87% say children not spending enough time outdoors is a serious problem.

On Water:

- Ninety percent (90%) say inadequate water supplies are a serious problem, with 69% saying it is an extremely serious or very serious problem. These are by far the highest numbers in the six states surveyed.
- The low levels of water in the state's rivers is also seen as a major concern, with 94% saying it is a serious problem, and 83% saying it is an extremely serious or very serious problem. Again, these are the highest percentages recorded across the six states.
- New Mexico voters are also worried about the pollution of lakes, rivers, and streams, with 76% of voters saying it is a serious problem.
- Two-thirds (67%) of New Mexico voters agree that the increasing number of extreme weather events such as wildfires and droughts is the result of climate change.



On Public Lands:



- New Mexico voters are strong supporters of public lands, with 77% 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.
- Voters in the state overwhelmingly agree that public lands are an essential part of the state's economy (84% agree/13% disagree).
- Public lands are seen as a job creator in the state, with 69% of voters agreeing that national parks, forests, monuments, and wildlife areas help attract high quality employers and good jobs to New Mexico.
- There is minimal support for selling off federal public lands as a way to reduce the nation's budget deficit (29% support/62% oppose).
- Support for selling off public lands actually diminishes when voters are presented with arguments on both sides of the issue. After hearing both arguments, just 24% support selling off public lands, while 69% oppose it.

On Energy Development:

- Voters in New Mexico continue to want the state to develop solar power (56% say it is one of the two energy sources they would encourage) and wind power (43% would encourage) in the state. Natural gas is their third most preferred energy source (31% would encourage).
- Just 37% can confidently say that oil and gas drilling is taking place on some public lands. More than half (52%) say they have not heard enough or don't know.
- A majority (52%) say environmentally sensitive places on public lands should be permanently protected from drilling.



On the Politics of Conservation:

- A majority of voters in New Mexico are not sure on the position their Member of Congress has taken on protecting land, air, and water.
- Conservation is a winning issue with New Mexico Independents. Among this key group, 67% would view a Democratic elected official more favorably if they spoke out in support of protecting public lands. The issue would also help Republican elected officials with Independents, as 58% of Independent voters would view a Republican more favorably if they supported protecting public lands.