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New Poll: Sportsmen View Wildlife Areas as “Essential” to the Economy, Want to Limit Private Development on Public Lands

Two out of Three Support Maintaining Protections for Land, Air, and Water

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO – Results released today from the [2012 Colorado College State of the Rockies Conservation in the West poll](#) find that western voters who identify as sportsmen view America’s public lands as critical to their state’s economy and quality of life, and support upholding protections for clean air, clean water, natural areas and wildlife.

The survey, completed in Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Utah and Wyoming by Lori Weigel of Public Opinion Strategies (a Republican firm) and Dave Metz of Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (a Democratic firm), found that **92 percent of sportsmen – the majority of whom identify as politically conservative or moderate -- believe that national parks, forests, monuments and wildlife areas are an “essential part” of the economies of these states.** Nearly two-thirds of sportsmen polled also opposed allowing private companies to develop public lands when it would limit the public’s enjoyment of – or access to – these lands, and the same percentage believe in maintaining current conservation measures for land, air and water.

“Investments in conservation of our public lands and water are not only critical to providing quality hunting and fishing opportunities, but also a critical component of the \$192 billions sportsmen contribute to our national economy annually,” said Gaspar Perricone, co-director of the Bull Moose Sportsmen’s Alliance. “Sportsmen and women continue to value a stubborn stewardship of our natural places and the recreational opportunities those places provide.”

More than two out of every three sportsmen view loss of habitat for fish and wildlife as a serious threat to a quality outdoor experience. Further, 75 percent of sportsmen polled indicated that cuts in funding for parks, habitat and water quality pose a serious threat to their hunting heritage and western lifestyle.

Both sportsmen and members of the general public agreed that even with tight state budgets, the government should maintain investments in land, parks, water and wildlife conservation. These results bolster the findings of [a major report](#) commissioned by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation late last year, which measures the significant economic impacts associated



with outdoor recreation and makes the case that conservation programs are a common sense investment.

“Conservation efforts amount to only about 1 percent of federal spending but in return sustain fish and wildlife and their habitats, enable our outdoor traditions and safeguard the nearly 6 million jobs supported by outdoor recreation,” said Whit Fosburgh, president and CEO of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership. “The general public, including sportsmen, supports our continued investment in conservation, and we will continue to work with our leaders in Washington, D.C., to uphold these critical policies that facilitate the responsible use and enjoyment of our public lands.”

The poll surveyed 1,100 registered voters in six key western states (AZ, CO, NM, UT, WY, MT) who identified as sportsmen from January 2 through 5 and 7, 2012, and yields a margin of error of + 2.95 percent.

The full survey and individual state surveys are available [on the Colorado College website](#).

To speak to sportsmen for comment on the poll, please contact Emily Rosenwasser at erosenwasser@mrss.com / (w) 202-478-6151 (c) 720-308-6055.

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About Colorado College

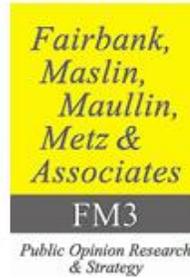
Colorado College is a nationally prominent, four-year liberal arts college that was founded in Colorado Springs in 1874. The college operates on the innovative Block Plan, in which its 2,000 undergraduate students study one course at a time in intensive 3½-week segments. For the past nine years, the college also has run the [State of the Rockies Project](#), which seeks to increase public understanding of vital issues affecting the Rockies through annual report cards, free events, discussions and other activities.

About Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates

[Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates](#) (FM3) – a national Democratic opinion research firm with offices in Oakland, Los Angeles and Madison, Wisconsin – has specialized in public policy oriented opinion research since 1981. The firm has assisted hundreds of political campaigns at every level of the ballot – from President to City Council – with opinion research and strategic guidance. FM3 also provides research and strategic consulting to public agencies, businesses and public interest organizations nationwide.

About Public Opinion Strategies

[Public Opinion Strategies](#) is the largest Republican polling firm in the country. Since the firm’s founding in 1991, they have completed more than 10,000 research projects, interviewing more than five million Americans across the United States. Public Opinion Strategies’ research is well respected, and prestigious media outlets such as *The Wall Street Journal*, NBC News, CNBC, and National Public Radio rely on Public Opinion Strategies to conduct their polling. The firm



conducts polling on behalf of hundreds of political campaigns, as well as trade associations, not-for-profit organizations, government entities and industry coalitions throughout the nation.

About the Polling Partnership of FM3 and Public Opinion Strategies

FM3 and Public Opinion Strategies have conducted bipartisan research on a wide range of issues over the last several years, including energy, land use, health care and transportation. Together, the two firms have jointly conducted research on behalf of political campaigns, businesses, not-for-profit organizations and public agencies in 38 states and nationally. In these six states, the two firms have conducted 650,000 interviews among voters and consumers.