

Colorado

A survey of Colorado voters regarding conservation demonstrates a strong conservation ethic and support for continuing to fund conservation and maintain protections.

Like their fellow Westerners, Colorado voters overwhelmingly identify as conservationists (67%) – a label that bridges partisan and ethnic lines as well as many other factors in the state.



Sub-group	Identify as Conservationist
Latino	64%
White/Anglo	68%
City	68%
Suburban	67%
Rural	67%
Tea Party Supporter	67%
Occupy Wall St.	81%
GOP	62%
Independent	65%
Democrat	73%
Hunter	66%
Angler	75%
Not Sportsmen	67%

Colorado voters prioritize conservation goals throughout the survey, in regard to energy, regulation, and public lands. Among the select findings from the survey:

On Jobs:

- 78% say that we can protect land and water and have a strong economy at the same time.
- 93% agree that “Our national parks, forests, monuments, and wildlife areas are an essential part of Colorado’s economy.”
- When asked whether environmental regulations have a positive or negative impact on jobs in their state, Colorado voters are more likely to say they have a positive impact (44%) rather than a negative impact (29%).

On Energy:

- 64% say increasing the use of renewable energy will create jobs in Colorado.
- State voters are more apt to say they would encourage the use of solar power (55%) and wind power (46%) than other sources of energy (responses are top two mentions combined).
- A plurality of 45% say that increasing the use of renewable energy would not have an impact on the reliability of the electricity system in the state.

On Regulation:

- 63% of Centennial state voters are more likely to view environmental laws more as “important safeguards to protect private property owners, public health and taxpayers from toxic pollution and costly clean-ups” than to view them as “burdensome regulations that tie up industry in red tape, hurt them too much financially, and cost jobs” (29%).
- 75% say that Colorado should maintain protections for land, air and water in the state rather than reduce them in an effort to create jobs as quickly as possible.
- Only 34% agree that “One of the best ways to create jobs is to cut back environmental regulations that are weighing down Colorado’s businesses.”
- 71% support the EPA “continuing to implement the Clean Air Act by updating the standards for air quality, including for smog, dust, and emissions from power plants, factories and cars,” with a majority (54%) strongly in support.

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On Prioritizing Conservation:

- 86% say that “Even with state budget problems, we should still find money to protect and maintain Colorado’s land, water and wildlife;” 82% say the same about state parks.
- Two-thirds (66%) of Colorado voters support designating some of the public lands in the Arkansas River Canyon in Colorado as a National Monument (respondents were told that National Monuments have “protections for natural areas and water similar to those in national parks. The public can recreate or view unique natural, cultural, and historic sites, and the lands are protected from development and resource extraction.”)
- 76% would prefer to continue to have Lottery funds distributed to protect natural areas and to school construction, rather than redirecting all that funding to the state education budget and eliminating this source of funding for conservation (15%).

76% would prefer to continue to have Lottery funds distributed to protect natural areas

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

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