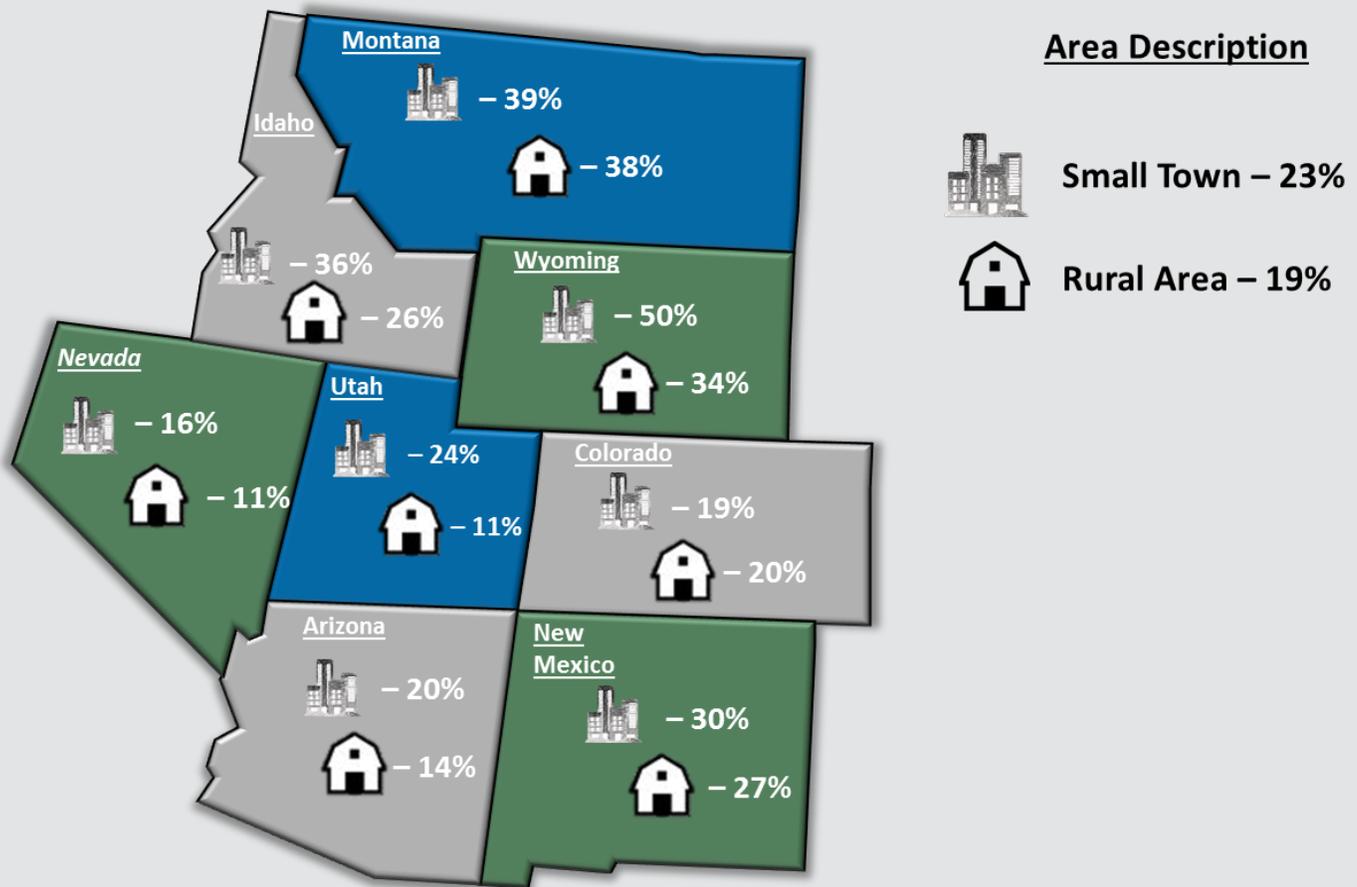


Rural voters

A majority in half of these Western states say they live in a rural area or small town.

Most voters in Wyoming (84%), Montana, (77%), Idaho (62%) and New Mexico (57%) report living in a small town or rural area. Even in the more populous states in the West, a significant number of voters live in small towns or rural areas.



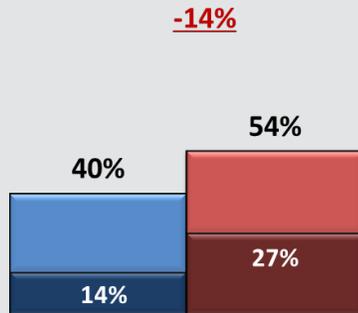
Many voters who now live in metro areas still have a connection to small towns and rural areas, with 68% of voters living in a city or suburb indicating that they once lived in a small town or rural area. A mere 18% of Westerners have no experience living in a less populous community.

Far more Westerners feel they share the values of small town and rural residents than urban ones.

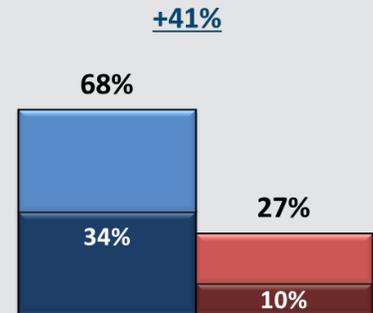
Sixty-eight percent (68%) of voters in the West say people who live in rural areas and small towns have values similar to their own, compared to just 40% who say people who live in big cities share their values.

Not surprisingly, the gap is especially pronounced in more rural states, such as Wyoming (20% similar values big cities/84% similar values rural areas) and Montana (28% big cities/80% rural areas).

Values Shared with Big City Residents

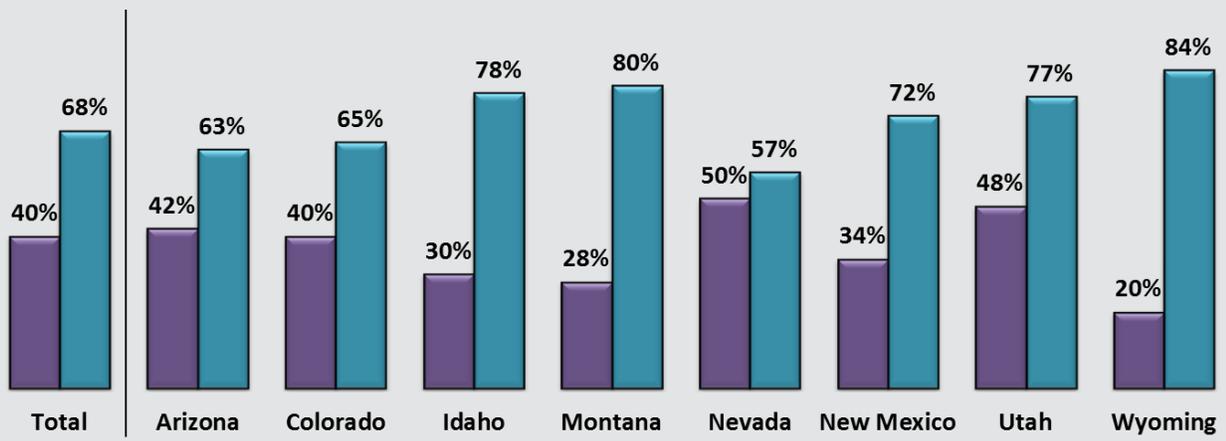


Values Shared with Rural/Small Town Residents



Very Similar Total Similar Very Different Total Different

Values Shared with City v. Rural Residents – By State



Similar values shared with big city residents Similar values shared with rural/small town residents

Voters who live in urban or suburban areas but once lived in a small town or rural area still feel a connection to less populous areas, with 67% saying they identify with the values of small town or rural residents. In comparison, fewer than half (49%) of these voters identify with the values of big city residents.

Majorities of rural voters side with pro-conservation policies and consider themselves to be a conservationist.

Three-quarters (75%) of rural voters identify as a conservationist, on par with Western voters overall (76%). However, they are far more likely to call themselves an outdoor recreation enthusiast (80%), compared to those in cities (68%) or suburban areas (71%).

More than half of rural voters support pro-conservation policies such as opposing allowing mining on public lands adjoining Grand Canyon National Park (64% oppose). Three-in-five also say it is a bad idea to reduce the size of Utah National Monuments (60% bad idea). While they are slightly less enthusiastic than Western voters overall, a majority of rural residents still side with the pro-conservation position.

	Total	Rural Voters
Oppose allowing mining on public lands by Grand Canyon	70%	64%
Choose solar or wind as representing future of energy in their state	67%	58%
Say bad idea to reduce size of Utah National monuments	66%	60%
Keep current sage grouse plans in place, rather than change	64%	56%
Oppose expanding how much public land is available for drilling	59%	52%

Moreover, rural residents view the presence of public lands and outdoor recreation as an advantage for their state (84% an advantage, 52% a “big advantage”). Similarly, 68% of rural residents in the West say that the outdoor recreation economy is very important to the economic future of their state and the region. Fully 95% of rural residents say it is at least somewhat important to their state’s economic future.

Rural voters are some of the most concerned about water quality and supplies.

A majority of rural residents (54%) say that inadequate water supplies are an extremely or very serious problem in their state, higher than Western voters overall (50%). Just under half (49%) of rural voters say the same about low level of water in rivers, and just slightly fewer (45%) also say pollution of rivers, lakes and streams is an extremely or very serious problem. Notably, rural voters in the West are just as likely as those in cities or suburban areas to view “rollbacks of laws that protect our land, water and wildlife” as an extremely or very serious problem (40%).

