

Crown of the Continent and Greater Yellowstone Initiative



*Data from a statewide survey of 500 registered voters in
Montana, conducted June 17–19, 2014.*



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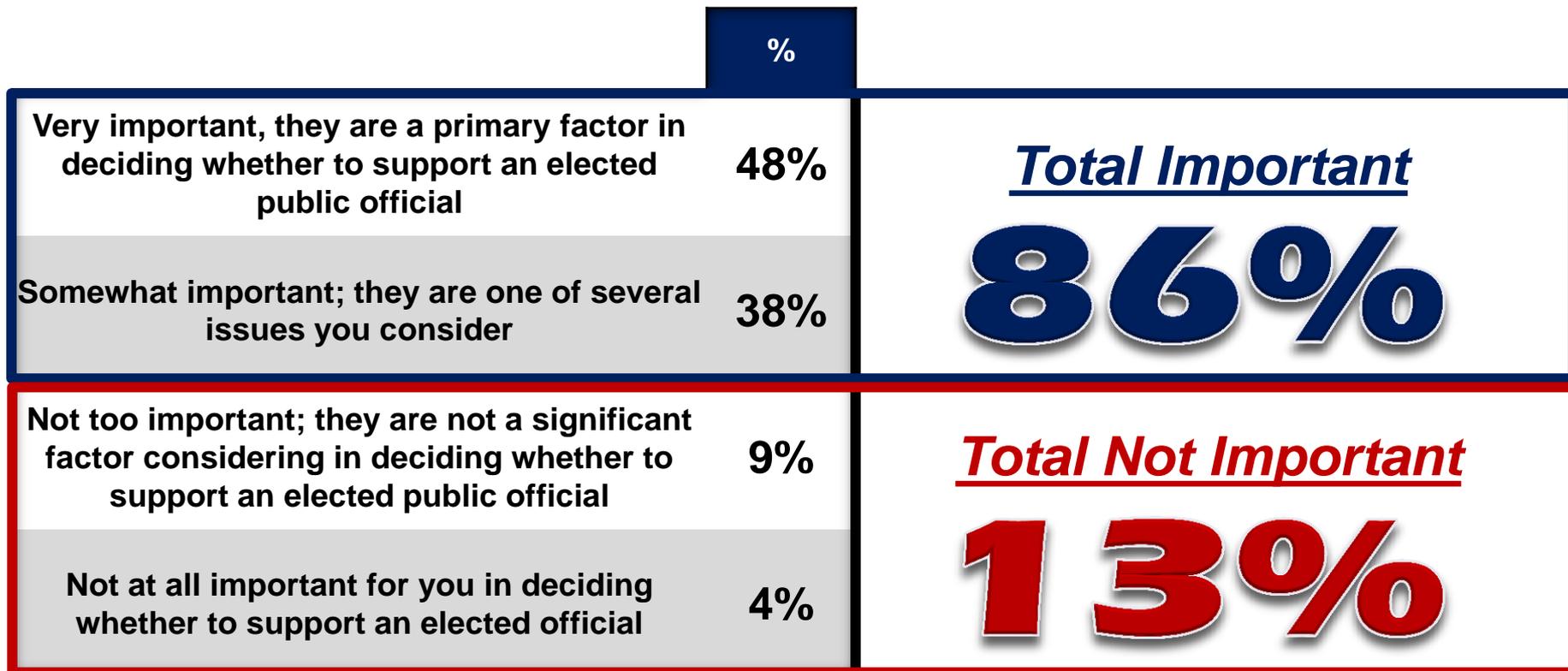
DAVE METZ

METHODOLOGY

- **Statistically valid telephone survey conducted statewide on both landline and cell phones**
- **The survey was completed June 17-19, 2014**
- **500 registered voters, which has an overall margin of error of $\pm 4.38\%$ at the 95% confidence level**
- **Bi-partisan team of Public Opinion Strategies and FM3**

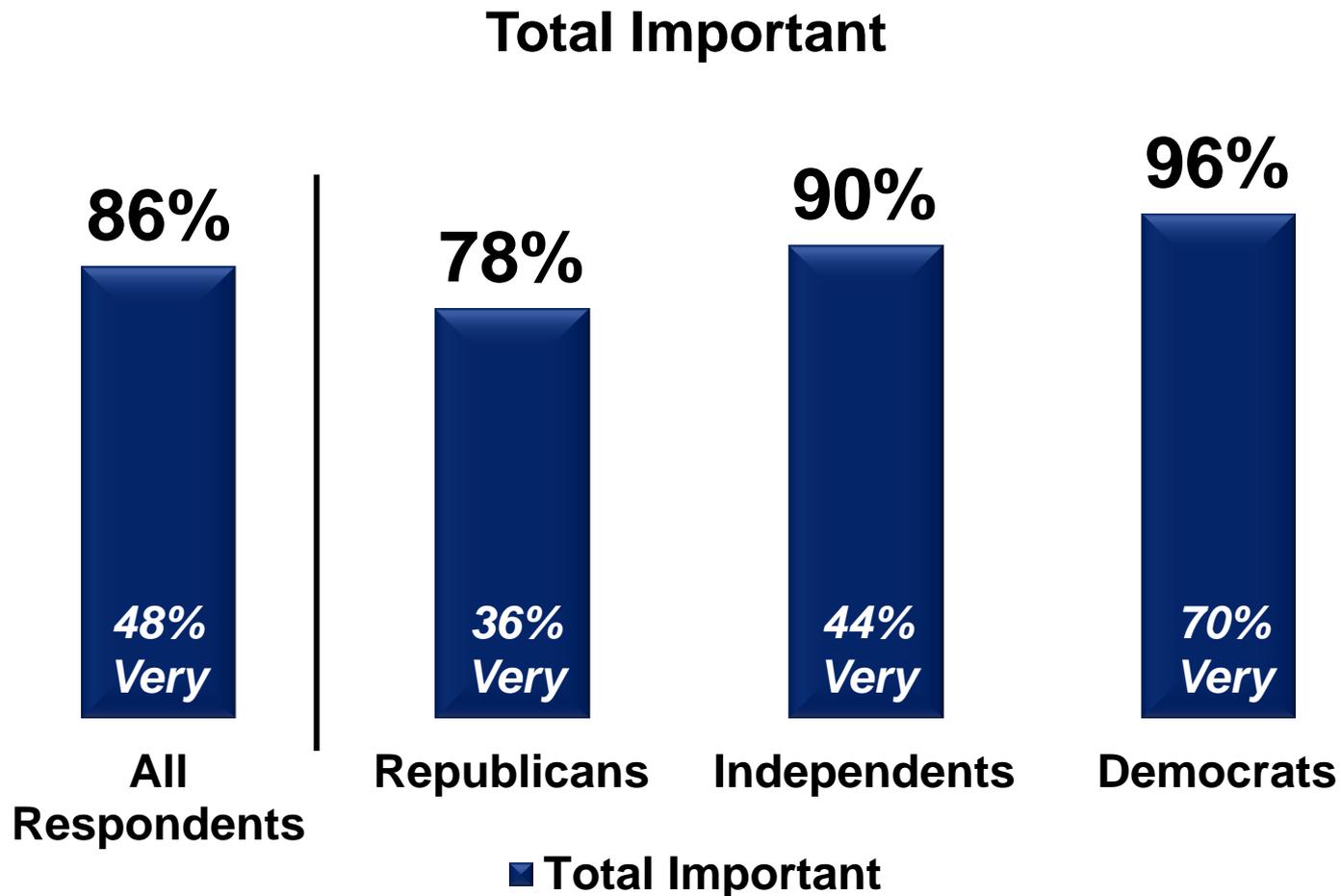
Entering this election season, Montana voters say that conservation issues are a primary factor in gaining their support.

“Compared to other issues like the economy, health care and education, how important are issues involving clean water, clean air, open spaces and public lands for you in deciding whether to support an elected public official? Are they...”



More than three-quarters of voters across the partisan spectrum say conservation will play a role.

“Compared to other issues like the economy, health care and education, how important are issues involving clean water, clean air, open spaces and public lands for you in deciding whether to support an elected public official? Are they...”



Voters also express solid support for pro-conservation policies and awareness of the Crown of the Continent.

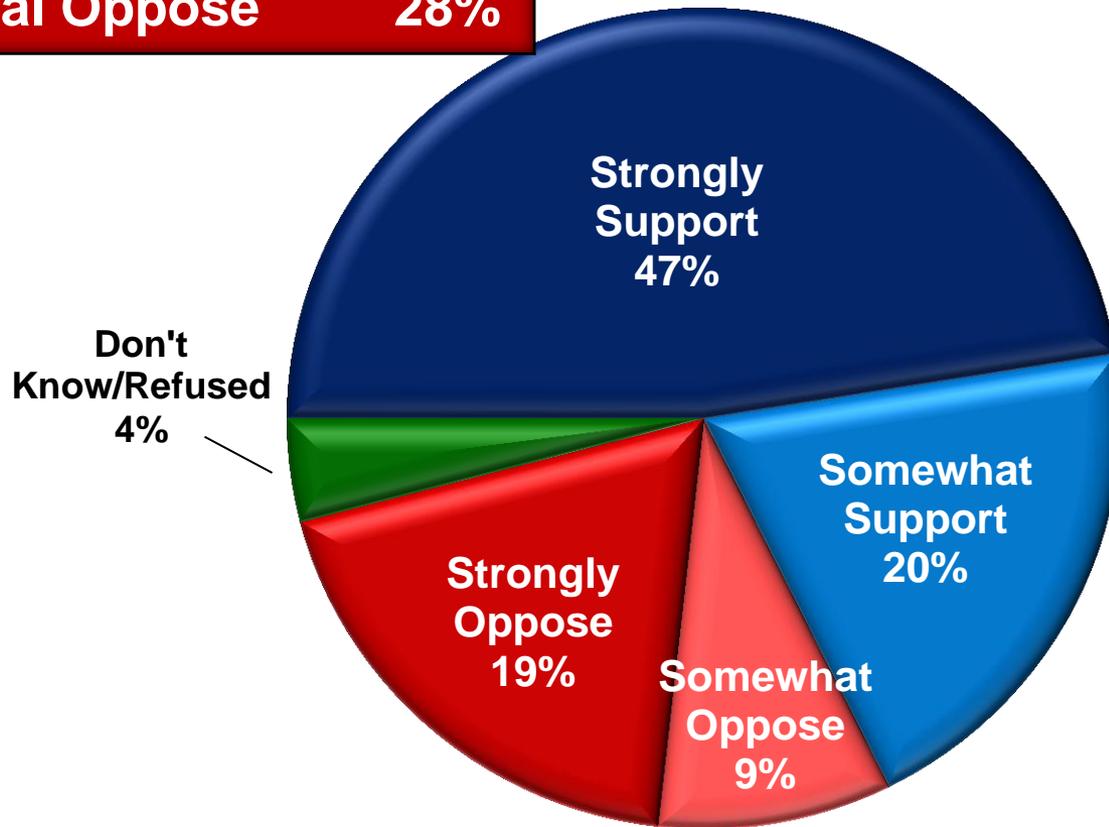
Support for policies extend across regional and partisan lines.



Two-thirds – including majorities of all partisan sub-groups – support the North Fork legislation.

The North Fork Flathead Watershed Protection Act prohibits new mining and oil and gas leases on public lands from Flathead Lake and bordering Glacier Park to protect water quality.”

Total Support	67%
Total Oppose	28%

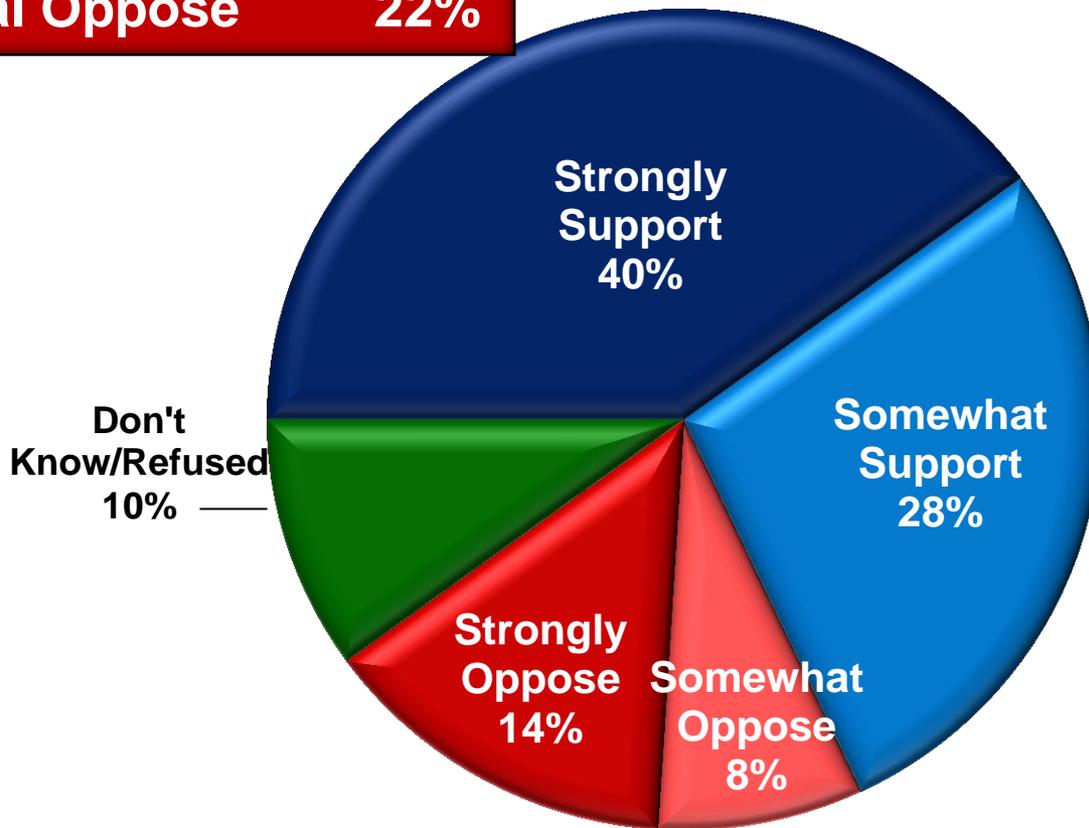


Total Support By Party	
	- 53%
	- 67%
	- 89%

There is similarly solid support for the Rocky Mountain Front Act.

“The Rocky Mountain Front Heritage Act protects existing uses and access, and fights invasive weeds in the Lewis and Clark National Forest, while adding acreage to the Bob Marshall and Scapegoat wilderness areas.”

Total Support	68%
Total Oppose	22%



Total Support By Party	
	- 53%
	- 68%
	- 91%

Part of the support for these proposals may be rooted in Montanans' familiarity with the Crown area.

“Now, the last two proposals you just heard about affect an area of the state that some people refer to as the Crown of the Continent – the area in northwestern Montana’s Rocky Mountains that includes Glacier National Park and the Bob Marshall Wilderness area. How familiar would you say you are with the Crown of the Continent?”

Total Familiar
78%

Top Sub-Groups	% Very Familiar
Missoula Media Market	47%
Anglers Only	46%
Conservative Independents	44%
West/Central Men	43%
Independent Men	43%
Moderate/Liberal Republicans	41%
Both Hunters and Anglers	41%
Town Men	40%
Men Ages 18-49	40%
Rural Men	39%
Independents	39%
Men	39%
All Respondents	33%

On the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, most Montanans consider it to have been a good thing for the state.

“50 years ago Congress passed the Wilderness Act, which protected the Bob Marshall or the Beartooths here in Montana. These areas were designated by Congress as wilderness in order to keep that land conserved in its natural state. Wilderness lands can be used for hiking, camping, livestock grazing, horseback riding, wildlife watching, hunting and fishing. However, mining, oil and gas development, logging, and the use of motorized or off-road vehicles, and mountain biking are not allowed on wilderness lands.

Generally, would you say protecting some public lands in Montana has been more of a good thing or more of a bad thing for the state?”

Good Thing

78%

Bad Thing

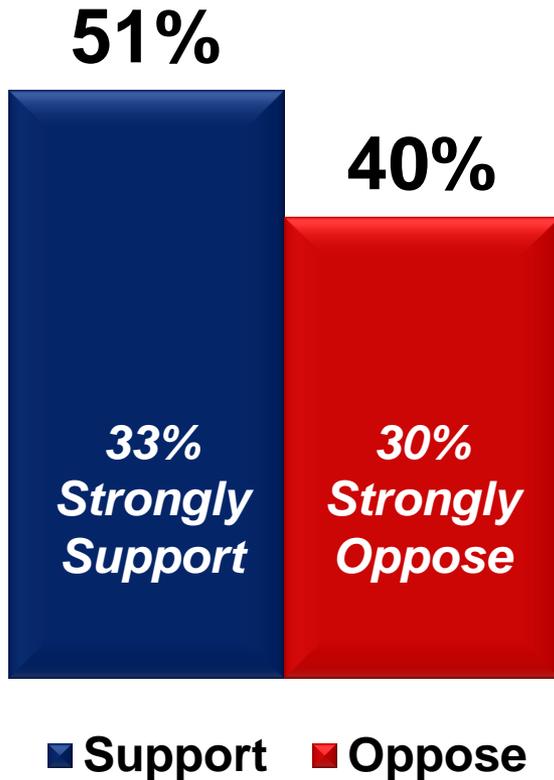
15%

This is true across the state and in every type of community.

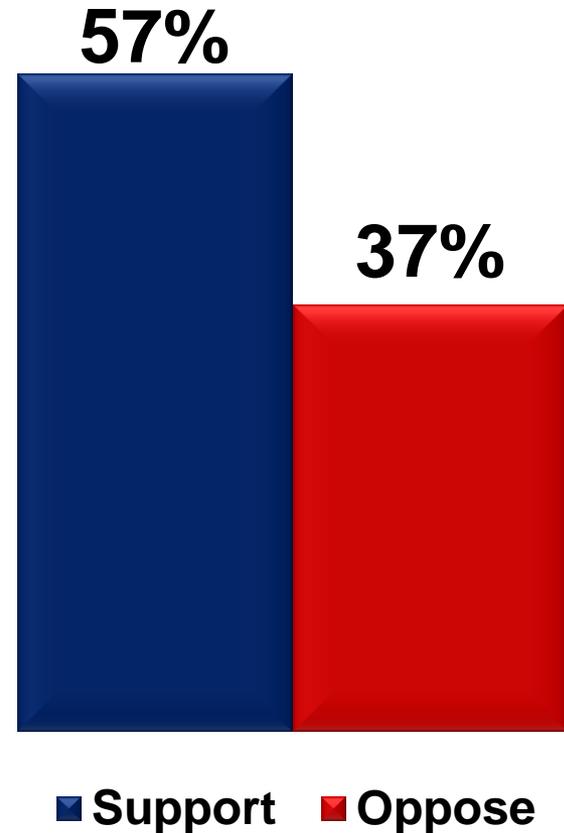
	Good Thing	Bad Thing
East/Central Media Markets	77%	16%
West Media Markets	79%	14%
City/Suburb	82%	10%
Town	75%	16%
Rural	77%	18%

Support for designating more public lands as wilderness is significant after hearing only 3% are today.

“Would you support or oppose dedicating additional, existing public lands as wilderness areas here in Montana?”

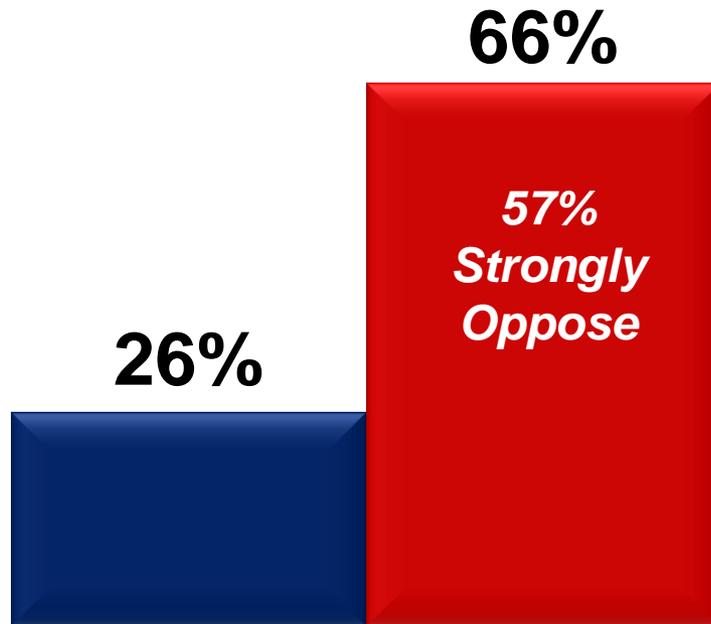


“Just three percent of the public lands in Montana are currently dedicated as wilderness areas. Knowing this, would you support or oppose dedicating additional, existing public lands as wilderness areas here in Montana?”



Two-thirds reject the sale of public lands even to reduce the federal deficit.

“Similarly, some Members of Congress have proposed selling off some public lands, such as National Forests or Bureau of Land Management areas, as a way to help reduce the budget deficit. Would you support or oppose the sale of public lands?”



■ Support ■ Oppose

	Support	Oppose
	40%	51%
	25%	67%
	8%	84%

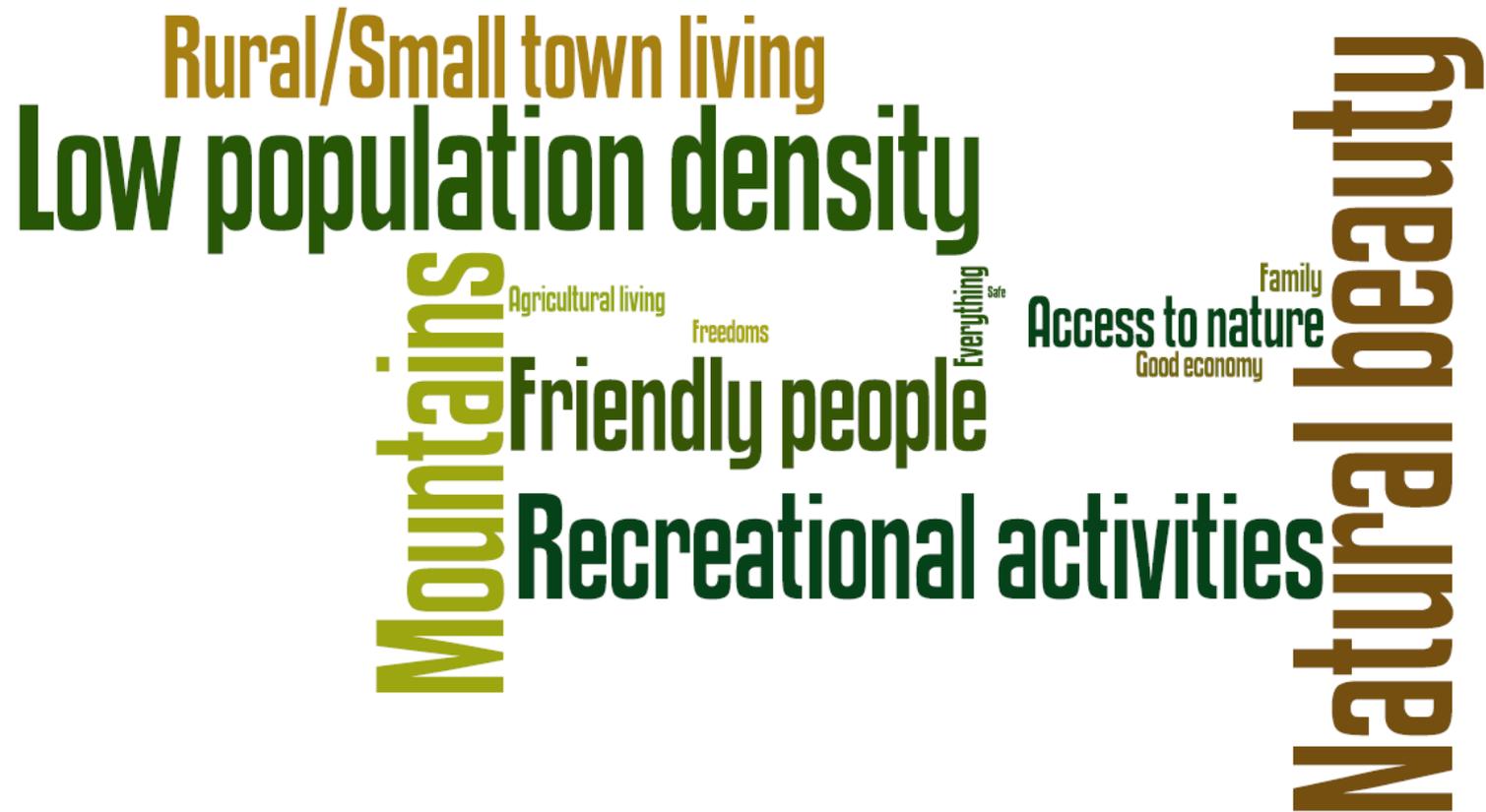
Why the solid support for so many conservation policies?

They have personal connections & perceive economic interests.



Montanans are more likely to point to nature and outdoor recreation as the things they like best about their state.

“Other than the weather, what do you like most about living in this part of Montana?”



Voters perceive a positive impact on virtually every aspect of life in the state, including economy/tourism.

“Generally speaking, do you believe enhancing and protecting public lands, such as local, state and national parks, national forests, and wilderness has a positive impact, negative impact, or no real impact on the following...”

<i>Impacts Ranked By % Positive</i>	Positive Impact	No Impact	Negative Impact
Opportunities for children to explore and learn @ nature	85%	11%	2%
Tourism	84%	9%	4%
Protecting clean water	81%	13%	2%
Wildlife	81%	10%	5%
Maintaining what is best about Montana	81%	8%	6%
Opportunities for hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation	80%	11%	6%
The overall quality of life in Montana	80%	11%	6%
Protecting our culture and heritage	74%	18%	4%
Protecting clean air	71%	16%	6%
Jobs and the economy	62%	17%	14%

They overwhelmingly tell us that land conservation is more beneficial to the state economy.

“Now, I’m going to read you a pair of statements. Please tell me which statement you agree with most. Please choose just one, even if neither fits your opinion exactly.”

Conserving land is good for the economy – it attracts tourists and visitors to our state, supports jobs in outdoor recreation and on working farms and ranches, and brings hundreds of millions of dollars to our state.

86%

Conserving land is bad for the economy – it takes land off the tax rolls, limits development and economic activity, and drives up costs to taxpayers to take care of preserved land.

12%

And more specifically, three-in-five say that public lands help attract good employers and jobs into the state.

Our public lands like national parks, forests, wilderness, and wildlife areas help to attract high quality employers and good jobs to Montana.

Agree

Disagree

62%

32%

In fact, a majority believe the state is uniquely well qualified to vie for these employers and jobs because of the presence of public lands in the state.

“When you think about the economic future of Montana in attracting good jobs and innovative companies, would you say that due to the presence of public lands and the Montana lifestyle of outdoor recreation, that the state is...”

**In a better position
than other states**

52%

**In a worse position
than other states**

12%

**About the same as
other states**

31%

No wonder then that they do not want to see economic development interfere with public uses of public lands.

"For each of the following, tell me if you agree or disagree with that particular statement."

We should NOT allow private companies to develop our public lands when their doing so would limit the public's enjoyment of -- or access to -- these lands.

Agree

70%

Disagree

25%

Conclusions



Conclusions

- Heading into election season, the survey demonstrates that voters say conservation issues will factor in their choices as a primary consideration in the mix with the economy, health care and other traditionally top tier issues.
- The priority given to conservation issues may in part be due to the strong support for pro- public lands policies that these voters hold – with majorities supporting additional public lands being designated as wilderness and broadly rejecting the sale of public lands. They overwhelmingly say the presence of wilderness has been a good thing for the state and more broadly ascribe positive benefits to nearly every aspect of life in Montana from having public lands here.
- State voters ascribe many benefits to the presence of public lands in the state. They say that it has positive impacts for tourism and even the broader economy – three-in-five believe it helps attract good jobs and employers to the state, and a majority say Montana is uniquely qualified to attract those innovative companies of the future due to the presence of public lands and the Montana lifestyle.

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