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**ARIZONA VOTERS ACROSS POLITICAL SPECTRUM AGREE:
OUR PUBLIC LANDS ARE ESSENTIAL TO OUR ECONOMY**

BIPARTISAN SURVEY FINDS STRONG SUPPORT FOR PARKS, CLEAN AIR REGULATIONS

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO – The results from the [2012 Colorado College State of the Rockies Conservation in the West poll](#) find that Arizona voters across the political spectrum – from Tea Party supporters to those who identify with the Occupy Wall Street movement and voters in-between – support upholding and strengthening protections for clean air, clean water, natural areas and wildlife. Voters also view Arizona’s parks and public lands as essential to their state’s economy, and quality of life.

The survey, completed by Lori Weigel of Public Opinion Strategies (a Republican firm) and Dave Metz of Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (a Democratic firm), found that **9 in 10 Arizona voters agree that public lands such as national parks, forests, monuments, and wildlife areas are “an essential part” of the state economy, and the quality of life of residents.** The survey found that 78 percent of Arizona voters view having a strong economy and protecting land and water as compatible.

"It doesn't matter which part of the political spectrum you are on, one thing we all agree on is that Arizona wouldn't be Arizona if we didn't have our public lands and waterways. And certainly my business -- and most businesses in Flagstaff -- depend on those special places like the Grand Canyon being protected," said Alexandra Thevenin, General Manager of Flagstaff-based Arizona Raft Adventures & Grand Canyon Discovery. Her business employs 110 people during the peak season.

In the wake of the Obama Administration’s announcement of a 20-year moratorium on new uranium mining near Grand Canyon National Park, **70 percent of voters say that the impact of mining on land and water is a serious problem in Arizona.**

“Spending by Arizona hunters and anglers directly supports 21,000 jobs and generates \$124-million in state and local taxes. This especially benefits rural communities like those surrounding the Grand Canyon. Why wouldn't we take steps to protect our parks, national forests, and wildlife habitat?” asked Tom Mackin, president of the Arizona Wildlife Federation and long-time resident of northern Arizona.

Arizona voters are concerned about air pollution (84 percent see it as a serious problem in their state) and want to transition from coal to cleaner renewable energy sources, like wind and solar, which 72 percent of voters view as local job creators. Additionally, **72 percent of voters indicate support for the EPA implementing the Clean Air Act and updating clean air**

standards—the highest level of support among Western voters polled. They view industry regulations as important safeguards for public health, and the natural beauty of Arizona.

Arizona voters voice support for continued funding of conservation, indicating that even with a tight budget, nearly 9 in 10 voters want their state government to find a way to maintain investments in parks, water, and wildlife protection. Consistent with other western voters polled, Arizona voters believe suspending environmental laws along U.S. borders to address illegal immigration is unnecessary.

“Arizonans understand that their quality of life and their state’s competitive economic advantage is tied to a healthy environment,” noted John Shepard, Senior Adviser to the Sonoran Institute. “Moreover, they see the economic opportunities tied to transitioning to a clean-energy economy. State and federal leaders should take stock in the poll’s consistent findings in this regard to advocate for strong conservation, environmental and renewable energy policies.”

The survey also tested voter attitudes on local issues and elected officials. Only 47 percent of Arizona voters approve of the job being performed by Governor Jan Brewer—the lowest approval rating of any governor of the Western states polled.

Grand Canyon Trust’s Richard Mayol said: “I’m not surprised with the poll results. In spite of what we hear from many Arizona elected officials, in my thirty-five years conducting and evaluating public opinion research in Arizona, it has always come across loud and clear that my fellow Arizonans (regardless of political affiliation) see themselves as conservationists and demand clean air, clean water and protections for the remarkable public lands that make our state so unique.”

The poll surveyed 2,400 registered voters in six key western states (AZ, CO, NM, UT, WY, MT) January 2 through 5 and 7, 2012, and yields a margin of error of + 2.0 percent nationwide and +4.9 statewide.

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

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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.