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MEDIA CONTACT – NEW MEXICO

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

**NEW SURVEY FINDS NEW MEXICO VOTERS SUPPORT UPHOLDING ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTIONS**

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO – The results from the 2012 Colorado College State of the Rockies Conservation in the West poll find that New Mexico 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 protections for clean air, clean water, natural areas and wildlife. Voters view New Mexico’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 80 percent of voters view having a strong economy and protections for New Mexico’s land and water as compatible with each other.

Voters reject the idea that reducing regulations creates jobs. In particular, 73 percent of New Mexican voters think that the state should maintain industry regulations that protect land, air, and water in New Mexico, and said that regulations have a positive effect on public safety (approximately 71 percent), the natural beauty of the state (76 percent), and residents’ quality of life (73 percent).

Approximately 73 percent of New Mexican voters also said that the loss of habitat for fish and wildlife is a serious problem in their state; nearly 9 in 10 voters said water pollution and inadequate water supplies are serious problems. In addition, over 60 percent felt that development of public lands by private companies should not limit the public’s ability to access and enjoy these lands.

“Healthy public lands make it possible for thousands of New Mexican families to hunt and fish, and to pass on their love of the outdoors to their kids. In turn, that strong hunting and fishing tradition creates jobs and opportunity for small businesses,” said Joel Gay, a spokesman for the New Mexico Wildlife Federation. “Everyone in New Mexico benefits from protected public lands.”

New Mexican voters also see renewable energy as a job creator: 70 percent believe it renewable energy sources like wind and solar will create new jobs in New Mexico. Seven in 10

want to see the state uphold the existing standard for the amount of energy to be met by renewable sources like wind and solar.

In a state with several national parks and monuments, the Colorado College poll found that by nearly two to one (63 percent to 33 percent), New Mexican voters support designating more existing public lands as national monuments. These findings are consistent with recent polling of New Mexico Latino voters.

“Both Republican and Democratic Presidents have designated national monuments on public lands in New Mexico. Thanks to their leadership, places like White Sands, Carlsbad Caverns, Bandelier and Chaco Canyon have remained among the most beloved treasures of our state. It’s no surprise New Mexicans are supportive of new national monuments,” said Mary Lee Ortega, President of Organizers in the Land of Enchantment (OLÉ).

By a margin of 65 percent to 25 percent, New Mexican voters also believe suspending environmental laws along the U.S. border to address illegal immigration is unnecessary.

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.