

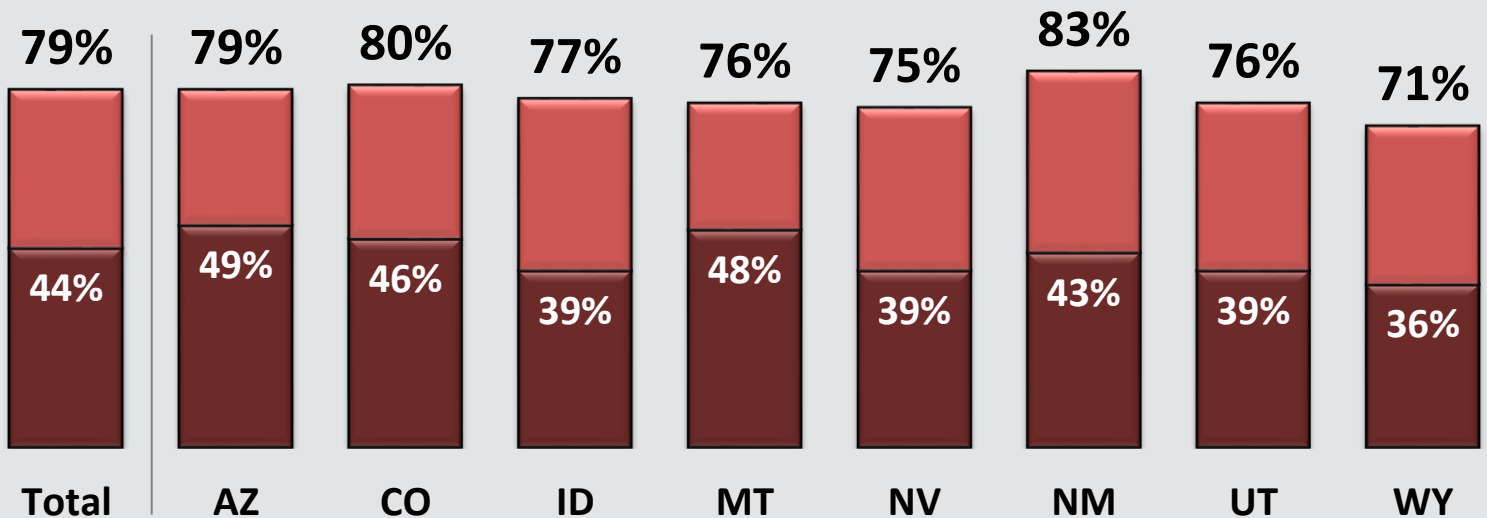
# Public Lands in the West

*Western voters are concerned by lack of resources for public lands and support multiple proposals intended to protect public lands.*



Most Western voters say the lack of funds to properly maintain and take care of national parks, forests, and other public lands is a serious problem, and there is majority agreement on this issue. Two-thirds of Republicans (66%), 82% of Independents, and 90% of Democrats say the lack of resources is a serious problem.

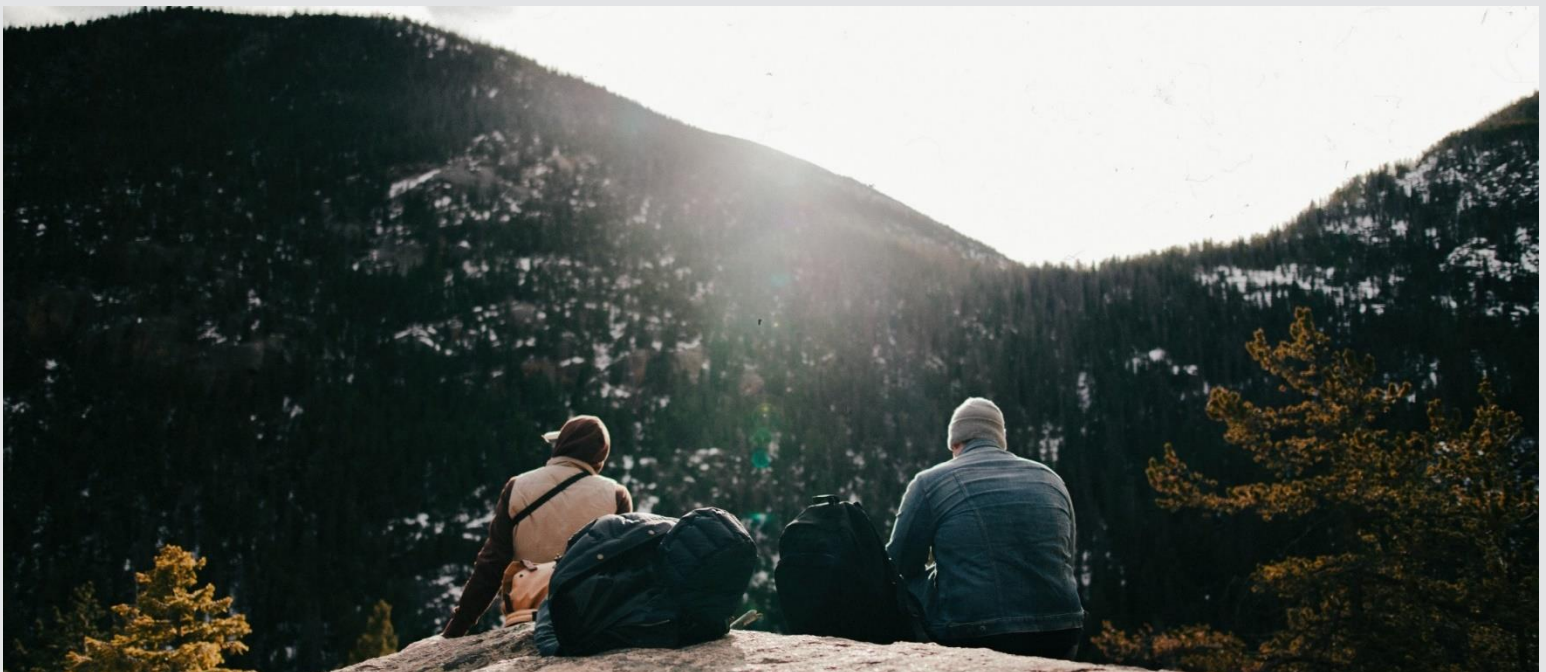
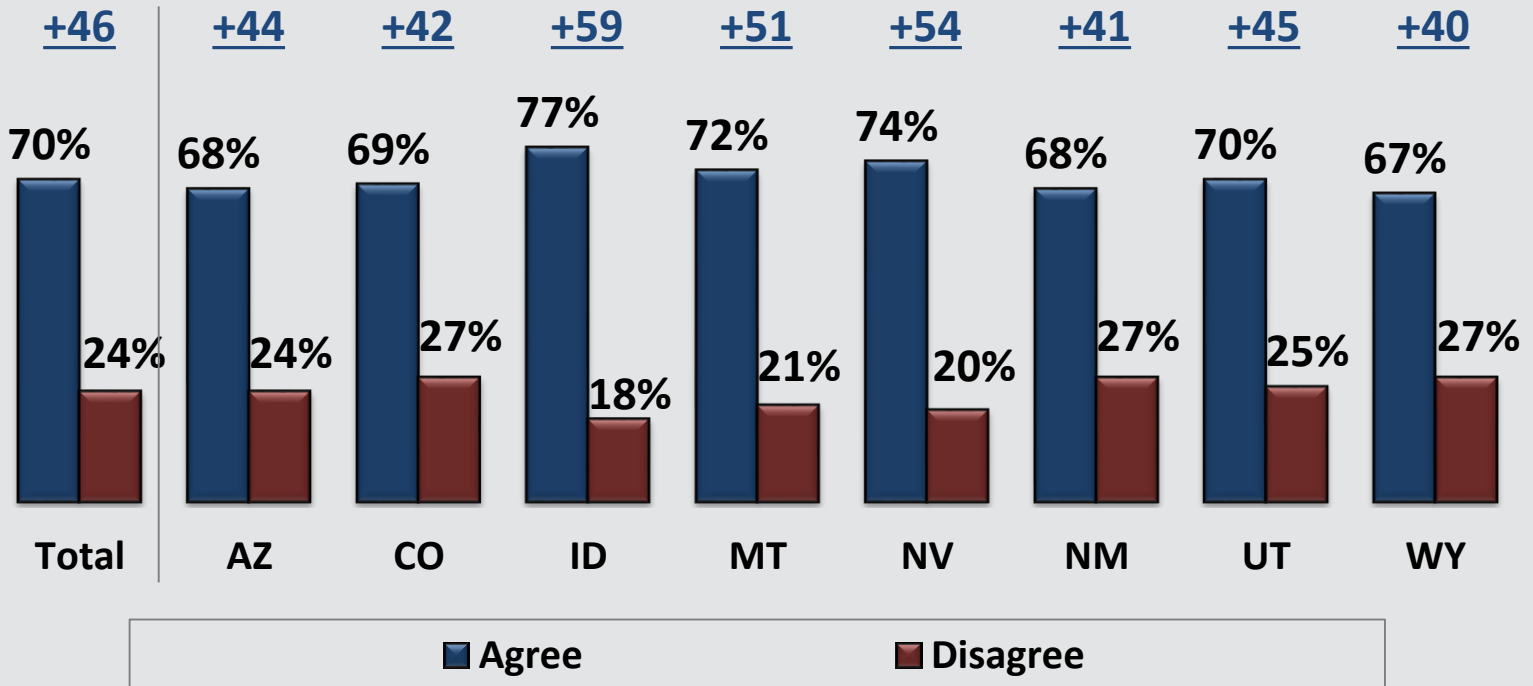
## Seriousness of Lack of Resources to Properly Maintain and Take Care of National Parks, Forests, and Other Public Lands



■ Extremely/Very Serious Problem    ■ Total Serious Problem

There is solid agreement that private companies should not be allowed to profit from using public lands if doing so would limit public access and enjoyment of those lands. Fifty-three percent (53%) of Republicans, 77% of Independents, and 86% of Democrats agree with this sentiment.

**We Should Not Allow Private Companies to Profit from Using our Public Lands When Their Doing So Would Limit the Public's Enjoyment of - or Access to - These Lands.**



Two-thirds of Western voters (67%) would prefer their Member of Congress to place more emphasis on protecting and creating public lands than on allowing mining and drilling on public lands. Although not a majority, Republicans also lean in favor of this approach (47% protect, 40% mining/drilling), while 71% of Independents and 86% of Democrats favor protection.

### Preference for National Public Land Decisions

Ensuring we protect sources of clean water, our air quality and wildlife habitat while providing opportunities to visit and recreate on our national public lands

67%

Ensuring we produce more domestic energy by maximizing the amount of national public lands available for responsible oil and gas drilling and mining

25%



Across all eight states, there is majority support for proposals that would restrict mining and drilling on public lands, and make oil, gas, and mining companies pay more for access. There is majority support among Republicans, Independents, and Democrats for all of these proposals, except one. In Colorado, Republicans are split (46% support, 47% oppose) on the CORE Act that limits drilling on lands in the Thompson Divide among other protections.

### Support for Public Lands Proposals

84%

Requiring mining companies to **pay fees for mining** on public lands.

76%

Designating portions of existing **public lands where wildlife migrate** each year as areas which should *not* be open to oil and gas drilling.

73%

Conserving existing public lands surrounding **Chaco Culture National Historical Park** in northwestern New Mexico so that oil and gas drilling will not take place on public lands in the area. Traditional Native American uses of the lands will still take place.<sup>^</sup>

71%

Conserving existing Forest Service lands in the **Ruby Mountains**, so that oil and gas drilling will not take place in the area. <sup>^^</sup>

70%

Providing full dedicated **funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund**, the federal program that has funded thousands of parks and conservation projects using the fees charged to oil and gas companies for drilling offshore.

69%

**Increasing the royalty fee** that oil and gas companies pay your state for drilling on public lands to 25 percent, the same as Texas.

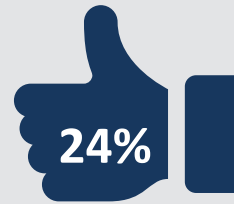
68%

Designating some existing public lands as wilderness areas in western Colorado, limit future drilling on public lands in the **Thompson Divide area** and create a national historic landscape at the former site of the Army's 10th Mountain Division. <sup>^^^</sup>

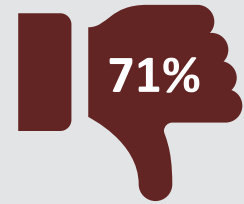
State specific questions only asked to N=400 voters in each respective state: <sup>^</sup>New Mexico, <sup>^^</sup>Nevada, and <sup>^^^</sup>Colorado.

Similarly, there is majority opposition among Western voters to allowing new uranium mining claims on existing public lands next to the Grand Canyon National Park (71% oppose), with solidarity across party lines: Republicans: 58% oppose, Independents: 74% oppose, and Democrats: 86% oppose. Majorities in every state hold this view although Arizonans are most opposed (77%).

## Allowing New Uranium Mining Claims on Existing Public Lands Next to the Grand Canyon National Park, a Practice That is Currently Banned



Support



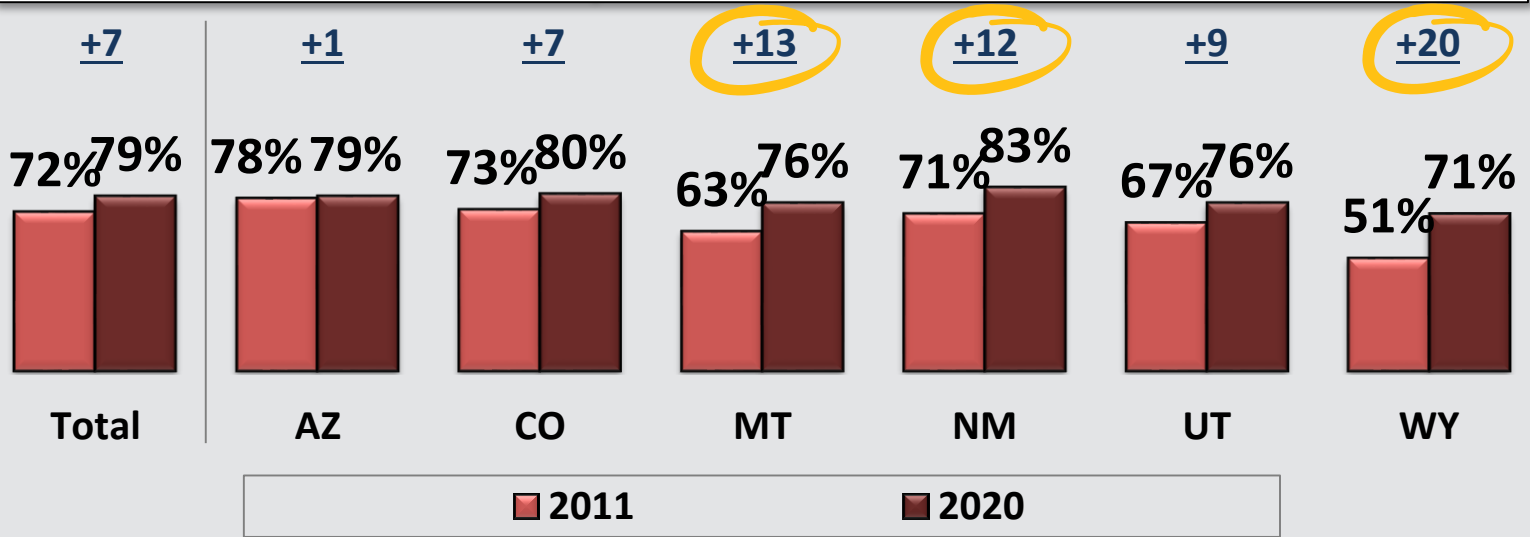
Oppose



**Concern over lack of resources for public lands has increased substantially in the last five years.**

A comparison of the six states that were interviewed in both 2015 and 2020 (AZ, CO, MT, NM, UT, & WY), indicates that voters see the lack of resources for public lands as a more serious problem today than in 2015. The greatest increase in concern on this issue over the last five years comes from voters in Wyoming, Montana, and New Mexico.

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Additionally, while majority Republican concern about lack of resources for public lands has remained stable since 2015, Independents and Democrats are far more likely to perceive this as a serious problem compared to five years ago.

