

Results of OLCV Education Fund 2008 Telephone Poll

About the Oregon League of Conservation Voters Education Fund

The Oregon League of Conservation Voters Education Fund (OLCV Education Fund) was formed in 1995, with the goal of increasing the effective participation of conservationists in the political process. OLCV Education Fund's work focuses on message development, trainings to help citizens translate their concern for the environment into effective action, public education on environmental issues, and coordination of the Oregon Conservation Network. OLCV Education Fund is affiliated with the Oregon League of Conservation Voters, which was formed in 1972. Questions about this research can be addressed to Jonathan Poisner at (503) 227-8073.

Purpose of the Research

OLCV Education Fund seeks to gauge the depth of public support for environmental protection in Oregon. In the last decade, the Legislature has considered hundreds of bills that would weaken Oregon's existing environmental safeguards. OLCV Education Fund is currently preparing for the 2009 Legislative Session. The primary purpose of this poll is to educate the public and decision-makers about public attitudes towards issues likely to be hotly debated in the 2009 session.

Research Parameters

The research findings presented in this document are based on a telephone survey conducted by Grove Insight of Portland, OR from June 5-8, 2008. The survey included 500 registered voters statewide with an overall margin of error for the statewide sample of +/-4.4%.

Finding 1: Clean Water, Clean Air, and Open Spaces are a Primary Issue for a Majority of Oregon Voters

Respondents were asked: *How important are issues involving clean water, clean air and open spaces for you in deciding for whom to vote? Are they...*

- *Very important, they are a primary factor in deciding how to vote*
- *Somewhat important; they are one of several issues you consider*
- *Not too important; they are not a significant considering in deciding how to vote*
- *DK/NA*

A majority of respondents (57%) indicated these issues were "very important," significantly more so than when the same question was asked in 2002 and 2004.

Table 1: Clean Water, Clean Air, Open Spaces – Importance when Voting

Year	2008	2004	2002
Very Important	57%	38%	36%
Somewhat Important	33%	46%	45%
Not Important	9%	15%	19%
Unsure	1%	1%	0%

Finding 2: Oregonians believe it is very important for the Legislature to take action to promote water conservation and better water management

Respondents were asked: *How important is it that the legislature create new rules and dedicate more money to increase water conservation and promote better water management, to ensure that Oregon has adequate water supplies in the future for people, fish and wildlife – is it very important that the legislature take action, somewhat important, not too important or not important at all?*

Sixty-three (63) percent of respondents indicated it was very important, with another 20% indicating it was somewhat important. Just 7% indicated it was not too important, and 6% indicated it was not important at all. These results held up across every demographic group in the state.

Table 2: Water as a Priority by Demographic

Demographic	Very	Somewhat	Not too	Not at all	Unsure
Men	59%	21%	8%	8%	4%
Women	67%	19%	6%	5%	3%
Younger (<50)	60%	24%	5%	7%	5%
Older (50+)	66%	18%	8%	6%	2%
Democrats	73%	18%	4%	2%	3%
Independents	61%	20%	6%	10%	3%
Republicans	52%	22%	13%	9%	3%
Portland Media Market	63%	20%	6%	7%	4%
Eugene Media Market	63%	19%	11%	7%	1%
Medford/Bend Media Markets	65%	20%	9%	3%	2%
Total	63%	20%	7%	6%	3%

Finding 3: By a 2-1 margin, voters prefer spending money to promote water conservation rather than building dams to store water.

Respondents were asked a lengthy question that discussed the pro's and con's of building dams versus promoting water conservation.

Respondents were asked: *“The Oregon legislature is considering new laws and programs that would dedicate tens of millions of dollars to better manage and efficiently use water from Oregon lakes, rivers and streams. It would require many users of water like farms and industrial plants to measure their use, invest in water conservation, and require more planning to prepare for global warming. I’m going to read you two points of view on this issue: [ROTATE]*

__SOME PEOPLE/OTHER PEOPLE object to the legislation because they say the better way to create future water supplies is to build more dams and store more water. They object to spending more money on water management and conservation because they believe we must first expand the water supply by storing more water, particularly winter or wet season water, in new reservoirs and other facilities.

__SOME PEOPLE/OTHER PEOPLE support the legislation because they believe the solution to future water supply problems is to increase water conservation and efficient use of water. They say we must first promote water conservation and more efficient use of existing supplies if we are to meet the needs of people, fish and wildlife and adapt to global warming. Better management of the water we have and use, before we invest taxpayer dollars in new water storage projects, like dams, is the right solution.

Having heard this, which opinion do you agree with more or are you undecided? [IF NEED TO BUILD DAMS/INCREASE WATER CONSERVATION, ASK:] Do you feel that way strongly or not so strongly?

By a 53%-27% margin, with 20% undecided or saying both, voters preferred water conservation over building dams.

This preference held up in every demographic, including the Bend and Medford media markets, where issues related to water receive a higher level of public debate.

Table 3: Spending Dollars on Conservation Versus Dams by Demographic

Demographic	Conservation Strongly	Conservation not strongly	Dams not strongly	Dams strongly	Unsure or Both Equally
Men	33%	14%	8%	26%	19%
Women	44%	14%	7%	14%	21%
Younger (<50)	34%	15%	9%	20%	22%
Older (50+)	42%	13%	6%	19%	20%
Democrats	50%	13%	8%	11%	17%
Independents	33%	17%	8%	18%	25%
Republicans	30%	13%	5%	32%	20%
Portland Media Market	39%	13%	7%	20%	23%
Eugene Media Market	41%	14%	7%	17%	21%
Medford/Bend Media Markets	38%	19%	8%	21%	14%
Total	39%	14%	7%	20%	20%

Finding 4: Voters Prefer Strong Action to Combat Global Warming

Respondents were split into two groups. Half the respondents were asked about how important it is to take action to combat global warming pollution. Half the respondents were asked how important it is to combat global warming pollution caused by cars and trucks in Oregon.

Nearly 3 in 4 Oregonians (73%) believe it’s important to take action to combat global warming in general, while nearly 4 in 5 Oregonians (79%) believe it’s important to take action to combat global warming pollution from cars and trucks. In both cases, a majority of respondents indicated that it was very important.

While support for taking action was significantly stronger among Democrats than Republicans, in every major demographic a majority thinks it’s either somewhat important or very important to take action.

The specific questions were:

Split Sample A: How important is it that the legislature take action to reduce global warming pollution – is it very important that the legislature take action, somewhat important, not too important or not important at all? If you aren’t sure, you can tell me that, too.

Split Sample B: How important is it that the legislature take action to reduce global warming pollution caused by cars and trucks in Oregon – is it very important that the legislature take action, somewhat important, not too important or not important at all? If you aren't sure, you can tell me that, too.

Table 4: Importance of Combating Global Warming Pollution by Demographic

Demographic	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not too Important	Not at all important	Not Sure
Men	48%	18%	11%	20%	4%
Women	55%	24%	7%	8%	7%
Younger (<50)	59%	20%	5%	10%	6%
Older (50+)	47%	21%	11%	16%	5%
Democrats	69%	20%	5%	4%	3%
Independents	48%	26%	9%	15%	1%
Republicans	34%	18%	12%	24%	12%
Portland Media Market	53%	24%	7%	12%	4%
Eugene Media Market	53%	14%	13%	15%	5%
Medford/Bend Media Markets	48%	18%	8%	16%	11%
Total	52%	21%	9%	13%	5%

Table 5: Importance of Combating Global Warming Pollution from Cars and Trucks by Demographic

Demographic	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not too Important	Not at all important	Not Sure
Men	50%	23%	13%	10%	5%
Women	64%	21%	4%	7%	4%
Younger (<50)	52%	27%	7%	12%	3%
Older (50+)	61%	19%	9%	6%	5%
Democrats	80%	16%	2%	1%	2%
Independents	54%	23%	10%	6%	8%
Republicans	29%	30%	16%	20%	5%
Portland Media Market	58%	22%	9%	7%	3%
Eugene Media Market	60%	25%	6%	6%	2%
Medford/Bend Media Markets	52%	17%	8%	13%	10%
Total	57%	22%	8%	8%	4%

Finding 5: Even after Voters are given a “Cost” Argument Against it, Voters Want Action to Combat Global Warming

Respondents were split into two groups.

Half of the respondents were presented pro and con arguments about taking strong action to combat global warming through an overall cap on such pollution. Half were presented with pro and con arguments about taking strong action to combat global warming pollution caused by cars and trucks.

In both cases, a solid majority support taking action, even after a cost argument against it. By a 62%-22% majority, voters favored a mandatory cap on global warming pollution, given arguments on both sides. By a 56%-16% majority, voters favored a transportation package designed to combat global warming, given arguments on both sides. The poll took place while gas prices were at or near their peak.

While support for taking action dipped below a majority in some demographics, in every demographic support remained at significantly higher levels than opposition. In both cases, strong supporters of taking action outweigh strong opponents by a more than 3-1 margin.

The specific questions were:

Split Sample A: *The Oregon legislature is considering a law that would place a mandatory cap on the total amount of global warming pollution generated in Oregon. I'm going to read you two points of view on this issue: [ROTATE]*

__SOME PEOPLE/OTHER PEOPLE say that mandatory global warming pollution limits would result in higher gas and utility prices at a time when the cost of living is high already. As a result, senior citizens and families will be hard hit by these energy spikes and Oregon businesses could end up laying off thousands of workers to pay for these added costs.

__SOME PEOPLE/OTHER PEOPLE say that by reducing global warming pollution we will create good-paying renewable energy jobs and reduce our reliance on foreign energy supplies. Global warming pollution is directly responsible for declining water levels and snow pack that affect farmers and hydro-power, and the time to act is now.

Having heard this, do you favor or oppose a law that place a mandatory cap on global warming pollution in Oregon, or are you undecided? [IF FAVOR/OPPOSE, ASK:] Do you feel that way strongly or not so strongly?

Split Sample B: *The Oregon legislature is considering a law that is designed to reduce the total amount of global warming pollution created by vehicles on Oregon's roads. It would reduce our dependence on cars by investing in transportation options like rail lines, buses and bike paths and make developers and oil companies pay fees to fund these alternatives. I'm going to read you two points of view on this issue: [ROTATE]*

__SOME PEOPLE/OTHER PEOPLE say that reducing the amount of global warming pollution caused by vehicles in Oregon would result in higher gas prices at a time when the cost of living is high already. As a result, senior citizens and families will be hard hit by gas price increases and taxes will have to be increased to pay for more transportation options.

__SOME PEOPLE/OTHER PEOPLE say that reducing global warming pollution caused by vehicles in Oregon would result in less time spent in traffic and reduce the amount families have to pay for gas each week. Besides, global warming pollution is directly responsible for declining water levels and snow pack that affect farmers and hydro-power. The time to act is now.

Having heard this, do you favor or oppose a law that place a mandatory cap on global warming pollution caused by vehicles in Oregon, or are you undecided? [IF FAVOR/OPPOSE, ASK:] Do you feel that way strongly or not so strongly?

Table 6: Support Mandatory Cap on Global Warming Pollution after Arguments on both sides

Demographic	Favor Strongly	Favor Not Strongly	Oppose Not Strongly	Oppose Strongly	Not Sure
Men	40%	15%	5%	24%	17%
Women	50%	19%	9%	8%	15%
Younger (<50)	50%	18%	9%	11%	13%
Older (50+)	42%	16%	6%	19%	18%
Democrats	57%	17%	7%	5%	14%
Independents	39%	13%	3%	19%	26%
Republicans	34%	20%	10%	25%	11%
Portland Media Market	45%	16%	7%	15%	17%
Eugene Media Market	40%	16%	7%	20%	16%
Medford/Bend Media Markets	51%	20%	5%	11%	13%
Total	45%	17%	7%	15%	16%

Table 7: Support for Transportation Package Designed to Combat Global Warming after Arguments on Both Sides

Demographic	Favor Strongly	Favor Not Strongly	Oppose Not Strongly	Oppose Strongly	Not Sure
Men	34%	15%	10%	10%	31%
Women	47%	15%	5%	8%	25%
Younger (<50)	39%	19%	10%	9%	23%
Older (50+)	42%	14%	6%	9%	30%
Democrats	56%	15%	3%	3%	23%
Independents	33%	18%	9%	7%	33%
Republicans	26%	13%	12%	19%	30%
Portland Media Market	46%	14%	6%	9%	26%
Eugene Media Market	33%	21%	11%	4%	32%
Medford/Bend Media Markets	30%	14%	8%	16%	33%
Total	41%	15%	7%	9%	28%