

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 30, 2012

MEDIA CONTACT – POLLING DETAILS:

Leslie Weddell, Colorado College
Leslie.Weddell@ColoradoCollege.edu; 719-389-6038

MEDIA CONTACTS – UTAH CONTEXT:

Angie Welling, Love Communications, [801-647-0702](tel:801-647-0702)

Jay Banta, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, 435-496-3600

Philip Carlson, Republicans for Environmental Protection, 801-694-2478

Sarah Wright, Utah Clean Energy, 801-673-7156

**Utah Voters Across Political Spectrum Agree:
Protecting Our Air Quality & Parks Safeguards Jobs, Way of Life**

**Bipartisan Poll Finds Utah Voters Support Upholding Environmental Protections;
Reveals Voter Attitudes of Statewide Elected Officials**

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO – The results from the [2012 Colorado College State of the Rockies Conservation in the West poll](#) find that Utah 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 Utah’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 Utah voters nearly unanimously agree that public lands such as national parks, forests, monuments, and wildlife areas are “an essential part” of the state economy; 76 percent of Utah voters view having a good economy and protecting land and water as compatible with each other.

“Clean air and water, as well as protected lands, have significant economic impacts for Utah, in terms of tourism and our quality of life,” said Jay Banta, Utah Board Member of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers. “But the value these lands provide in the way of wildlife habitat and solitude, for hunters and anglers, goes far beyond what an economist or pollster can quantify.”

Among Western voters, Utahns were the most concerned about air pollution and smog in their state, with more than 9 in 10 voters saying it is a serious problem. Accordingly, 69 percent of Utah voters indicate support for the EPA implementing the Clean Air Act and updating air quality standards. **Eight in 10 Utah voters want to maintain protections for our air, land, and water -- the strongest response from voters in any of the Western states polled.**

These results are in sharp contrast to some positions on conservation issues taken by Utah’s elected officials. Earlier this year, Governor Gary Herbert [sent a letter](#) to the Obama Administration challenging EPA regulations to limit toxic pollution from power plants. Some members of Utah’s congressional delegation are supporting legislation that would suspend environmental protections within 100 miles of U.S. borders to help stop illegal immigration; by a margin of 72 percent to 20 percent, voters in Utah (with similar results across the West) feel this proposal is unnecessary.

“The poll results show that voters of all stripes, including conservatives, believe protecting clean air, clean water, and our natural heritage are consistent with traditional conservative values,” said Philip Carlson, Utah Coordinator for Republicans for Environmental Protection. “We call on our elected representatives to listen to their constituents and embrace the conservative ethic of good stewardship.”

Six in 10 Utah voters said that the highest priority for meeting America’s energy needs should be to reduce our need for more coal, oil and gas by expanding use of clean, renewable energy. Sixty-four percent of voters believe that increasing the use of renewable energy will create local jobs. Utah voters also voiced strong support, by a margin of 76 percent to 18 percent, for requiring builders to meet updated energy efficiency standards in new homes -- even if it results in an increase in home prices.

“Voters and public officials across Utah support renewable energy and energy efficiency for numerous reasons and want to see barriers to their adoption eliminated,” said Sarah Wright, Director of Utah Clean Energy. “These poll results confirm what we hear from residents, businesses and local governments every day: public and private sectors and elected officials can work together to create a robust economy and healthy communities powered by clean energy.”

The poll also asked a few election-related questions unique to each state. In Utah, Governor Herbert received a 68 percent approval rating from voters. The poll also showed that 33 percent of Utah voters believe that U.S. Senator Orrin Hatch has done his job well enough to deserve re-election; 58 percent would like to give a new person a chance.

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](#).

###

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.