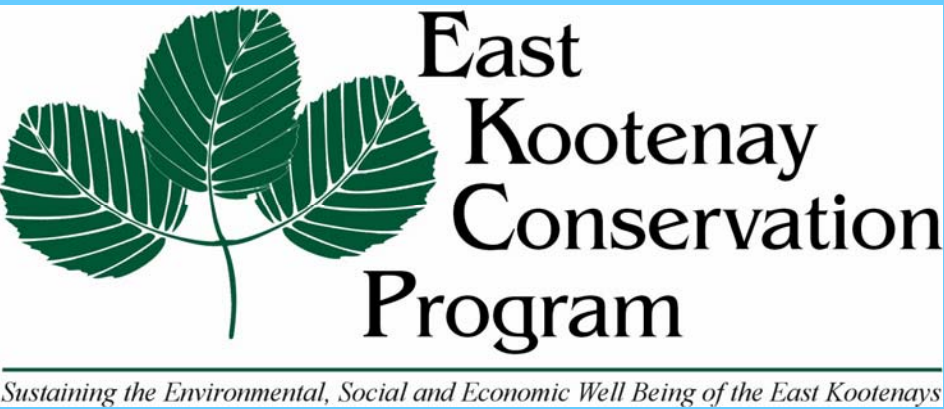


GRASSROOTS FOR GRASSLANDS

Green Polling in the East
Kootenay



Green Polling in the East Kootenay

Darrell Smith

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Outline

- East Kootenay Conservation Program
- Motivation to Poll
- The Poll Results
- Focus Group Research Results
- Political Feedback
- Next Steps
- If I had to do it again – what would I do different

East Kootenay Conservation Program

Who is it?

- **partnership** of organizations wanting to **balance economic, social and environmental values** in the East Kootenay.
 - 40 Partners

What does it do?

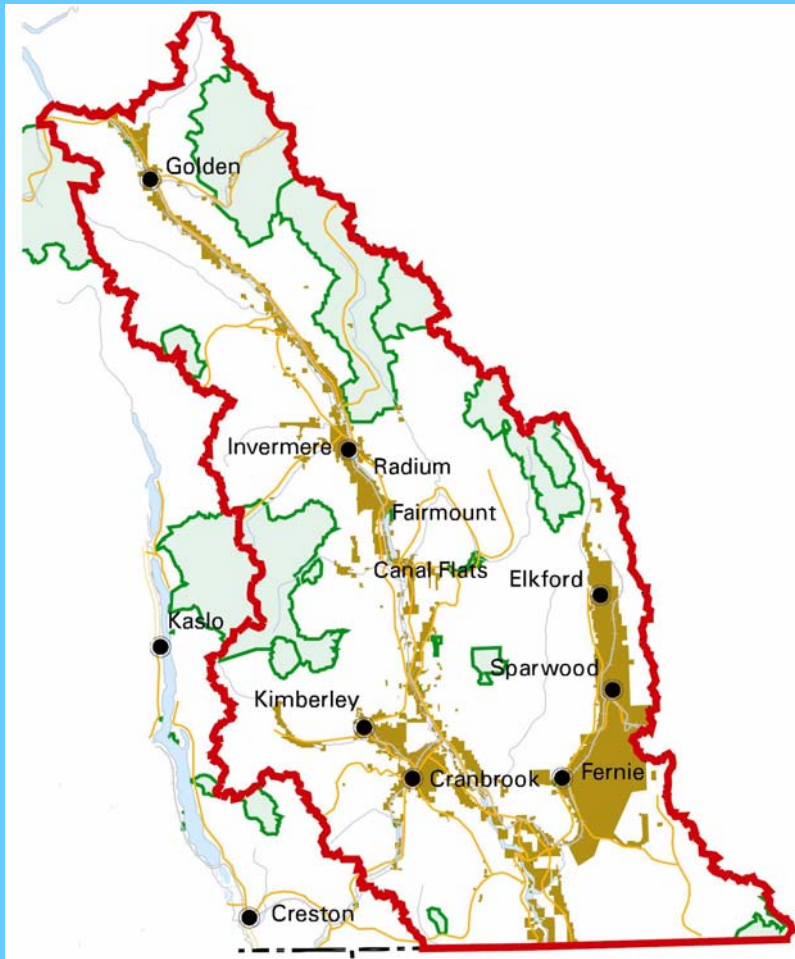
- coordinate/facilitate private land conservation & stewardship

Why private land

- 11% of land base is private – location is key!
 - Valley bottoms
 - Biodiversity hot spots
 - Agriculture – Forestry - Wildlife
 - Towns & people

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Green Polling in the East Kootenay



Motivation to Poll the “People”

1. Determine what the people are thinking
 - support private land conservation?
 - what is important to them about private land conservation
 - support for what the EKCP partners are doing?
 - Do the “people” understand what we are talking about
 - What issues /concerns are important to the people?

Motivation to Poll the “People”

2. Propose the idea of a local conservation fund
 - would the “people” support it?
 - \$\$\$ coming in from various sources, lacking – local
 - U.S. - “local bond initiatives” to help fund conservation work at the local level
 - CRD and GVRD have initiated similar concepts
 - Canada only a handful of local jurisdictions going this route
 - Large untapped funding pool - possibly
 - Locally driven - local \$\$\$ for local projects

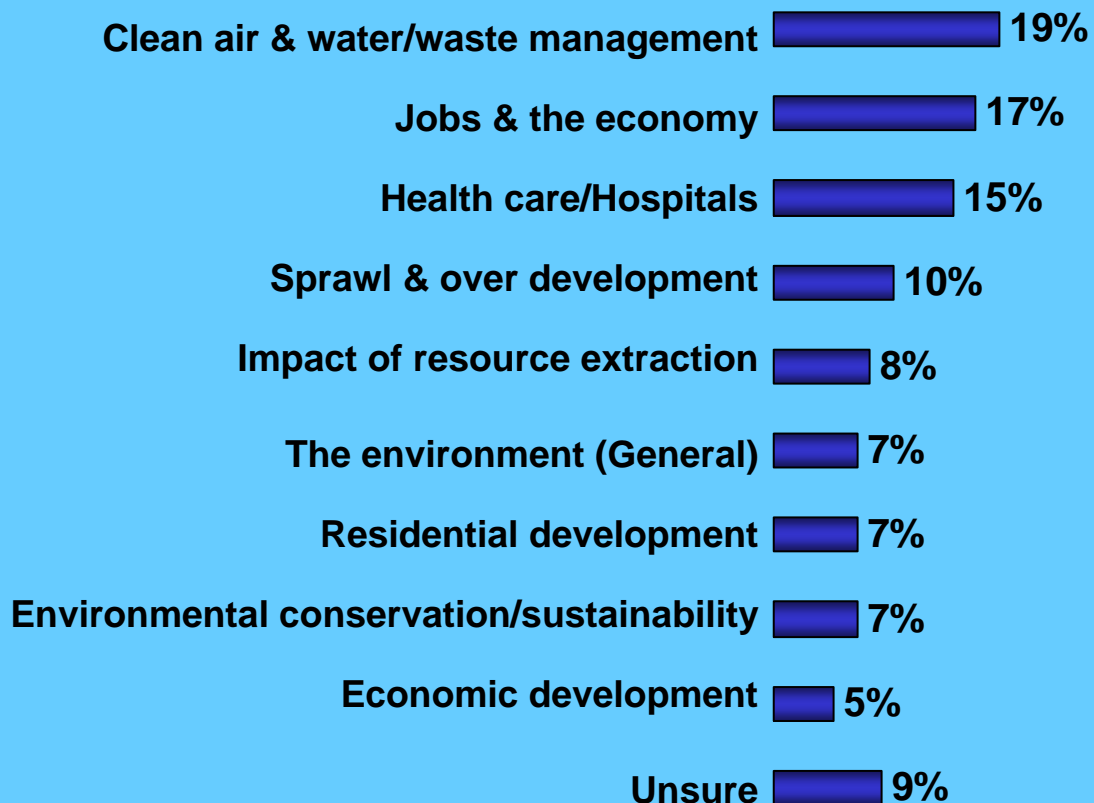
Motivation to Poll the “People”

3. Are local decisions in tune with locals?
 - No prior poll
 - Is there a disconnect between local decisions and what people want?
 - Good information no matter what

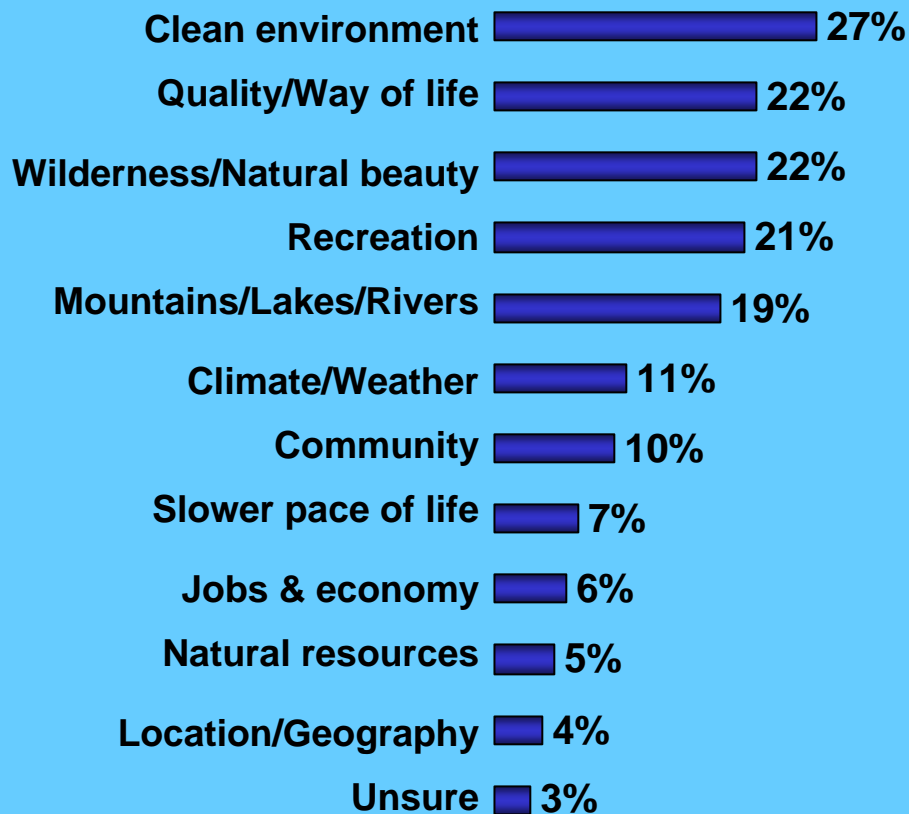
Public Opinion Poll

- Determine public's values towards water, wildlife, agriculture, economic development and private land conservation issues.
- Poll entire Columbia Basin area
- Working with professional polling company (Cameron Strategies)
- Sample size = 750
- Date conducted – Jan & Feb. 2006

A1. What do you consider to be the most important issue facing your community?



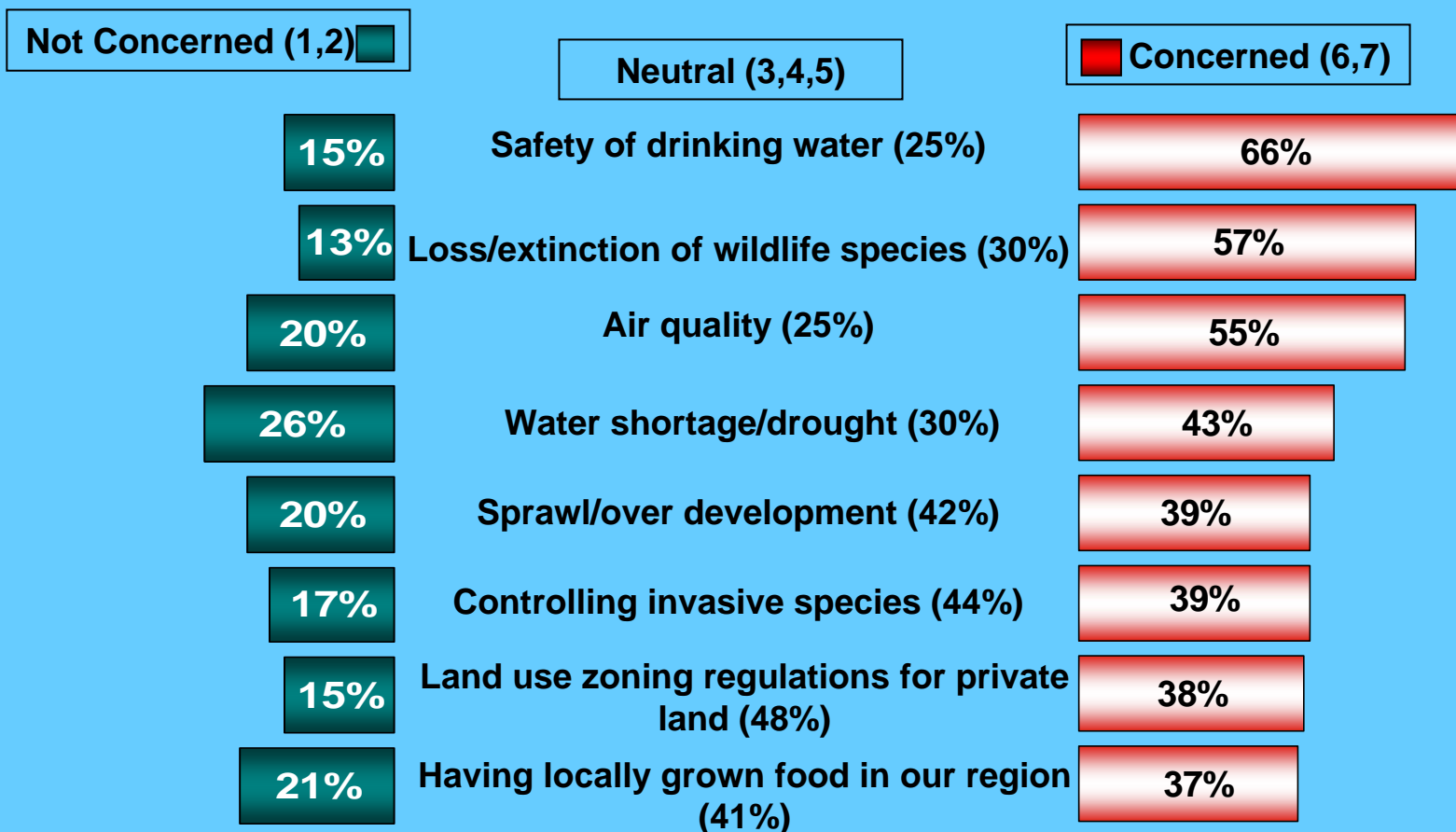
A2. More specifically, when it comes to quality of life, what do you think is the most valuable asset of the Columbia-Kootenay region that contributes to your quality of life?



GRASSROOTS FOR GRASSLANDS

Green Polling in the East Kootenay

A3. I'd like you to tell me how concerned you are about the following issues in your community on a scale from 1 to 7, with 1 being not at all concerned and 7 being very concerned. How concerned are you about

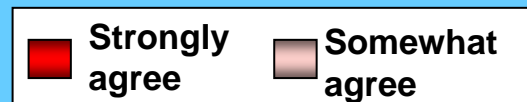


Base: All Respondents (n=751)

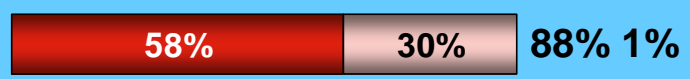
GRASSROOTS FOR GRASSLANDS

Green Polling in the East Kootenay

B1. I am going to read you a few statements. For each on please tell me whether you agree or disagree? Is that strongly or somewhat?



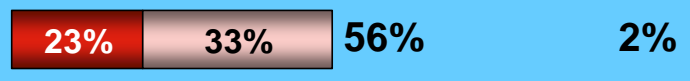
10% 6% Important to have locally grown food products that support locals



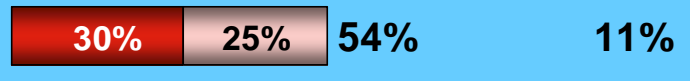
16% 11% 5% Conserving private lands is a good way to conserve wildlife/landscapes



43% 20% 23% Land use regulations on private lands is needed even if restrictive



35% 26% 9% Too many farms/ranches being lost



64% 23% 41% ALR* should be removed to allow landowners to develop as they see fit



78% 25% 53% Growing economy is more important than protecting wildlife

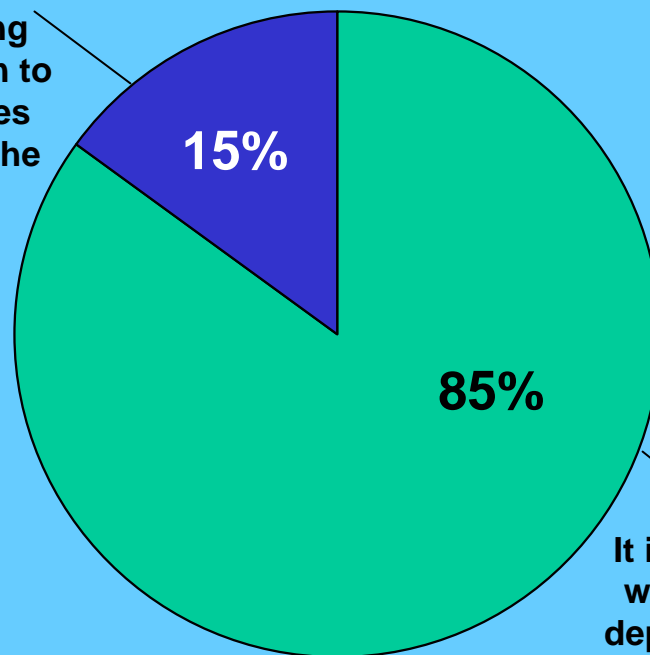


Base: All Respondents (n=751)

*Agriculture Land Reserve

B2. Which of the following statements best represents your views

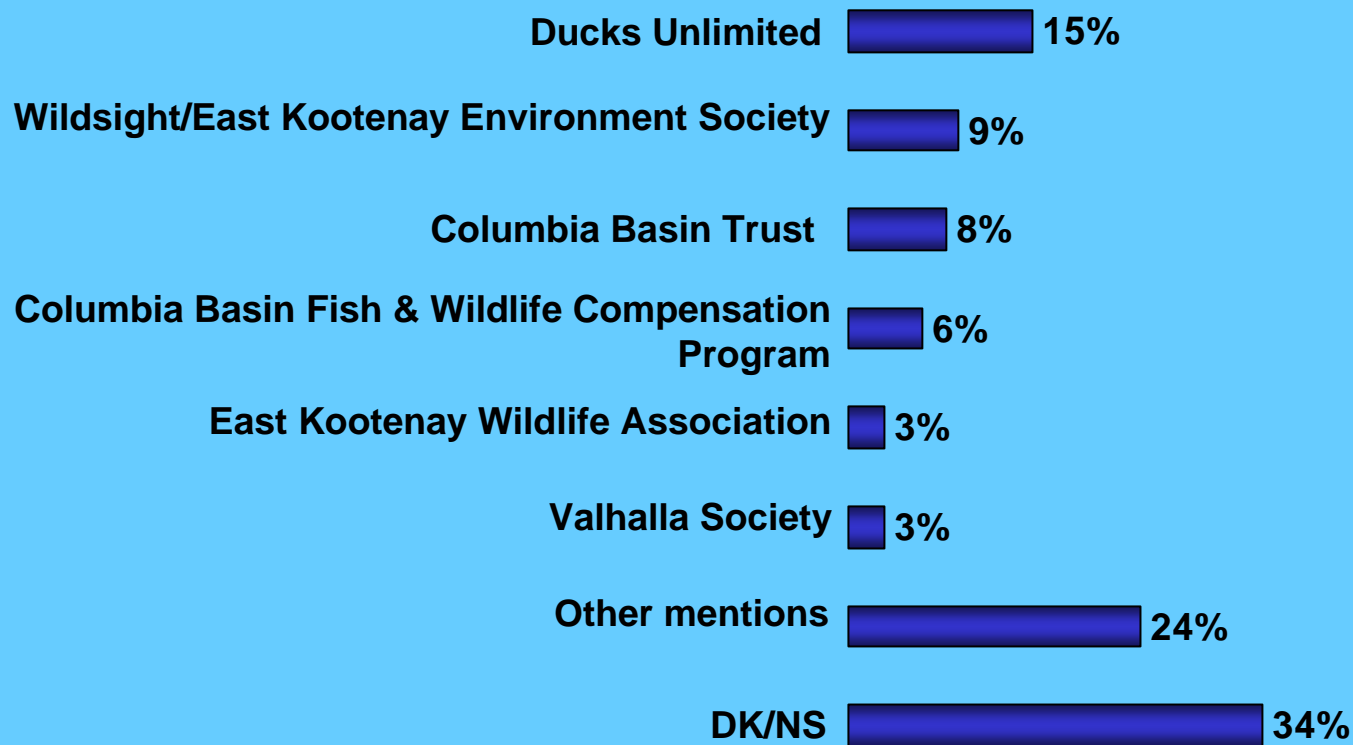
It is more important to have immediate economic development (like housing and recreational developments), than to conserve and protect wildlife species and the habitats they depend on in the long-term.



It is important to conserve and protect wildlife species and the habitats they depend on in the long-term, even if that means slowing down short-term economic development (like housing and recreational developments).

Base: All Respondents (n=751)

B5. When you think of conservation efforts in the Columbia-Kootenay region, what organizations come to mind?

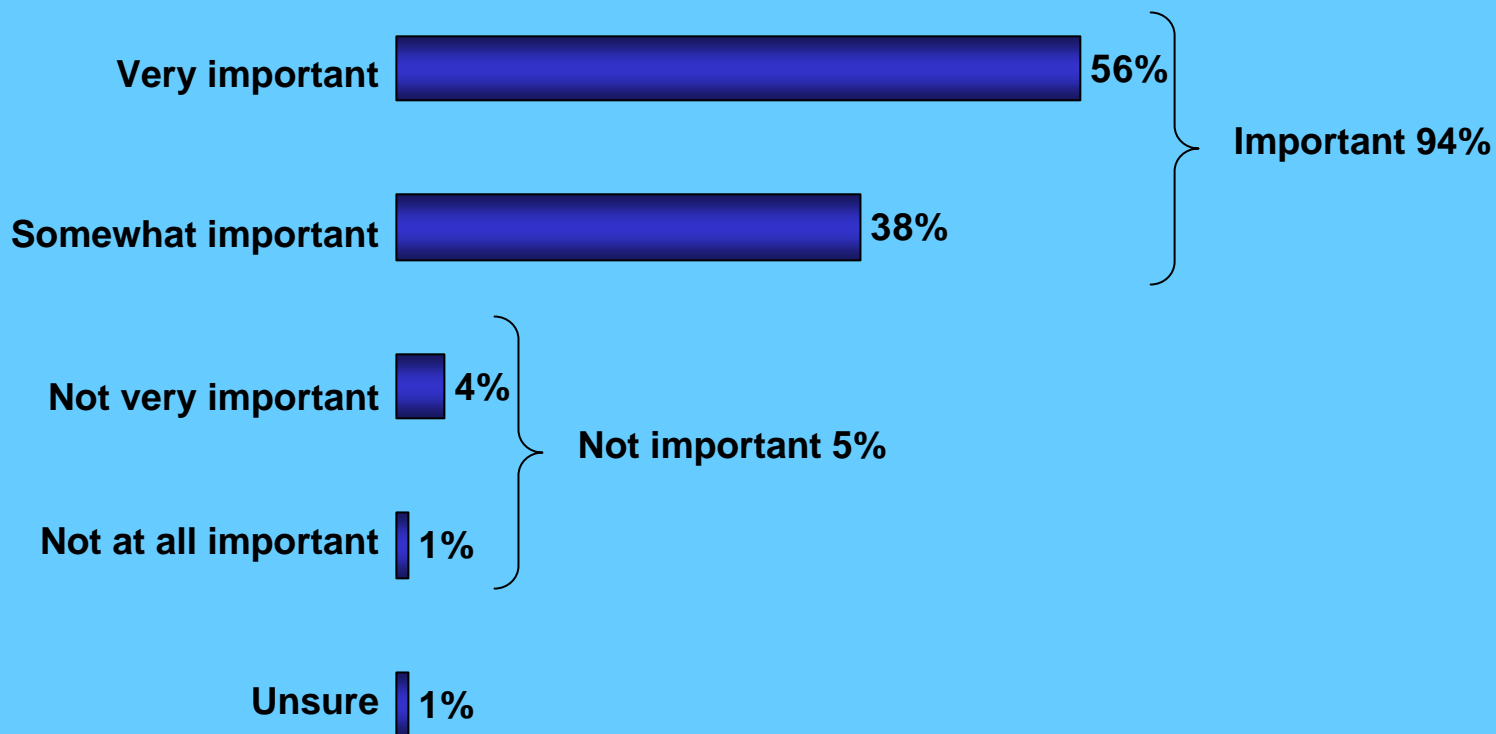


Base: All Respondents (n=751)

GRASSROOTS FOR GRASSLANDS

Green Polling in the East Kootenay

C1. Private land only makes up 11% of the Columbia-Kootenay region, but is located in the valley bottoms which are important habitat to many species of fish and wildlife. How important is it to you to look after or conserve the private land in valley bottoms in its natural state in the Columbia-Kootenay region?



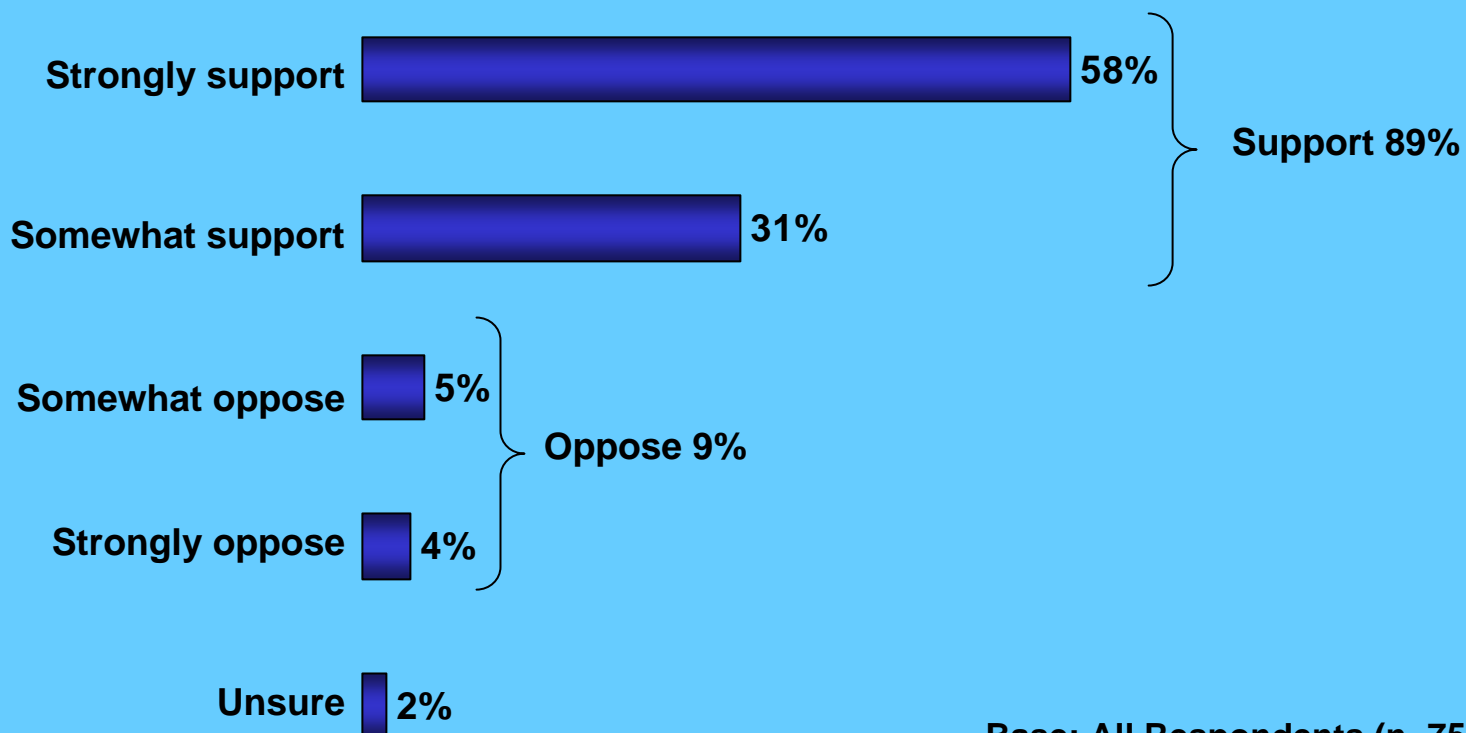
Base: All Respondents (n=751)

GRASSROOTS FOR GRASSLANDS

Green Polling in the East Kootenay

D1. Numerous communities across Canada and North America (including cities, small towns and counties) have recognized the need to provide funding for private land conservation. These initiatives are meant to conserve farmland, protect watersheds, habitat for birds and wildlife and conserve recreational access.

Do you support or oppose the idea of creating a dedicated conservation fund in the Columbia-Kootenay region to support environmental conservation initiatives? Is that strongly or somewhat?

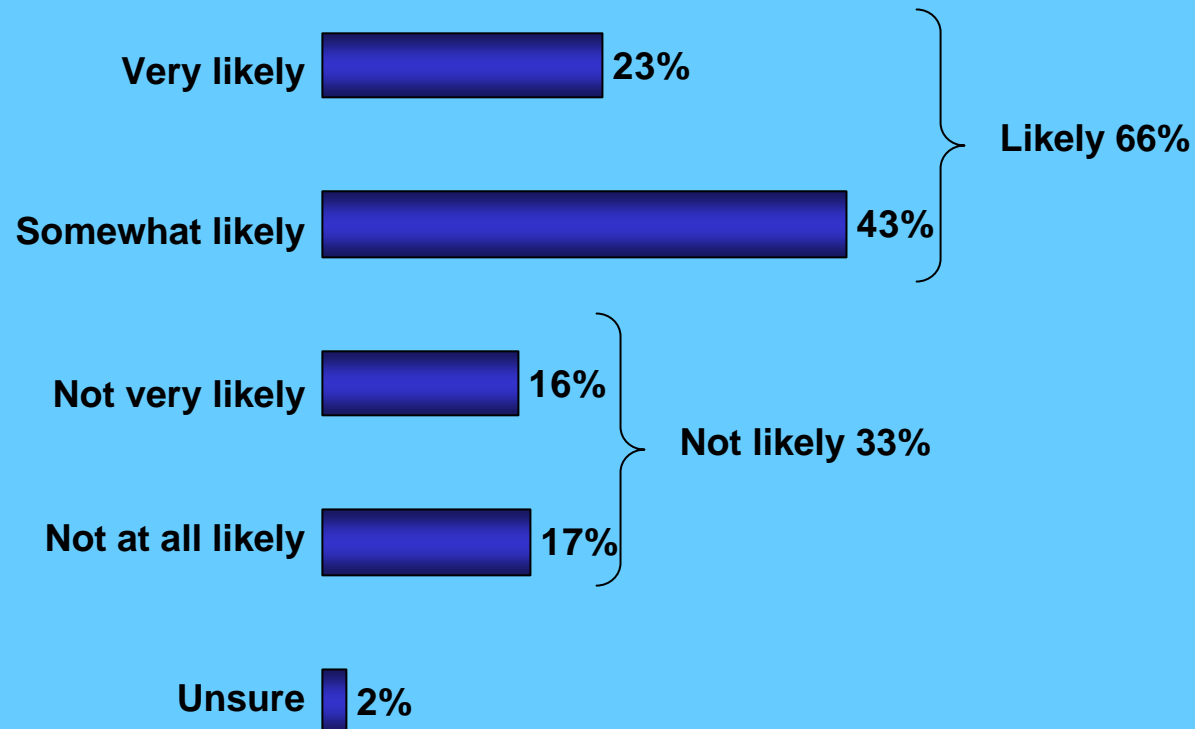


Base: All Respondents (n=751)

GRASSROOTS FOR GRASSLANDS

Green Polling in the East Kootenay

D3. How likely would you be to contribute financially to the creation of a conservation fund? Please note, we are not asking you to donate at this time nor will we be following up this call with a request for a financial donation. Would you be...

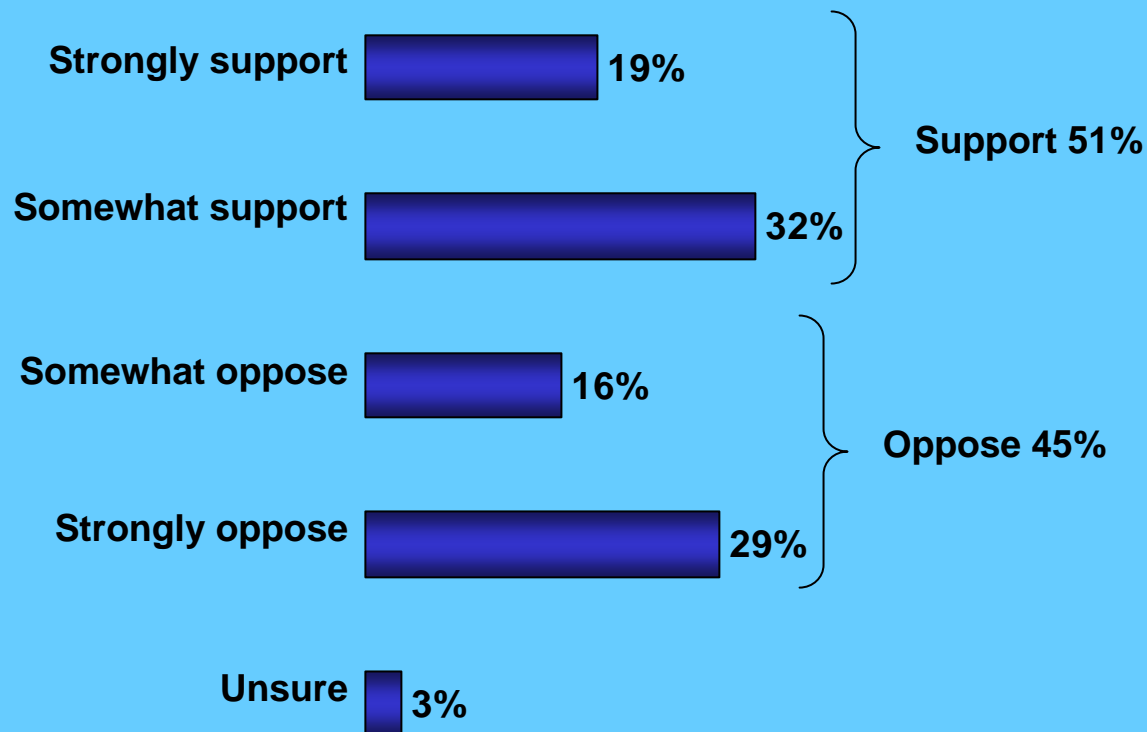


Base: All Respondents (n=751)

GRASSROOTS FOR GRASSLANDS

Green Polling in the East Kootenay

D4. One possible way of paying for conservation initiatives is by creating a local levy that all landowners would pay. How much do you support or oppose the idea of creating a mandatory levy to support environmental conservation initiatives? Is that strongly or somewhat?

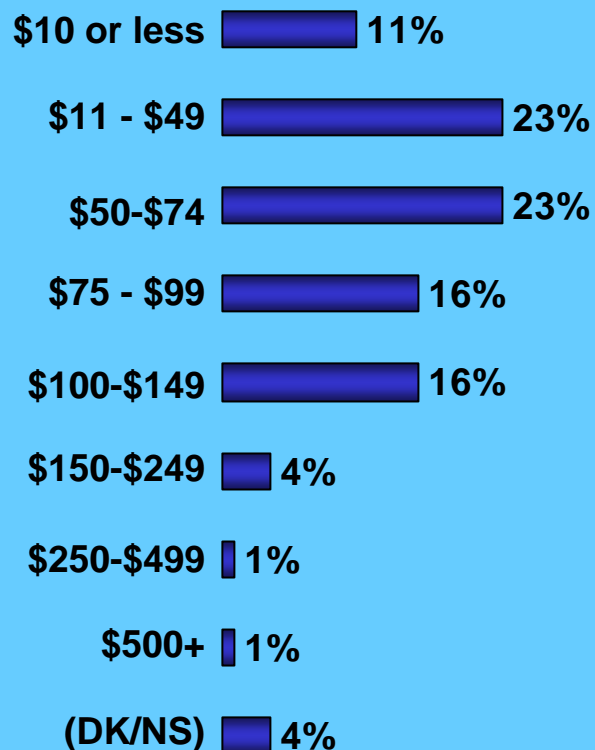


Base: All Respondents (n=751)

GRASSROOTS FOR GRASSLANDS

Green Polling in the East Kootenay

D5. [ASK TO THOSE THAT SAID STRONGLY OR SOMEWHAT SUPPORTIN D4] I am going to read you range of dollar figures, please ask me to stop when you feel I have reached a range that you would be willing to pay on an annual basis towards a dedicated conservation levy in the Columbia-Kootenay region.



MEAN Annual Price Point \$80

By Household Income:

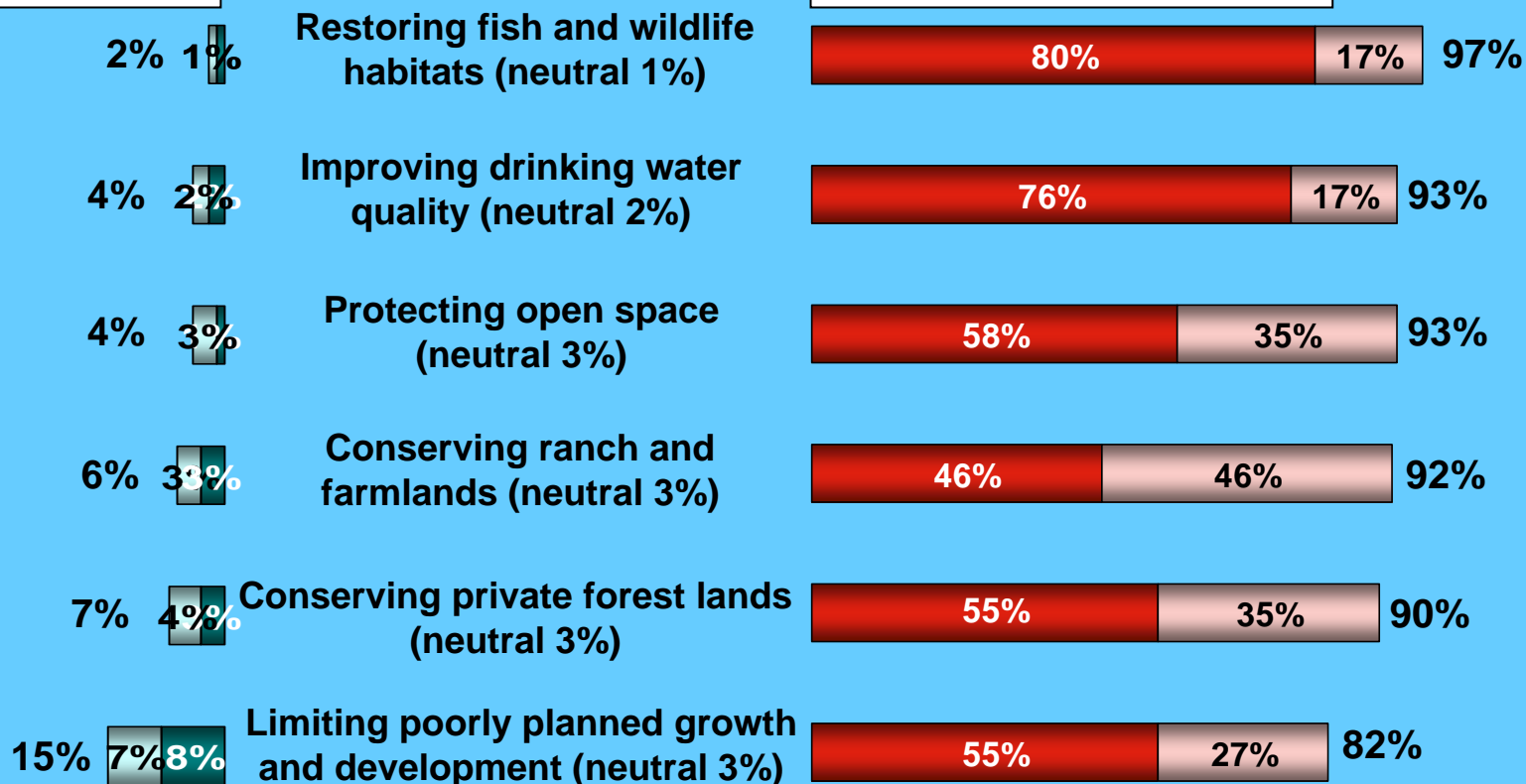
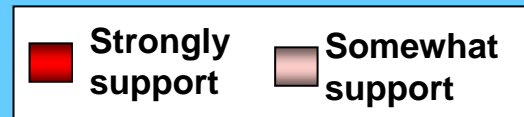
- Less than \$25K = \$59/year
- \$25-\$49K = \$67/year
- \$50-\$74K = \$90/year
- \$75K or more= \$111/year

Base: Those that support the levy (n=389)

GRASSROOTS FOR GRASSLANDS

Green Polling in the East Kootenay

D6. Please tell me whether you support or oppose money being used from a conservation fund for the following types of conservation activities. Is that strongly or somewhat (support/oppose)?

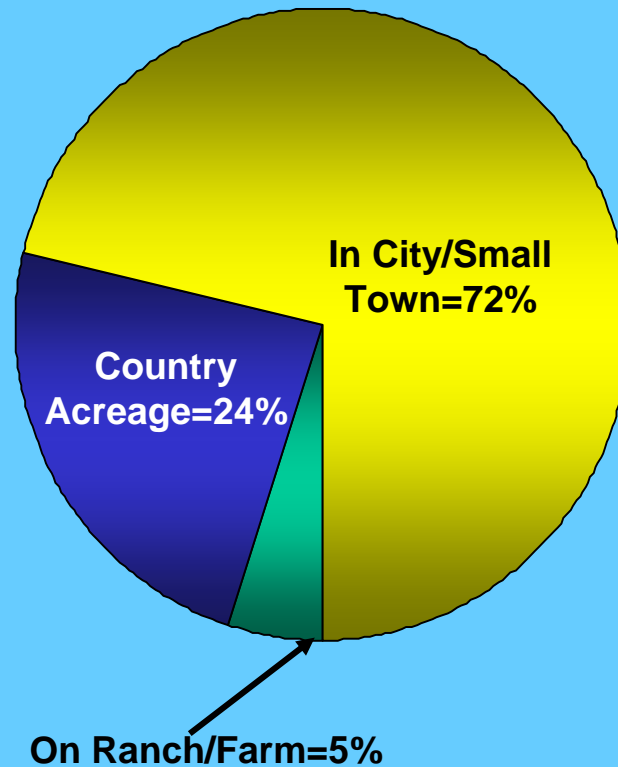


Base: Those that support the levy (n=389)

GRASSROOTS FOR GRASSLANDS

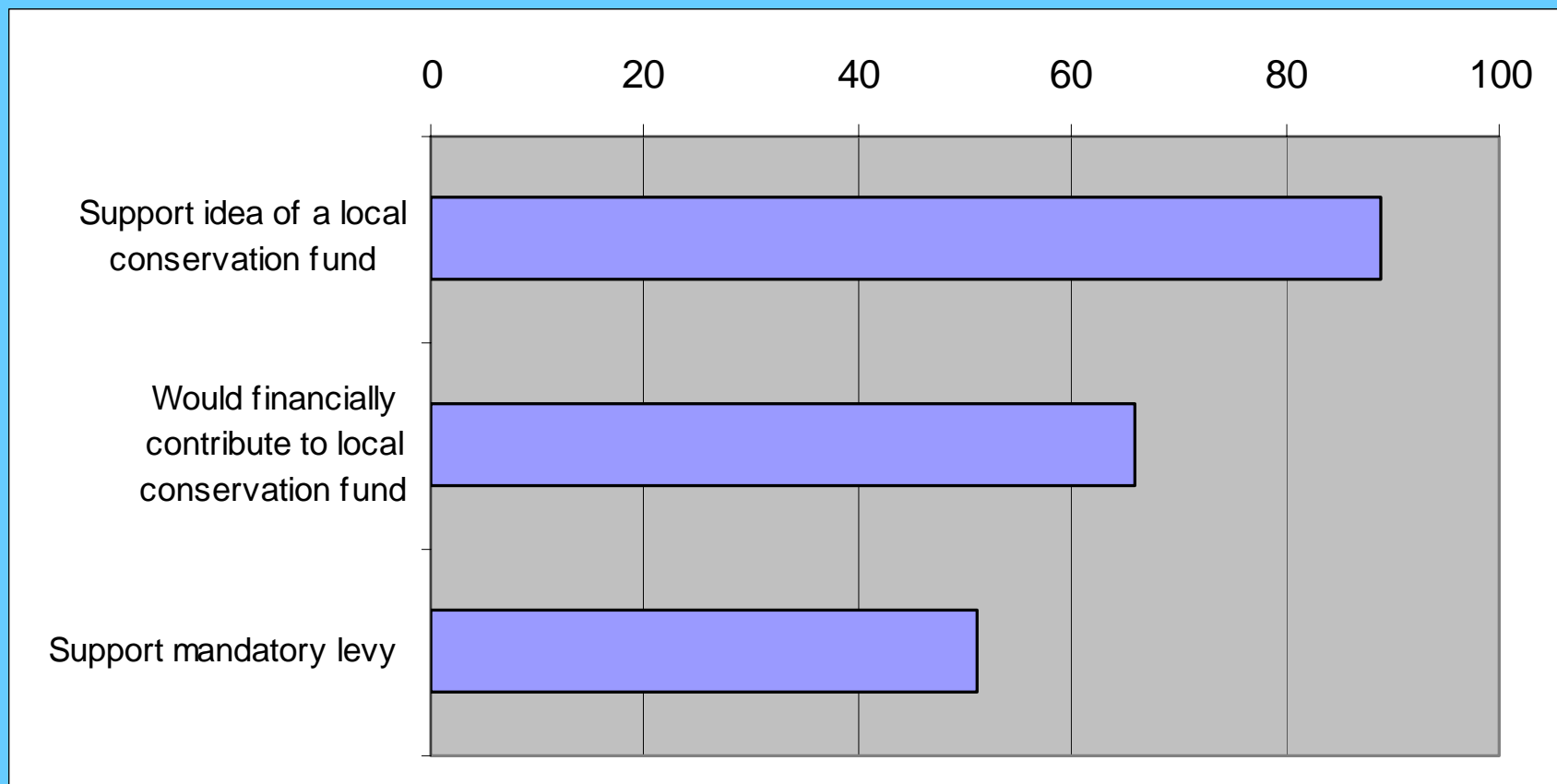
Green Polling in the East Kootenay

**CURRENTLY
LIVE**



Base: All Respondents (n=751)

Local conservation fund Concept



Focus Group Research

- August 2006 (Radium & Cranbrook)
- Findings:
 - Outraged by all the development
 - Did not want to “close the door” once they moved here, but need to look after the landscape that is drawing everybody here
 - Would pay \$25 per year on property taxes IF went to local conservation projects decided by locals
 - Time limit to fund (ie. 10 years)
 - Wanted coordinating body to ensure priority projects were undertaken
 - Never heard of the EKCP – thought it was a good idea

Political Feedback

- Regional District of East Kootenay
 - Cautious acceptance of poll
 - Skeptical of “conservation fund”
 - Adding another tax to the public is never good

Next Steps

- Detailed plan on the fund and its use.
- Need 51% of Board approval to proceed to public vote for conservation fund.
- Two different processes to be engaged in.
- Two voting systems:
 - Alternate approval process
 - Referendum in conjunction with normal local elections (Nov. 2008)

Next Steps - Issues

- EKCP very limited name recognition
 - Going to oversee this fund but who are they?
- Public not fully supportive of conservation fund (i.e. willing to pay)
- Need an educational – informational campaign

What to do different?

- Do not expect to jump from poll results to end product very quickly!
- This is a 2 to 3 year process – budget for the time and costs!
- Need to budget and plan for a public education campaign!
CRITICAL
- First poll is just the beginning – find the weakness in your support, educate and inform the voters, poll again, test the referendum question, have a comprehensive plan in place on where, why, how the money will be spend.

What to do different?

- The first poll is JUST the beginning.
- Need to enter this process with the ability to do all the steps – skipping steps could cost you dearly
- First poll is just the beginning
 - find the weakness in your support
 - educate and inform the voters – target your approach
 - poll again to see if support for you initiative is growing
 - test the referendum question
- Have a comprehensive plan in place on where, why, when, what, and how the money will be collected and spend.

GRASSROOTS FOR GRASSLANDS

Green Polling in the East Kootenay

US Ballot
Measures for
local (State
and County)
conservation
funding.

Summary of Measure By Year	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Conservation Funds Approved</i>
1998	\$5,852,872,774
1999	\$2,225,135,868
2000	\$5,213,047,298
2001	\$1,529,510,437
2002	\$5,538,616,357
2003	\$1,215,871,985
2004	\$4,088,243,792
2005	\$1,678,003,889
2006	\$6,726,277,535
<u>2007</u>	<u>\$331,835,558</u>
TOTALS	\$44,366,687,855

Since 1988