



# Keep It Colorado

*December 2020*

# Methodology

New Bridge Strategy conducted an online survey among N=424 Coloradans ages 22-64 who live in counties that are serviced by a land trust\*.

Interviews were conducted November 24 - December 3, 2020 and were distributed proportionally by county. Modest weighting was applied in order to have an appropriate mix of gender, age, and ethnic background.

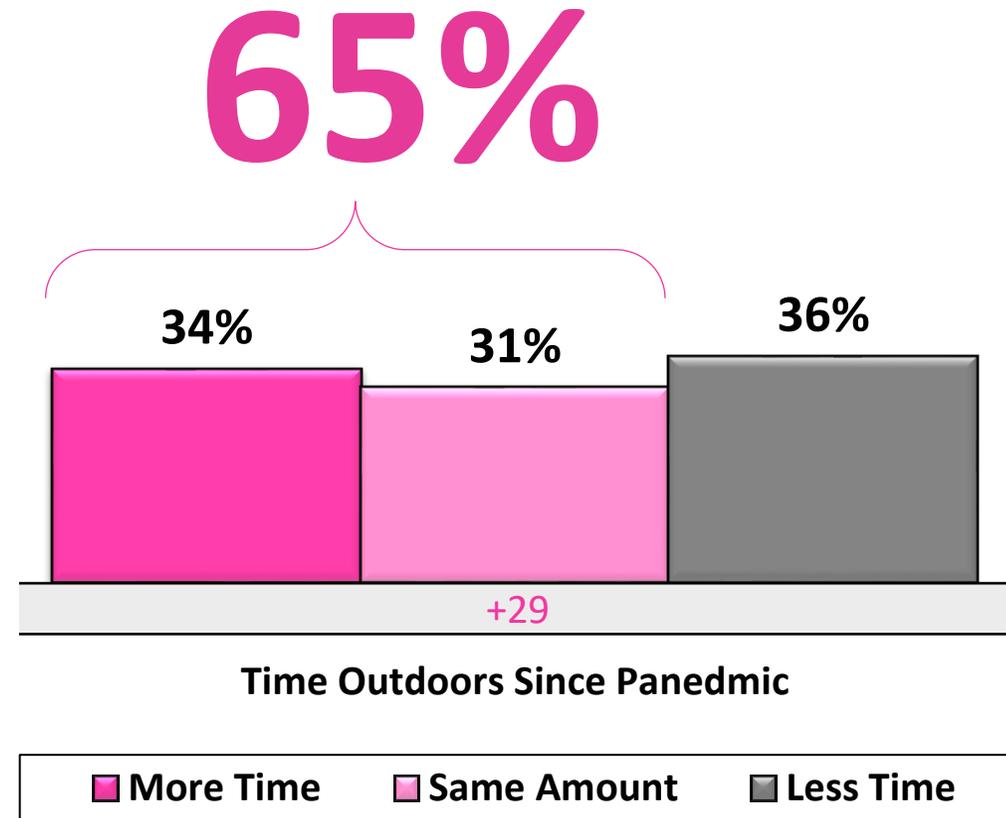
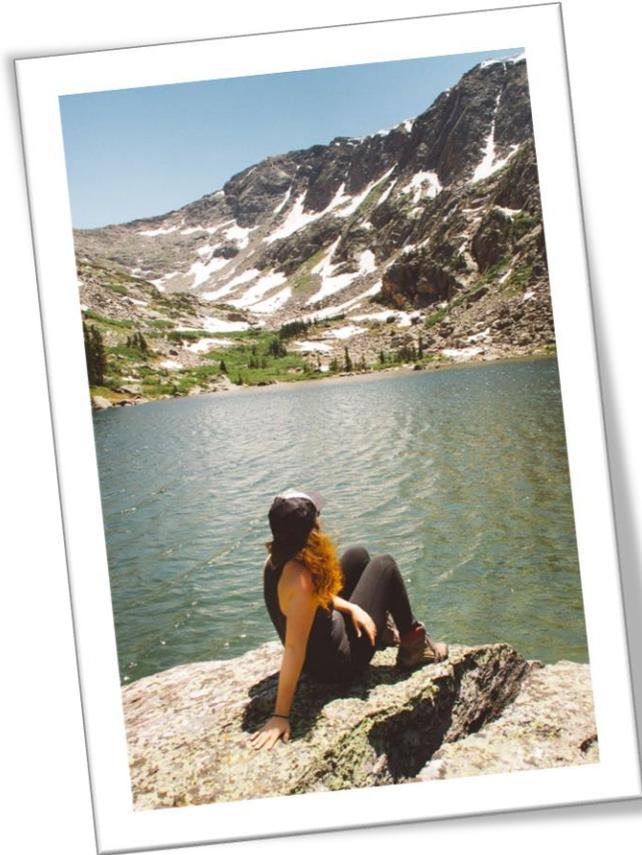
The credibility interval (analogous to margin of error) is  $\pm 5.43\%$  for the overall sample. The credibility interval will vary for sub-groups.

\* Counties included are Alamosa, Arapahoe, Archuleta, Baca, Bent, Boulder, Chaffee, Clear Creek, Conejos, Costilla, Crowley, Custer, Delta, Denver, Douglas, Eagle, Elbert, El Paso, Fremont, Garfield, Gilpin, Grand, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Huerfano, Jackson, Jefferson, Lake, La Plata, Las Animas, Larimer, Lincoln, Mesa, Montezuma, Montrose, Mineral, Pitkin, Park, Prowers, Pueblo, Otero, Ouray, Rio Grande, Saguache, San Miguel, San Juan and Teller counties.



# Core Perceptions

# Two-thirds of Coloradans have continued or increased their outdoor activities at parks or in nature during the pandemic.



*Since the coronavirus pandemic began, the types of things many Coloradans do for entertainment or recreation have changed.*

*Would you say that you have spent more time outdoors at parks or in nature, spent less time outdoors at parks or in nature, or spent the same amount of time in parks and nature?*

# They enjoy hiking, walking, and visiting at local parks the most.



Visiting a park or recreation area for a family gathering or picnic



*In which of the following outdoor recreational activities have you participated in the past year, if any? (Multiple responses accepted)*

# Over the last two years, just over one-third of these Coloradans have helped a wildlife or conservation non-profit by donating their money and/or time.

	 Total Helped	 Donated Money	 Volunteered Time	 Both	 Neither
A wildlife-related non-profit organization	<b>37%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>63%</b>
A conservation or environmental non-profit organization	<b>35%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>65%</b>
A political candidate or campaign	<b>27%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>73%</b>

*Thinking about you for a moment, in the past two years have you given money or volunteered your time to any of the following?*

# Respondents were only able to think of state and national conservation organizations. No one mentioned a local land trust.

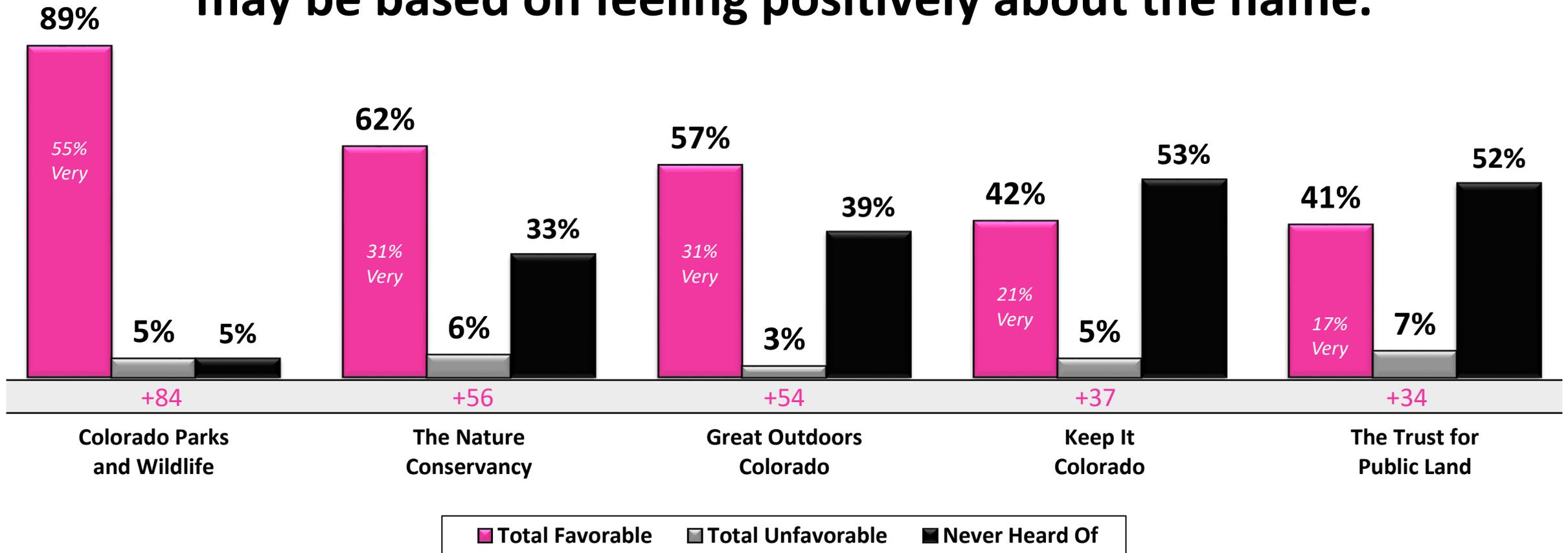
*There's a number of different organizations that help to conserve natural areas, wildlife habitat, prairies and mountain areas in our state. Some people are more familiar with these than others. What organizations come to mind, if any?*

Top Mentions	# of Responses
CO Parks and Wildlife (State Government)	34
Sierra Club	27
National Park Service	25
Bureau of Land Management	20
Nature Conservancy	10
World Wildlife Fund (WWF)	10



# **Views of Conservation Entities and Land Trusts**

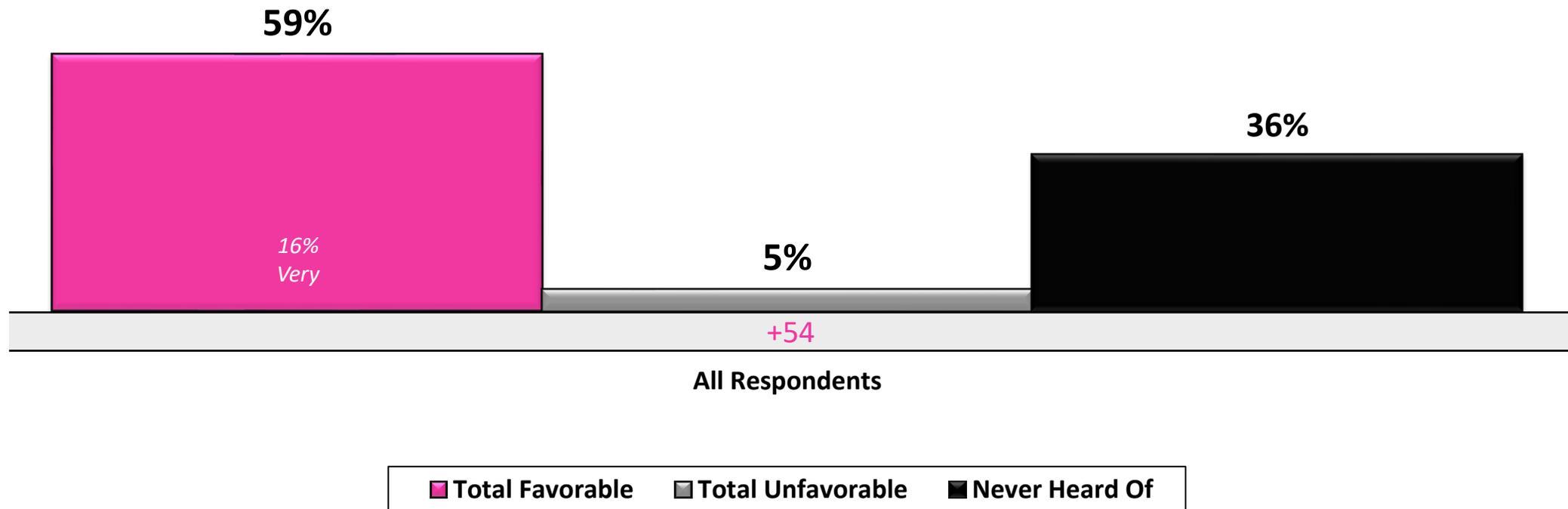
# Respondents have a favorable opinion of the state agency included and conservation organizations; however, some of this response may be based on feeling positively about the name.



For each of the following organizations, please indicate if you have a favorable or unfavorable impression. If you don't know enough to rate or have not heard of them, please indicate that instead.

# The generic reaction to a “land trust” is positive, albeit likely overstated.

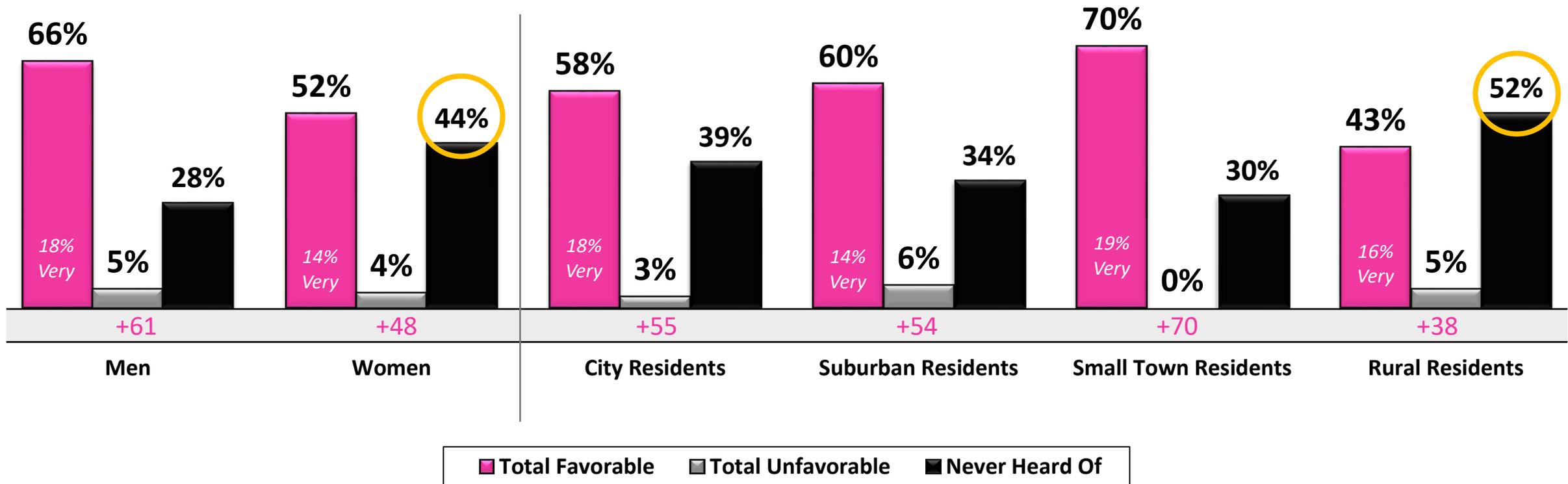
Image of “A Land Trust”



*For each of the following organizations, please indicate if you have a favorable or unfavorable impression. If you don't know enough to rate or have not heard of them, please indicate that instead.*

# Women and rural residents are the least familiar with a land trust.

Image of "A Land Trust"  
By Gender and Community Type



For each of the following organizations, please indicate if you have a favorable or unfavorable impression. If you don't know enough to rate or have not heard of them, please indicate that instead.

# Among those who said they had heard of a land trust, more were on track in describing what they do than were off base or unsure.

*And if a friend or neighbor asked you to describe what a land trust is or what it does, what would you say?*

**56%**

Fairly Closely  
Described

*“It works to identify and conserve land that offers natural habitat as well as land with recreational, agricultural use.”*  
– Male, Age 35-44, Democrat, Denver County

**44%**

Incorrectly Described/  
Unsure

*“An organization that takes care of land for the taxpayer.”*  
– Female, Age 25-34, Democrat, El Paso County

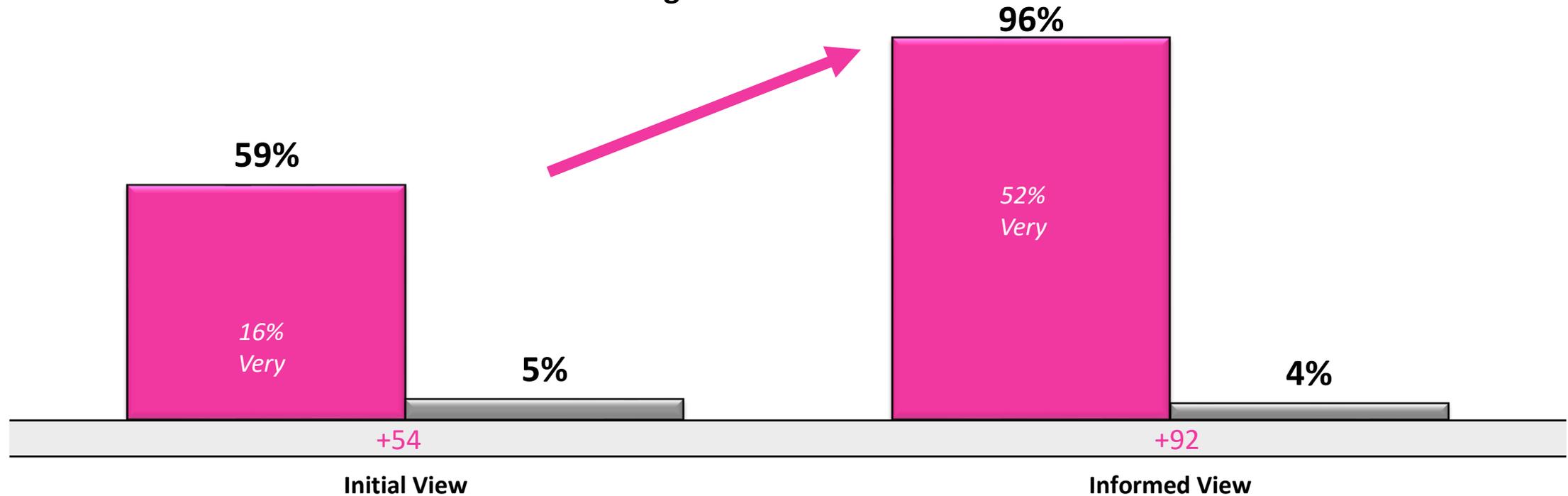
# Land Trust Explanation Provided

We provided respondents with a basic definition of a land trust.

*So everyone is on the same page, a land trust is a nonprofit organization that is supported primarily by private donations and occasionally receive grants from foundations or the Lottery. Land trusts work in partnership with private organizations, government agencies and other nonprofits to conserve land – either by purchasing it outright, or by negotiating voluntary agreements with land owners who agree to keep their land undeveloped. They do so for the benefit of people and wildlife that rely on these lands for water, food, and natural beauty, and they also provide opportunities for people to engage with nature and experience some of these lands.*

# Nearly everyone has a favorable opinion of a land trust, once they hear a quick explanation.

Image of "A Land Trust"



*Having heard that, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of a land trust?*

# About two-in-five, particularly women and residents in rural areas, have a favorable opinion after learning more about land trusts.

**38%**

Of Respondents  
Moved to a  
Favorable Opinion  
of a Land Trust

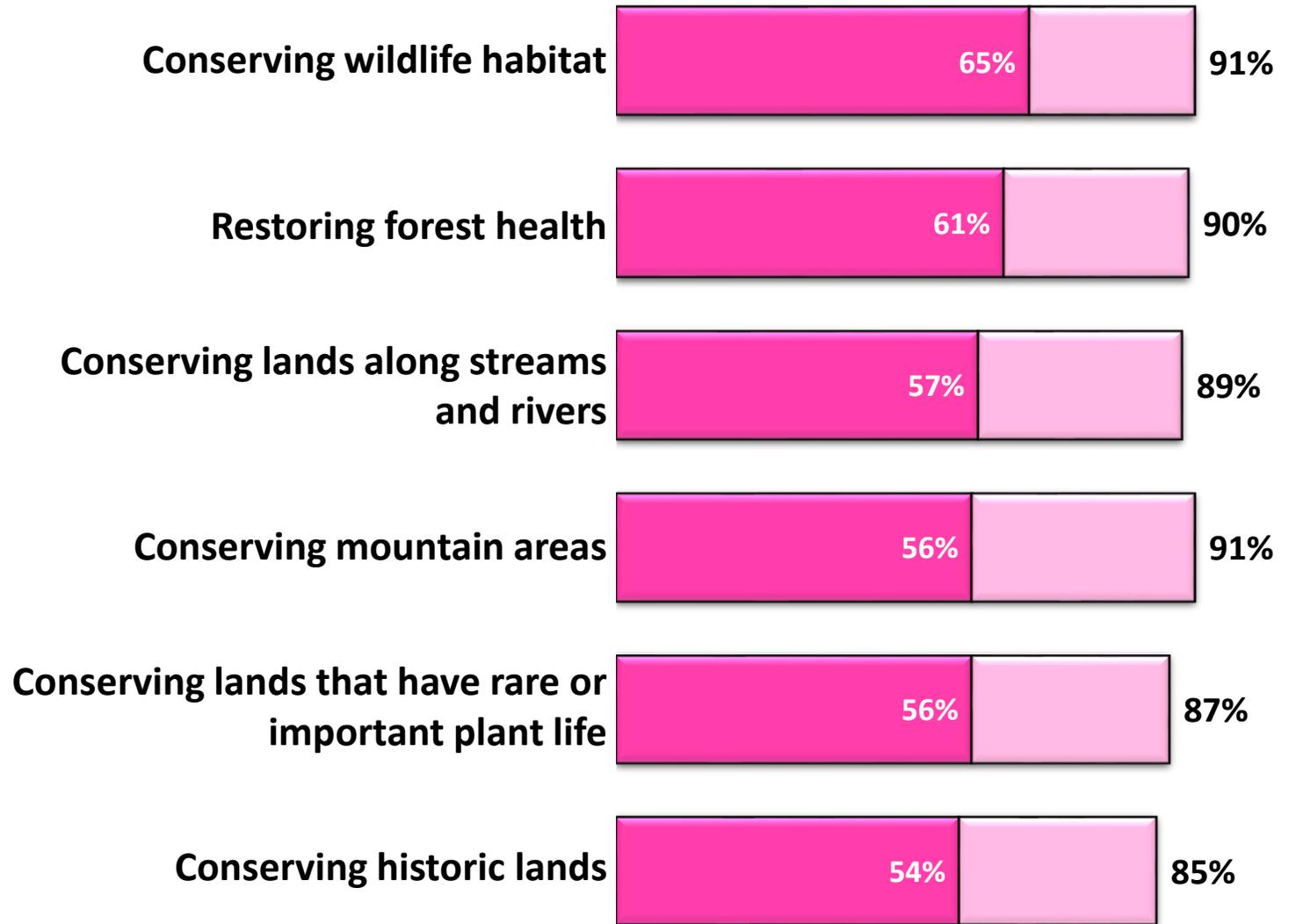


Small Town/Rural Women	63%
Rural Residents	51%
Independent Women	51%
Women 45+	51%
Women with less than College Education	48%
Less than \$40K Household Income	47%
Women with less than \$75K Household Income	47%
Non-Climate Change Believers	47%
Women	45%
Southwest Suburbs	45%
East Plains Region	44%
High School or Less Education	44%
Non-helpers (didn't donate or volunteer with conservation/environmental non-profit)	44%

*Having heard that, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of a land trust?*

**More than half of respondents say actions related to conserving the land are extremely important responsibilities for land trusts to undertake.**

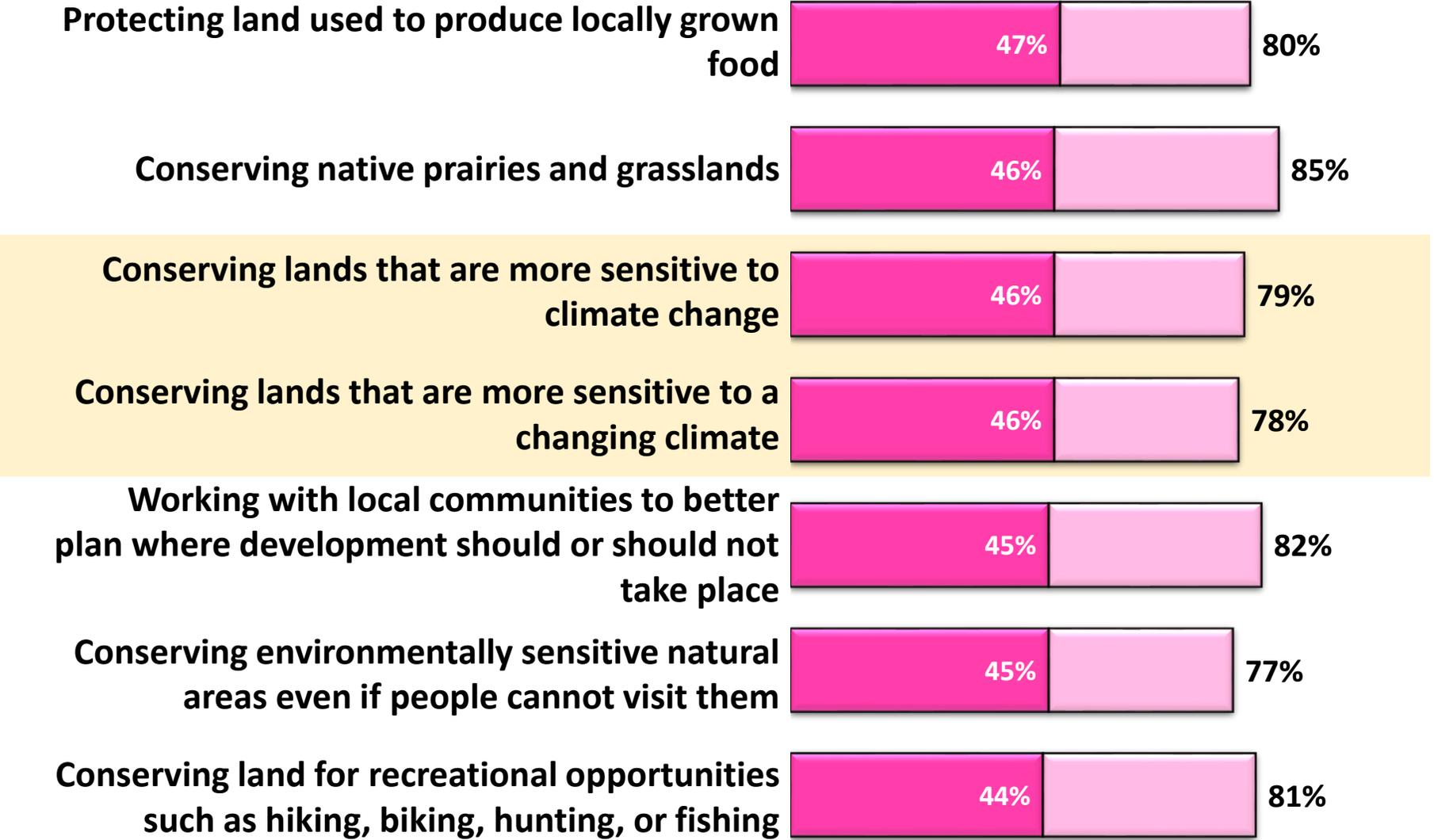
Extremely Important    Extremely/Very Important



*The following is a list of different tasks or responsibilities that some land trusts in Colorado undertake. For each one, please indicate how important that is to you personally. Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not that important to you?*

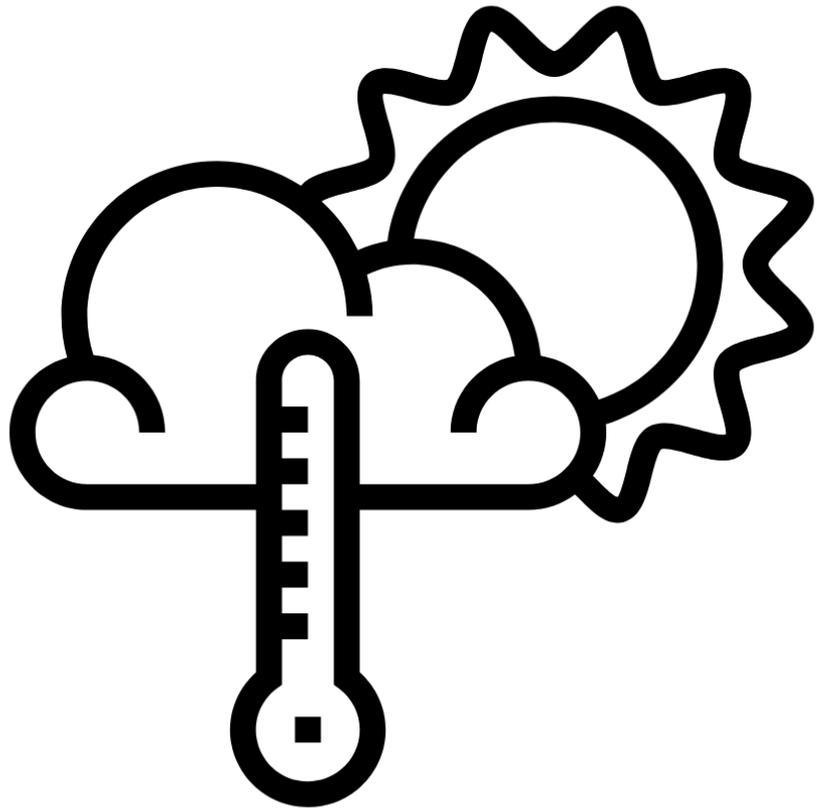
**Second tier responsibilities focus on protecting crops, conserving land sensitive to climate change, and planning development.**

Extremely Important    Extremely/Very Important



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**It is worth noting that the vast majority of these respondents believe climate change is happening, but we have seen skepticism in other research among more conservative audiences in the state.**



**88%**

**Of All Respondents Say “Yes, Climate Change Is Occurring”**

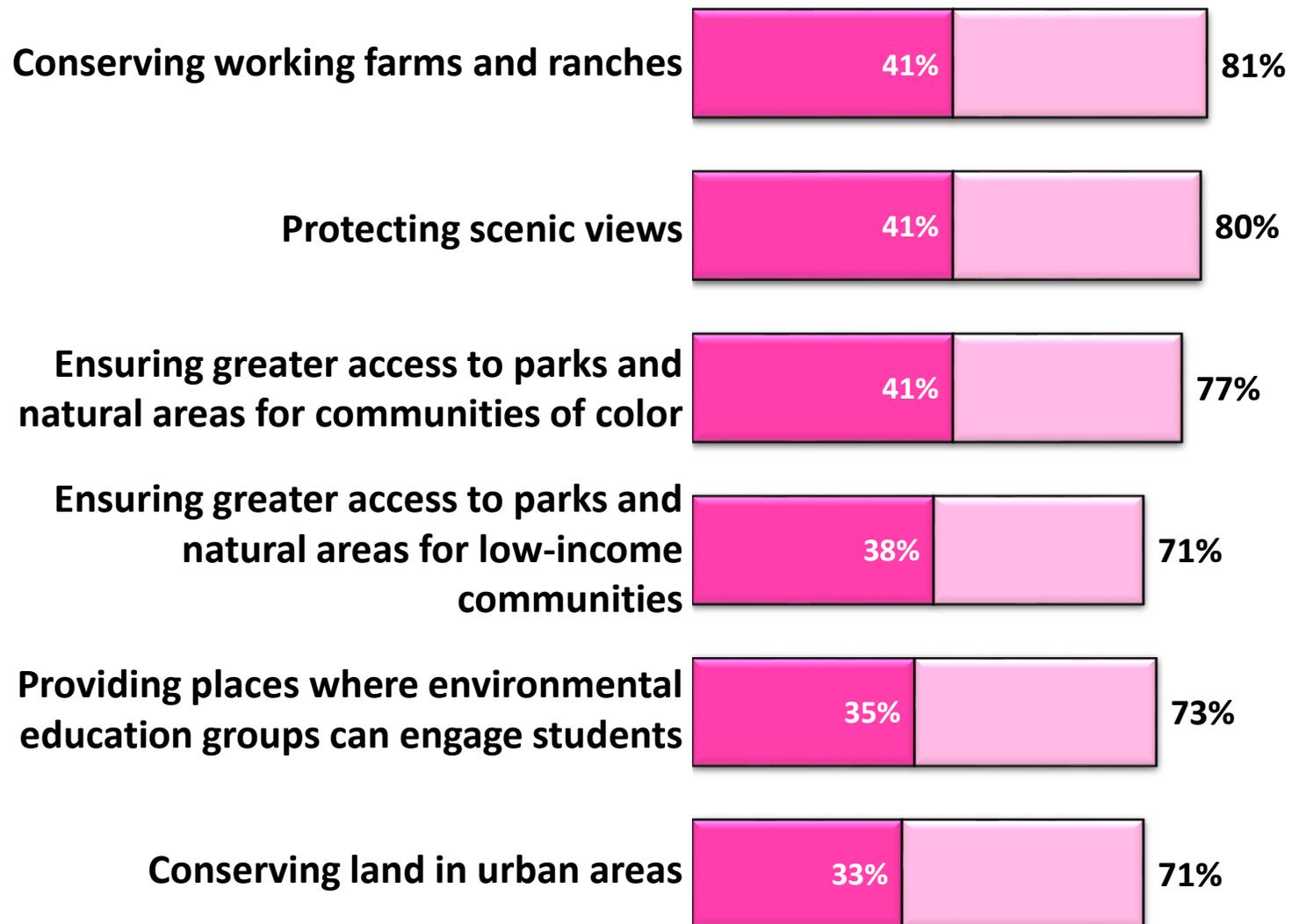
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Republicans	73%
Independents	90%
Democrats	98%

*Do you think climate change is happening or not?*

**Even the lower rated priorities are considered by 70-80% of respondents to be extremely or very important tasks for land trusts to carry out.**

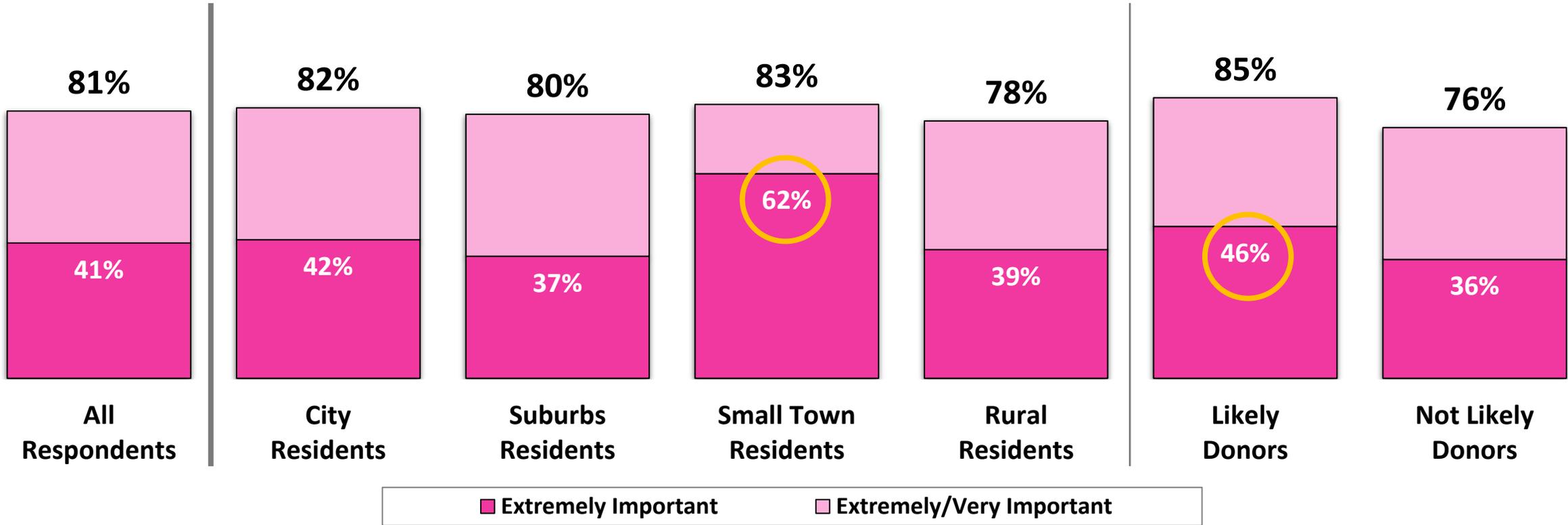
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# Small town residents and likely donors are most likely to say conserving working farms and ranches is important.

Conserving working farms and ranches



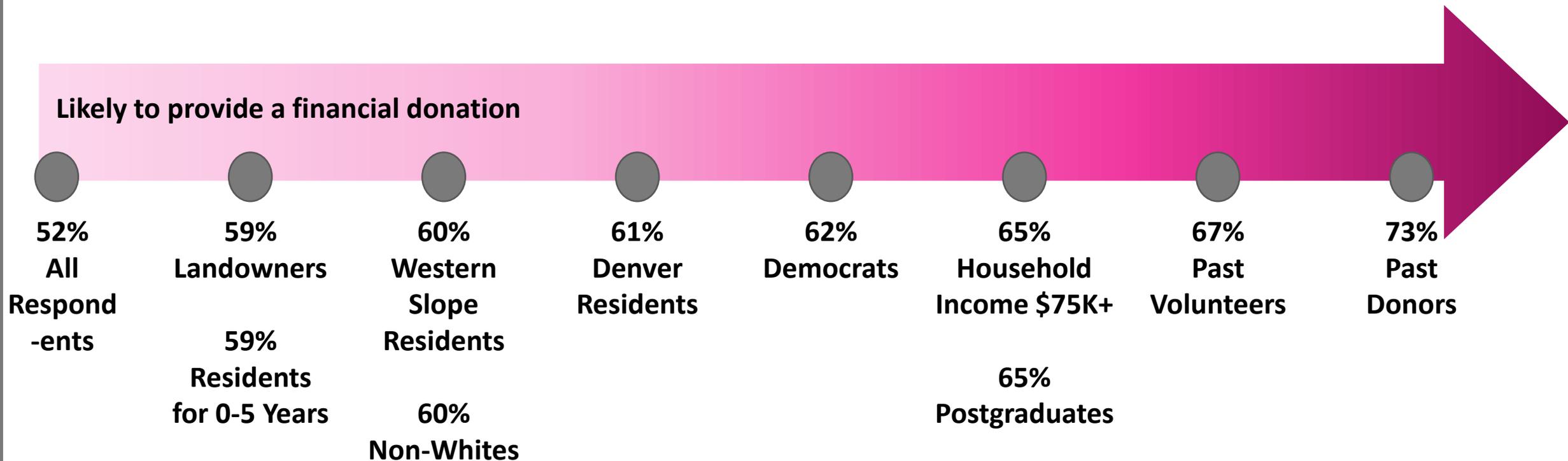
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# There is a clear preference for joining a hike on locally conserved land as a first step in engagement.



*There is a local land trust conserving natural areas near you. For each one of the following please indicate if you are very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely or not at all likely to engage in that activity, assuming the activity can be held next year when it is safer to do so from a health perspective.*

# Past donors and volunteers of a conservation organization are the most likely demographics to say they would donate to a land trust, followed by those with higher income/education and Democrats.



*There is a local land trust conserving natural areas near you. For each one of the following please indicate if you are very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely or not at all likely to engage in that activity, assuming the activity can be held next year when it is safer to do so from a health perspective.*

# Why Respondents Would Not Donate To A Land Trust

*What more would you need to learn about this organization in order to want to provide a financial donation?  
Or are there specific reasons you would NOT want to provide a financial donation at this time?*

Top Mentions	Percentage
Can't afford it (general)	45%
Need more info about how their money is used	20%
Pandemic (has worsened financial situation)	14%
Unemployed	5%
Need to know more about the organization	4%
Donate to other organizations	3%
Don't donate	2%
Other priorities for donations right now (food banks, homeless shelters)	2%
Would volunteer time	1%
Don't donate to big organizations	1%



# Messages

# Restoring natural areas should happen everywhere so all Coloradans can enjoy the land according to these respondents.

*In general, would you say it is more important to ...*

*Safeguard and restore natural areas no matter where they are so they are conserved for all Coloradans*

88%

*...OR...*

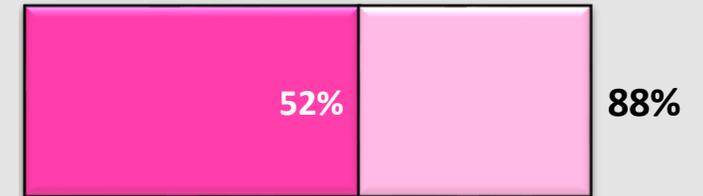
*Safeguard and restore natural areas closer to home so you can see and enjoy them*

12%

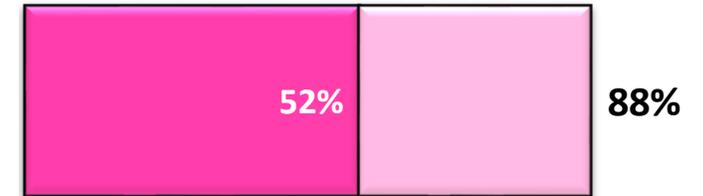
# Most would support land trusts because of Colorado's outdoor way of life, its growing population, and their need for clean water.

Very Convincing Total Convincing

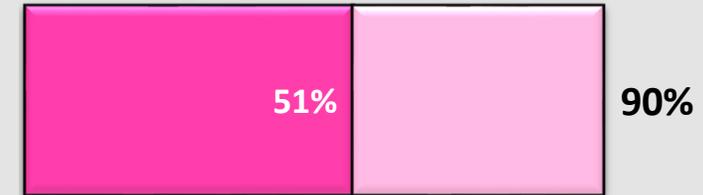
The **outdoors are important to our way of life** in Colorado, from the mountains to the prairies, and from the ranches to the places we love for camping or hiking. We can work together to maintain the places we care about so our children and grandchildren can enjoy them much as we have.



Colorado is one of the **fastest growing states in the country**, with another 743 thousand people projected to move here in the next ten years. If we fail to act now to conserve what we love about our state, our mountain areas and open space may be lost forever.



**Nothing is more important than having clean water to drink.** By protecting land around rivers, lakes, and streams, we can prevent polluted runoff from flowing into the sources of our drinking water supplies.



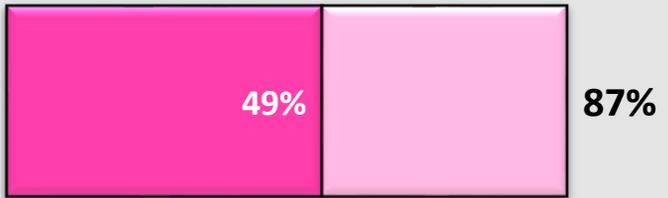
*The following are a number of reasons some people say we need to support the work of land trusts in conserving land, water and wildlife in Colorado.*

*For each one, please rate that statement as to whether you find it very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing or not at all convincing as a reason to support the work of land trusts in your area.*

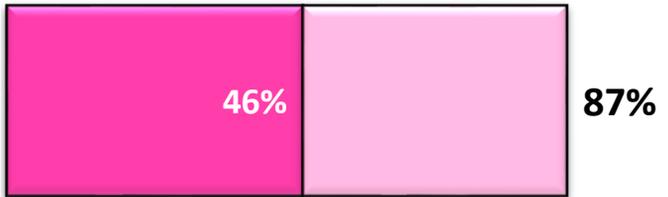
# They also believe in protecting the land from climate change and to ensure future generations can continue enjoying it just as they have.



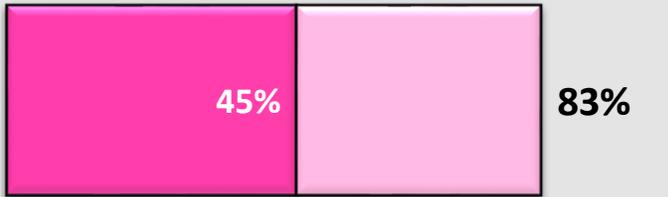
To local land trusts, **conservation is about protecting what we have today** so that people and wildlife can thrive in the future. It is critical to maintaining healthy lands and waters, which we need not only to survive, but to sustain a high quality of life.



Local land trusts help **conserve lands that provide a range of benefits with our changing climate**. They help to ensure there are more healthy natural areas in our state that help to store carbon in trees, plants and soil; remove harmful emissions from the air; reduce erosion; and ensure the health of more types of plants and wildlife throughout our state.



Most of us in Colorado have a **personal connection to our natural lands**. Whether it is Indigenous peoples who have ancestral ties to these lands, families who have farmed and ranched here for generations, or those who love to ski or camp in the same beautiful places year after year, conserving these natural areas demonstrates our shared love for Colorado.

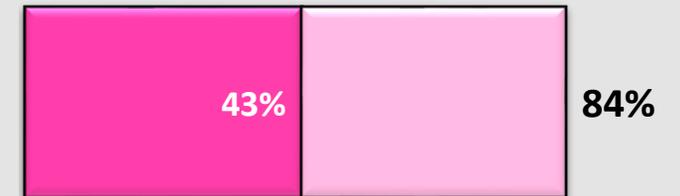


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# While these Coloradans like that land trusts can voice a local perspective, they aren't as compelled by matching funds.

Very Convincing Total Convincing

In these difficult times we have seen how important spending time in the outdoors and nature is for our mental and physical health. It is more important than ever to work together to conserve the natural beauty of the places we love in Colorado.



Land trusts in your community bring a local perspective and voice to some of the challenges that Colorado's land, water and wildlife face today. They are important advocates for ensuring that sensitive natural areas are conserved throughout our state, and in all types of communities.



Your contribution to a non-profit land trust can leverage additional money from private organizations or the Colorado Lottery to protect open space. Through these partnerships, we can accomplish much more toward conserving natural areas.



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*For each one, please rate that statement as to whether you find it very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing or not at all convincing as a reason to support the work of land trusts in your area.*

# Women are more apt to respond to growth concerns, while men are convinced by the outdoor way of life and having clean water which crosses over with women's next top messages.

Women	Men
Fastest Growing States in Country 61%	Outdoor Way of life in Colorado 43%
Outdoor Way of life in Colorado 59%	Nothing More Important than Clean Water 43%
Nothing More Important than Clean Water 59%	Personal Connection to Natural Lands 43%

Showing % Very Convincing

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# Growth is the one of the few consistent messages across each community type. Rural residents respond well to the message about personal connection with the land.

City Residents	Suburban Residents	Small Town Residents	Rural Residents
Nothing More Important than Clean Water 61%	Outdoor Way of life in Colorado 55%	Fastest Growing States in Country 73%	Personal Connection to Natural Lands 53%
Changing Climate 61%	Nothing More Important than Clean Water 49%	Protecting What We Have Today 64%	Protecting What We Have Today 49%
Fastest Growing States in Country 54%	Fastest Growing States in Country 49%	Outdoor Way of life in Colorado 59%	Fastest Growing States in Country 42%

Showing % Very Convincing

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# Message preferences are also impacted by the length of time a resident has lived in the area. Having clean water is the most universal message for these segments.

Resident for 0-5 Years	Resident for 6-15 Years	Resident for 16-24 Years	Resident for 25+ Years	Native Resident
Outdoor Way of life in Colorado 50%	Nothing More Important than Clean Water 58%	Importance of Time Outdoors 62%	Outdoor Way of life in Colorado 65%	Fastest Growing States in Country 58%
Protecting What We Have Today 48%	Protecting What We Have Today 52%	Changing Climate 61%	Fastest Growing States in Country 58%	Personal Connection to Natural Lands 52%
Importance of Time Outdoors 45%	Outdoor Way of life in Colorado 51%	Nothing More Important than Clean Water 59%	Nothing More Important than Clean Water 57%	Nothing More Important than Clean Water 47%

Showing % Very Convincing

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# Messages about growth and our outdoor way of life resonate with those most active already; some cross-over messages with those less engaged.

Past Donors
Fastest Growing States in Country 75%
Personal Connection to Natural Lands 68%
Protecting What We Have Today 61%

Past Volunteers
Outdoor Way of life in Colorado 52%
Changing Climate 50%
Fastest Growing States in Country 50%

Non-Helpers
Nothing More Important than Clean Water 49%
Protecting What We Have Today 48%
Outdoor Way of life in Colorado 47%

Showing % Very Convincing

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# The Bottom Line

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- Slightly more than one-third of respondents have donated their time and/or money to a conservation/environmental non-profit organization, despite the vast majority of respondents believing in climate change and enjoying outdoor activities.
- Respondents have a favorable opinion of conservation/environmental non-profit organizations.
- However, there is limited knowledge of local land trust organizations, particularly among women and rural residents.
- All responsibilities undertaken by land trusts are considered extremely/very important by more than 70% of respondents.
- More than three-quarters of respondents would be interested in participating in a hike to learn more about a local land trust. Only half of respondents would be likely to donate financially to these organizations.
- Top messages to persuade respondents to support and financially contribute to a land trust include Colorado's outdoor way of life and its growing population.



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