

Opinion Polling and the Environment

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The environment is not often a key issue in political campaigns. Polls at the nation, state, and local levels consistently show other issues to be of more concern to the voters (e.g., Jobs, Education, Crime).

Some voters are “single issue” voters (e.g., abortion, gun control). That is, if the candidates have opposing positions on your “single issue,” you vote for the candidate holding your position, regardless of any other positions they may hold. There is no large single issue constituency for the environment.

Occasionally people are asked to choose between alternatives having both environmental and economic consequences. When the economic and environmental consequences appear to be opposed to each other, the economic consequences are usually seen as more important. The only exceptions are when the environmental consequences are perceived to be huge, or directly impact our daily life.