

MEMORANDUM

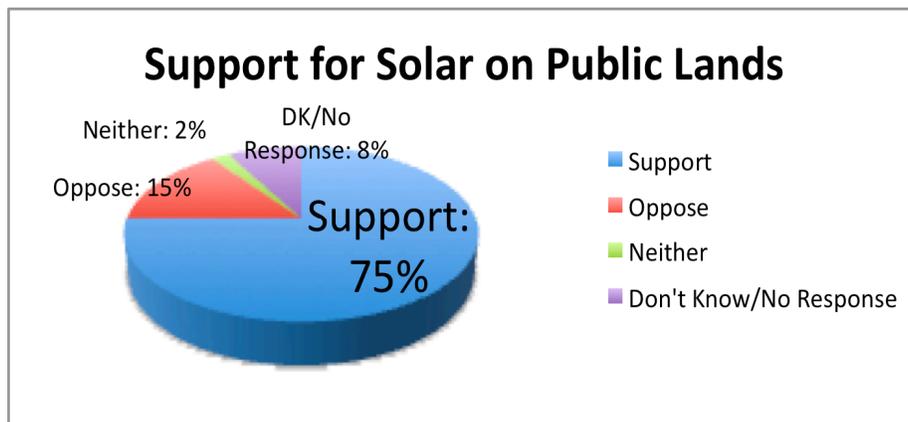
TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Gotham Research Group
SUBJECT: Summary of National Survey Findings
DATE: March 18, 2010

Below are an overview and key findings from a survey of 500 U.S. adults, age 18+, conducted February 24 through February 26, 2010.

Overview

This poll examined public opinion about developing utility-scale solar power projects on public lands that has not already been set aside for national parks and nature preserves in the western United States. The results indicate strong public support for utility-scale solar power development on public lands and complements earlier polling that found that 92 percent of Americans think it is important to develop and use solar energy.¹

- **Three out four (75 percent of) Americans support developing solar energy plants on public lands.**
- **Producing solar power is the top choice as the best use of this land (38 percent).**
- **Americans choose solar energy farms (22 percent) and wind energy farms (22 percent) as the top energy sources for the U.S. government to support.**
- **The most important energy challenge facing the country today is developing energy sources while protecting the environment, according to respondents (26 percent).**



¹ http://www.seia.org/cs/news_detail?pressrelease.id=638

Key Findings

Strong Support for Solar Energy

- A recent national telephone survey of U.S. adults demonstrates that there is broad support for utility-scale solar initiatives, particularly developing solar energy plants on public lands in the western United States.
- 75 percent of Americans say they support developing solar energy plants on federal land not being set aside for national parks and nature preserves (39 percent “strongly support”; 36 percent “somewhat support”). Self-identified Democrats and Republicans report similar levels of support (74 percent and 73 percent respectively), while Independents are most supportive of solar energy plants (79 percent),

Summary Table

See appendix for full question wording.

<i>Please tell me whether you support or oppose developing solar energy plants on this federal land?</i>	Total Sample	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
NET: Support	75%	74%	79%	73%
NET: Oppose	15%	17%	10%	16%
Strongly support	39%	44%	37%	33%
Somewhat support	36%	30%	42%	41%
Somewhat oppose	6%	6%	5%	6%
Strongly oppose	9%	11%	5%	10%

- In addition, when asked to weigh several options for how to use this federal land, “producing solar power” is Americans’ clear top choice. Democrats are most supportive of developing solar power on federal land, followed by Independents. Among Republicans, solar power is rated in second place after “drilling for oil.”

Summary Table

See appendix for full question wording.

<i>Which one of the following do you think is the best use of this federal land?</i>	Total Sample	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Producing solar power	38%	45%	38%	27%
Drilling for oil	18%	9%	18%	31%
Drilling for natural gas	18%	18%	18%	21%
Grazing cattle	9%	13%	7%	5%
Mining for minerals and ores	3%	3%	4%	3%
Riding off-road vehicles	1%	*	1%	1%

Energy Sources: Top Priority

- When asked which energy source should be the top priority for the U.S. government to support, solar energy farms and wind energy farms are tied as the top response. Democrats and Independents are most supportive of solar energy farms, while Republicans clearly prefer either wind energy farms or nuclear plants.

Summary Table

See appendix for full question wording.

<i>Which one do you think should be the top priority for the U.S. government to support?</i>	Total Sample	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Solar energy farms	22%	27%	26%	13%
Wind energy farms	22%	21%	22%	22%
Natural gas plants	16%	22%	11%	14%
Nuclear plants	16%	11%	22%	21%
Oil wells	11%	8%	3%	19%
Coal plants	4%	4%	5%	4%

Most Important Energy Challenge

- Americans report that the most important energy challenge facing the country today is “developing energy sources while protecting the environment” (26 percent), while “cutting the cost of utility bills” (19 percent) and “developing clean energy sources” (19 percent) represent a second tier of concern. Republicans are most likely to rate “developing energy sources while protecting the environment” as the most important challenge (33 percent), compared to 23 percent of Democrats and 21 percent of Independents.

Summary Table

See appendix for full question wording.

<i>Which of the following is the most important energy challenge facing the country today?</i>	Total Sample	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Developing energy sources while protecting the environment	26%	23%	21%	33%
Cutting the cost of utility bills	19%	17%	21%	21%
Developing clean energy sources	19%	23%	17%	18%
Being more energy efficient	15%	13%	14%	18%
Addressing climate change/global warming	9%	12%	10%	4%

Methodological Disclosure

The findings described in this release are based on a survey conducted on behalf of the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), the national trade association of the solar energy industry. The survey was conducted from February 24 through February 26, 2010 among a representative sample of 500 U.S. adults, age 18+. The margin of error on the total sample of 500 is +/- 4.4 percent. The study was conducted by telephone and respondents were drawn from a random digit dial (RDD) sample, which gives every household an equal chance of being called. All respondents were screened to ensure that they are currently 18 years or older. The overall sample results were weighted demographically and geographically based on the Current Population Survey of the U.S. Bureau of the Census. All the numbers are presented as percentages and, due to rounding, may not add up to 100 percent.

Appendix: Full Questionnaire & Total Sample Data

Below is the full questionnaire showing the order in which questions were read to respondents of the survey.

- Which of the following is the most important energy challenge facing the country today? (READ AND ROTATE; ACCEPT ONE ANSWER) [IF "ALL", ASK:] If you absolutely had to choose, which one would you say should be the top priority?

	Total Sample (n=500)
Developing energy sources while protecting the environment	26%
Cutting the cost of utility bills	19%
Developing clean energy sources	19%
Being more energy efficient	15%
Addressing climate change/global warming	9%
All of the above	7%
None of the above	2%
Other	1%
Don't know/Refused	1%

- Now I'm going to read you a list of energy sources. Which one do you think should be the top priority for the U.S. government to support? (READ AND ROTATE; ACCEPT ONE ANSWER) [IF "ALL", ASK:] If you absolutely had to choose, which one would you say should be the top priority?

	Total Sample (n=500)
Solar energy farms	22%
Wind energy farms	22%
Natural gas plants	16%
Nuclear plants	16%
Oil wells	11%
Coal plants	4%
All of the above	3%
None of the above	1%
Other	1%

Don't know/Refused	4%
--------------------	----

[READ TO ALL RESPONDENTS]

As you may know, the land owned by the federal government in the western United States is used for a variety of purposes. There's been discussion about what to do with some of the land – specifically the land that has NOT been set aside for national parks and nature preserves.

[ROTATE Q.3-4]

3. Please tell me whether you support or oppose developing solar energy plants on this federal land? [IF SUPPORT/OPOSE, ASK:] Do you strongly support/oppose or somewhat support/oppose?

	Total Sample (n=500)
Strongly support	39%
Somewhat support	36%
Somewhat oppose	6%
Strongly oppose	9%
NET: Support	75%
NET: Oppose	15%
Neither	2%
Don't know/Refused	8%

4. Which one of the following do you think is the best use of this federal land? (READ AND ROTATE; ACCEPT ONE ANSWER) [IF "ALL", ASK:] If you absolutely had to choose, which one would you say is the best use of this land?

	Total Sample (n=500)
Producing solar power	38%
Drilling for natural gas	18%
Drilling for oil	18%
Grazing cattle	9%
Mining for minerals and ores	3%
Riding off-road vehicles	1%
All of the above	1%
None of the above	3%
Other	2%
Don't know/Refused	7%