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Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates
Opinion Research & Public Policy Analysis
Santa Monica - Oakland - Madison, WI - Mexico City

PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION: Key Findings From a National Voter Survey

LORI WEIGEL *Public Opinion Strategies*

DAVE METZ *Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates*

METHODOLOGY

- **Conducted by the bi-partisan team of Public Opinion Strategies (Republican) and Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates (Democratic).**
- **800 voters throughout the nation, representative demographically of the electorate (margin of error of ± 3.8%).**
- **700 were reached via traditional land lines and 100 are those who exclusively or mostly use cell phones.**
- **Total of 500 additional voters in the West, excluding California (margin of error of ± 4.38%).**

METHODOLOGY

- **Interviews conducted September 8-13, 2009.**
- **Comparisons are made to similarly-conducted national surveys in 2004, 2007, and 2008.**
- **Margin of error for sub-groups varies with their size, and is higher for smaller groups.**
- **The survey was informed by eight focus groups with various segments of swing voters conducted in July and August in Kansas City, Denver, Charlotte and Tampa.**

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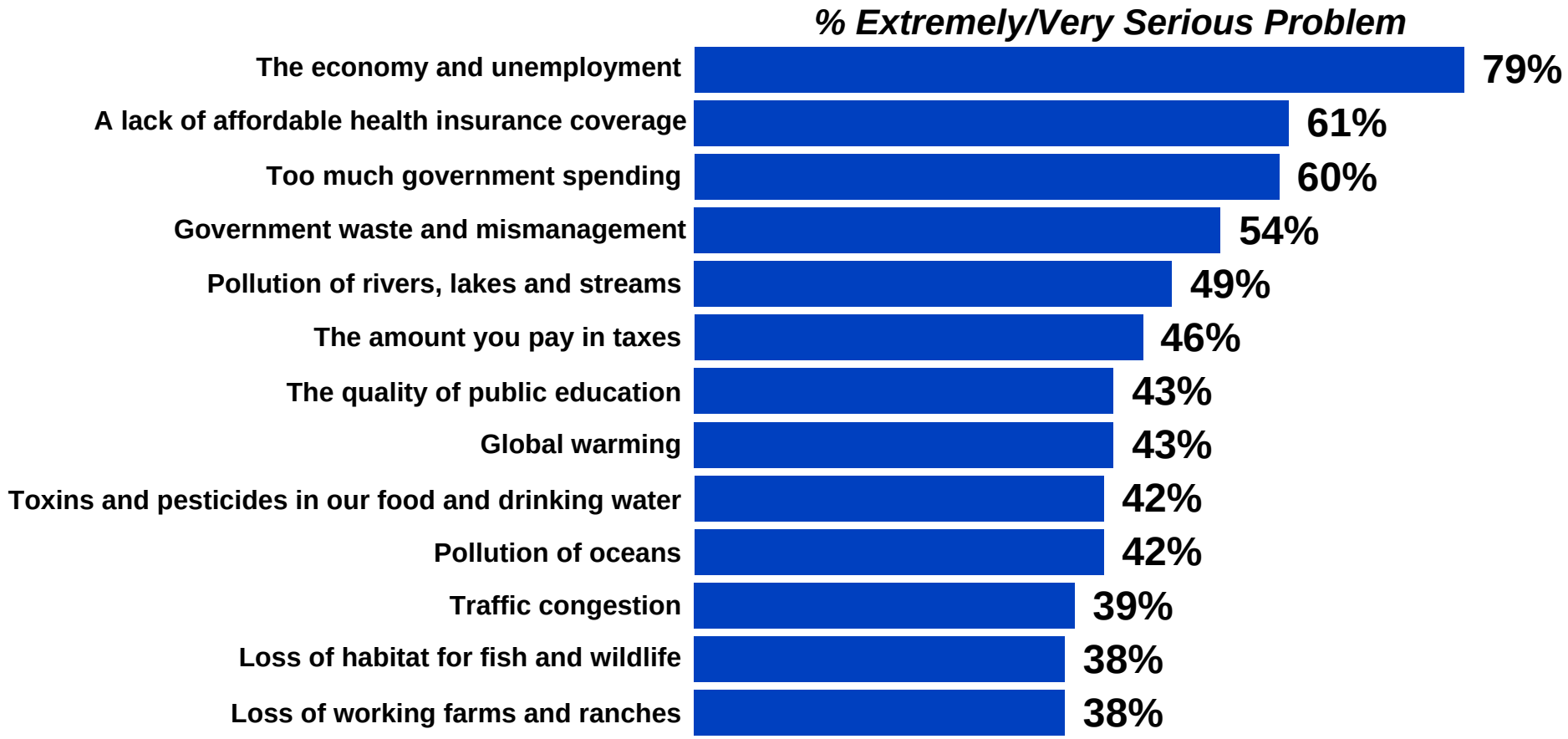
Conservation Issues in 2009:

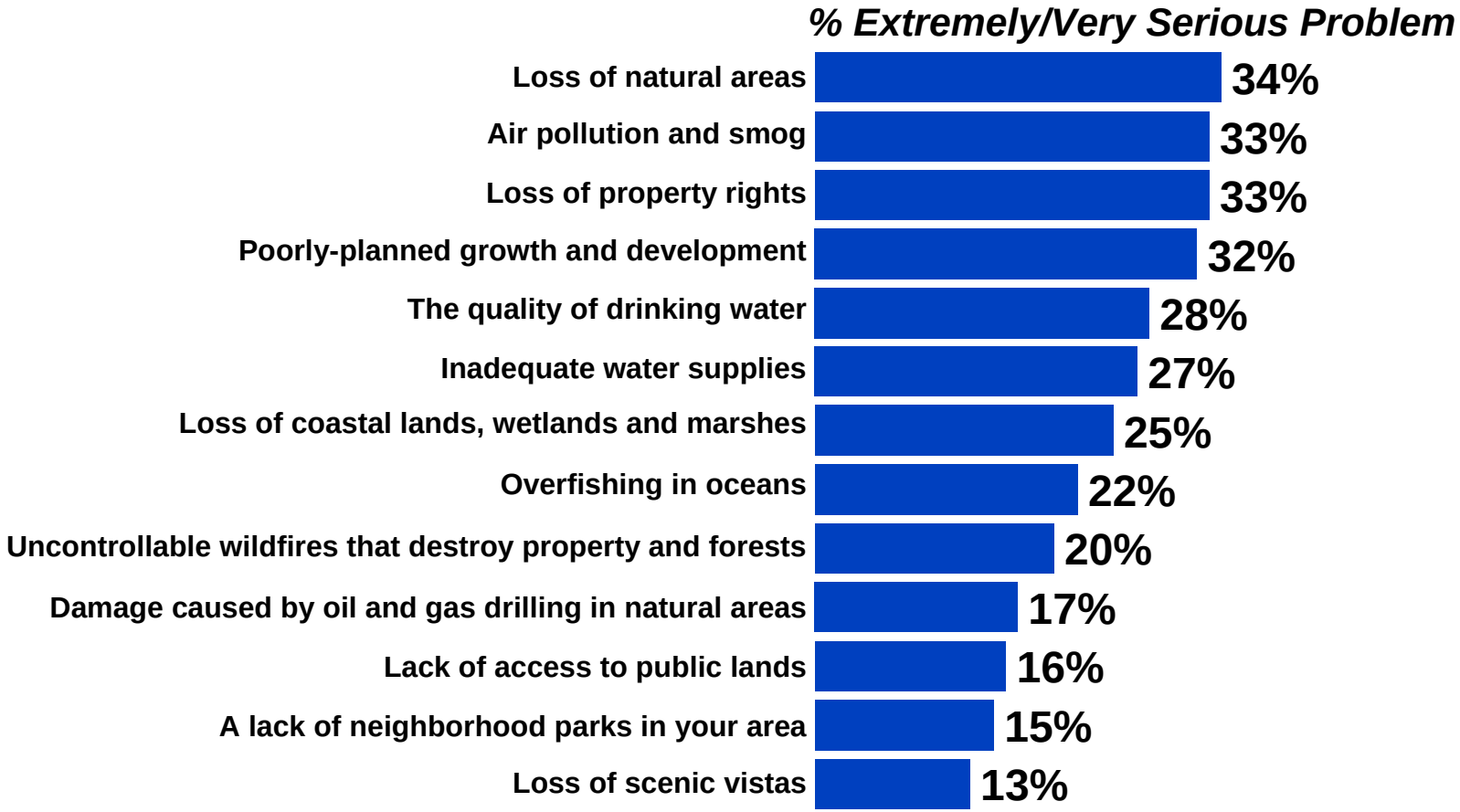
Voters continue to support funding conservation despite concern about the economy.

Every issue – including conservation – is predictably dwarfed by economic concerns.



I am going to read you a list of issues, and I'd like you to tell me how serious a problem you think each one is in your area. After I read each one, please tell me if you think it is an extremely serious problem, a very serious problem, a somewhat serious problem, or not a serious problem in your area.

Some issues that strike a chord in local polls are not viewed nationally as critical concerns.



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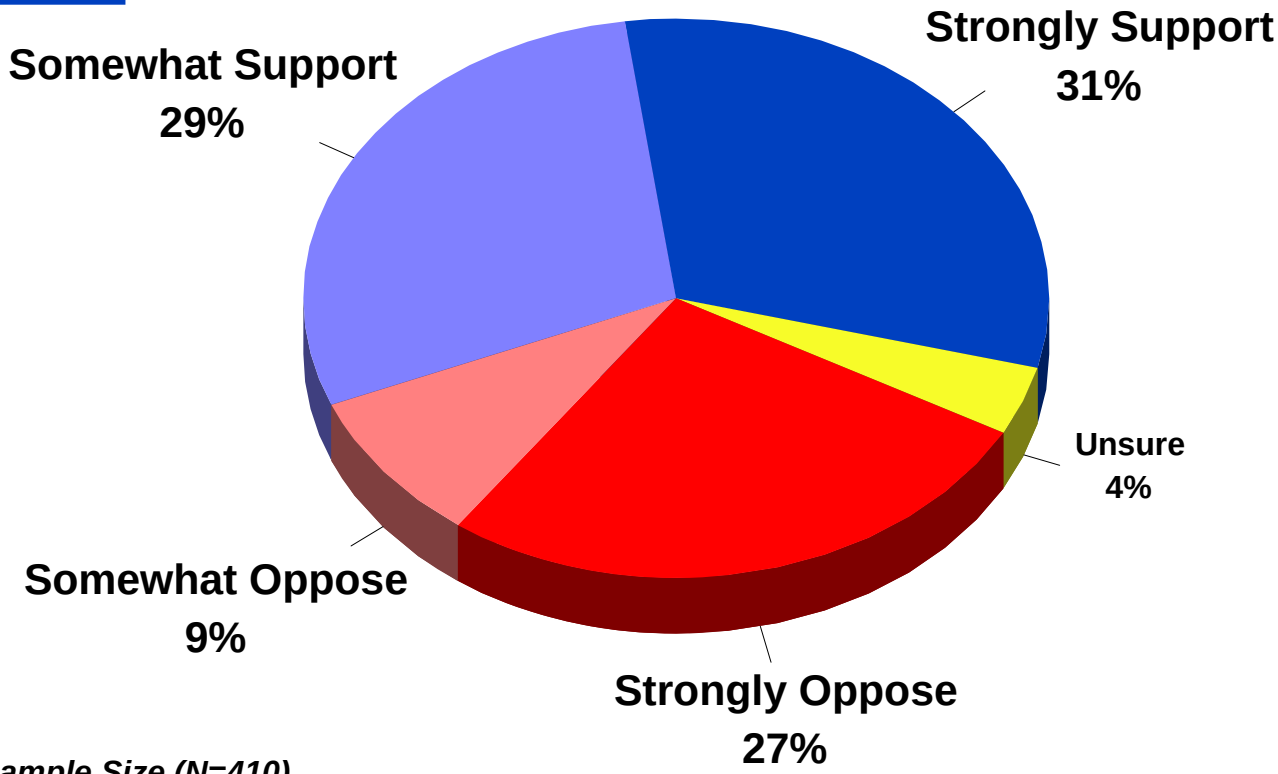
By greater than a three-to-one margin, voters think that protecting the environment and supporting the economy *are* compatible.

We can protect land and water and have a strong economy with good jobs for Americans at the same time, without having to choose one over the other.	***76%***
Sometimes protections for land and water and a strong economy are in conflict and we must choose one over the other.	***19%***

I'm going to read you a pair of statements, and please tell me which one comes closest to your own views, even if neither of the statements matches your views exactly.

Three-in-five voters support federal land purchases, even if it requires increased taxes.

Total Support 60%
Total Oppose 36%

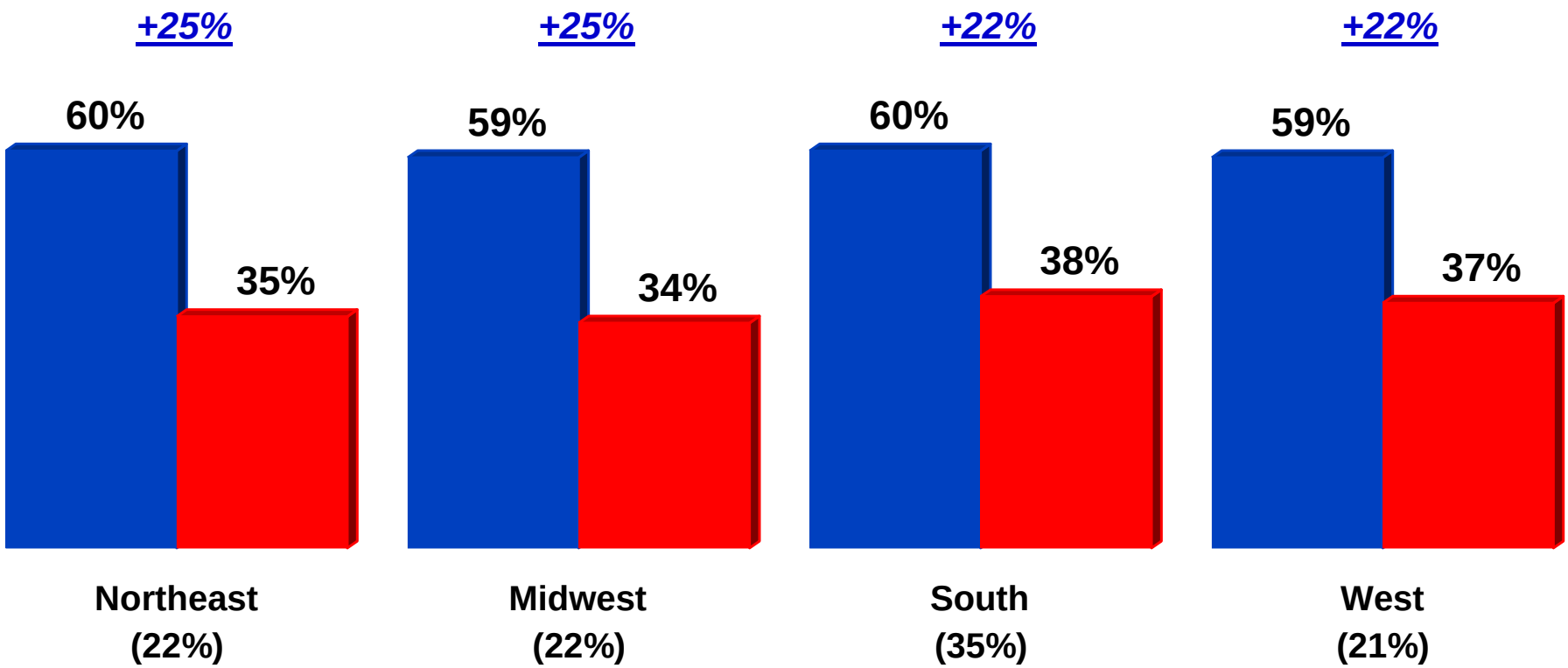


** Asked of Split Sample Size (N=410)*

In general, would you support or oppose programs through which the FEDERAL government would purchase land to protect water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers or beaches; neighborhood parks; and wildlife habitat if it required a small increase in taxes?

There is broad support across the country.

By Region



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Total Support **Total Oppose**

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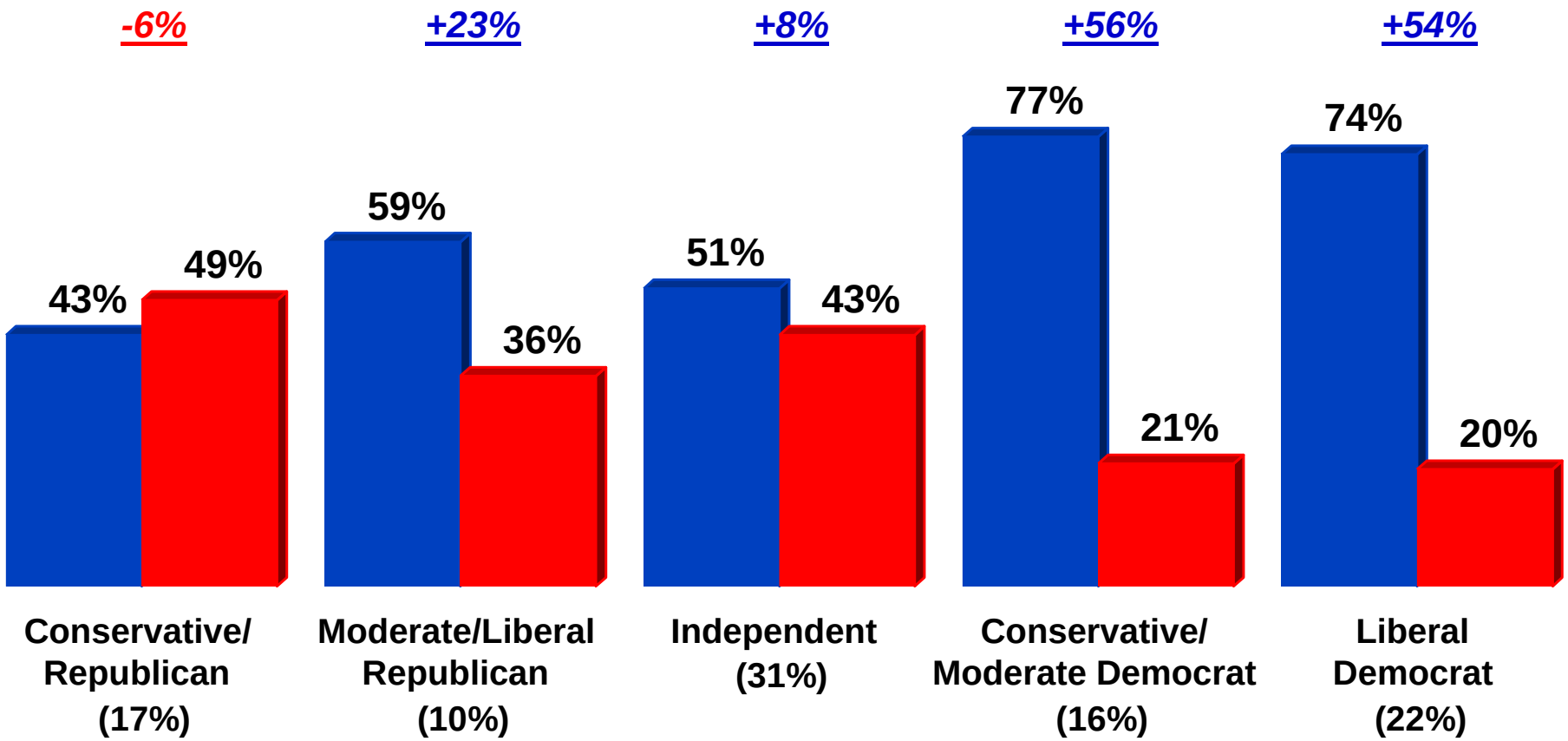
Most partisan sub-groups are also supportive.

By Party and Ideology



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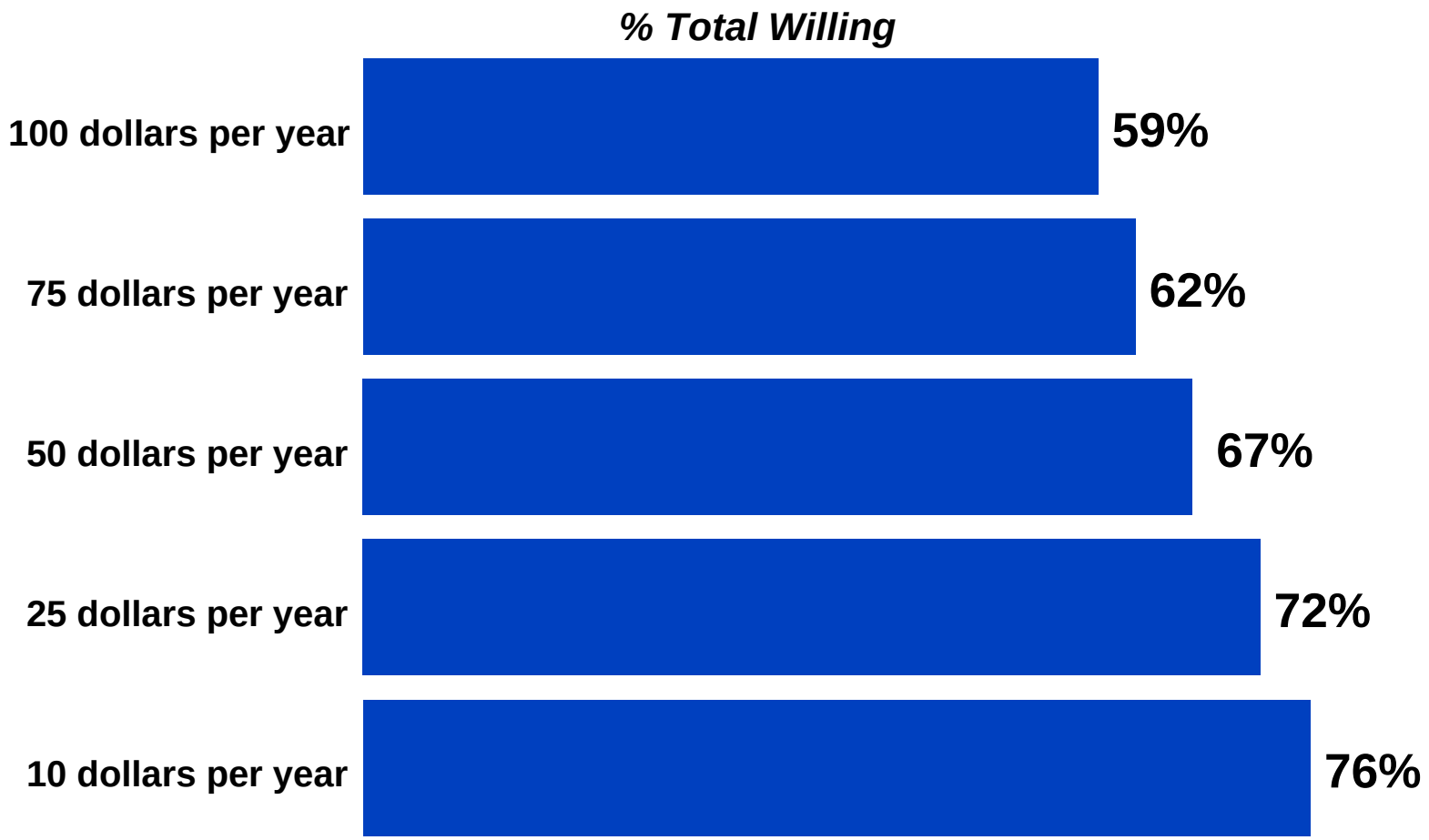
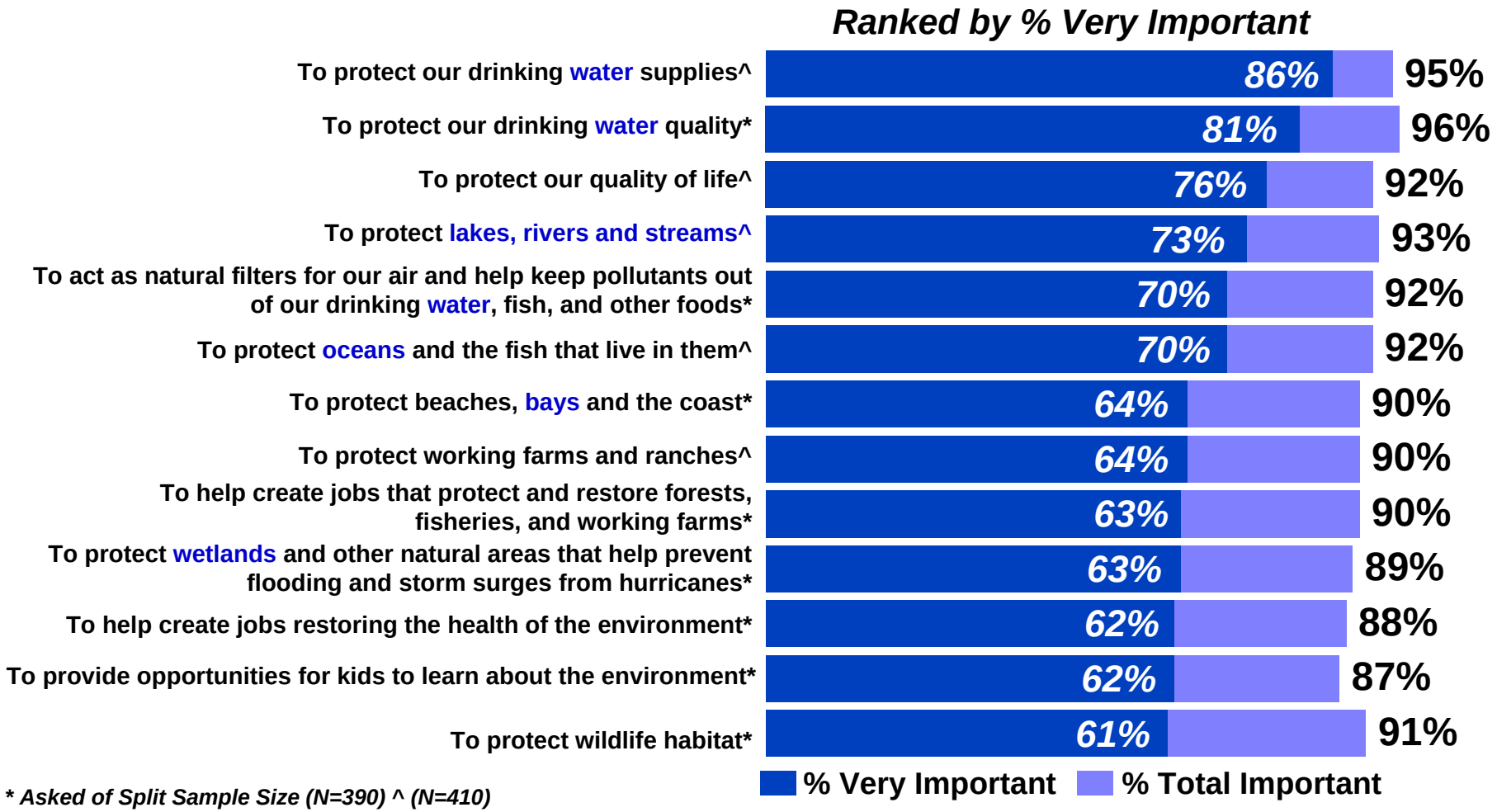
A majority of voters are willing to pay significantly more in taxes to fund conservation.



Would you be willing to pay _____ more in taxes to fund these types of programs to protect water quality; natural areas; lakes, rivers, or beaches; neighborhood parks; and wildlife habitat in your area?

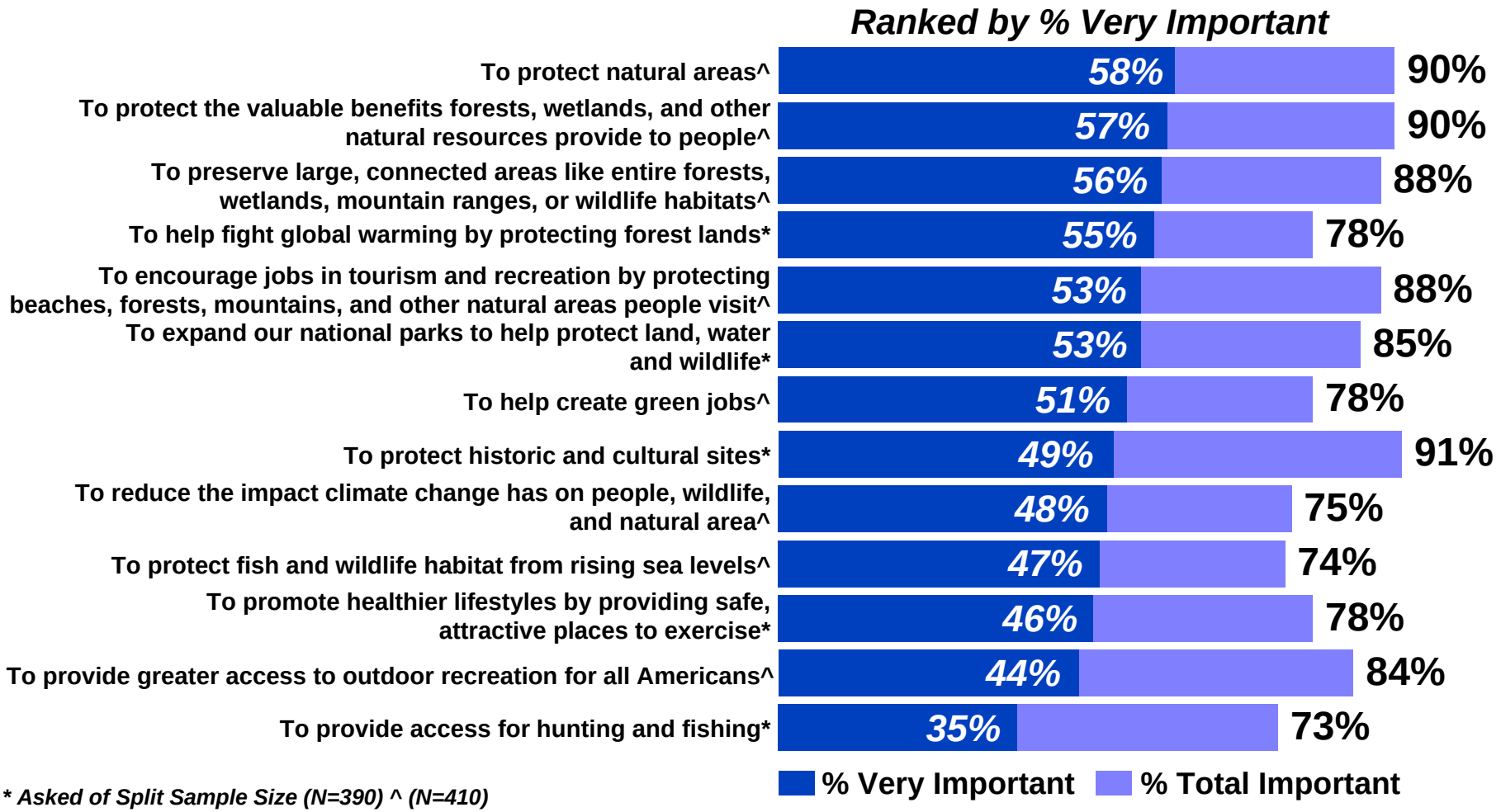
Of all conservation goals, water resonates most.



** Asked of Split Sample Size (N=390) ^ (N=410)*

How important are each of the following as goals of this proposal to protect and restore land, water and wildlife? For each item I read, please tell me if you think that particular reason is very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not important at all.

While still important, these are second tier goals:



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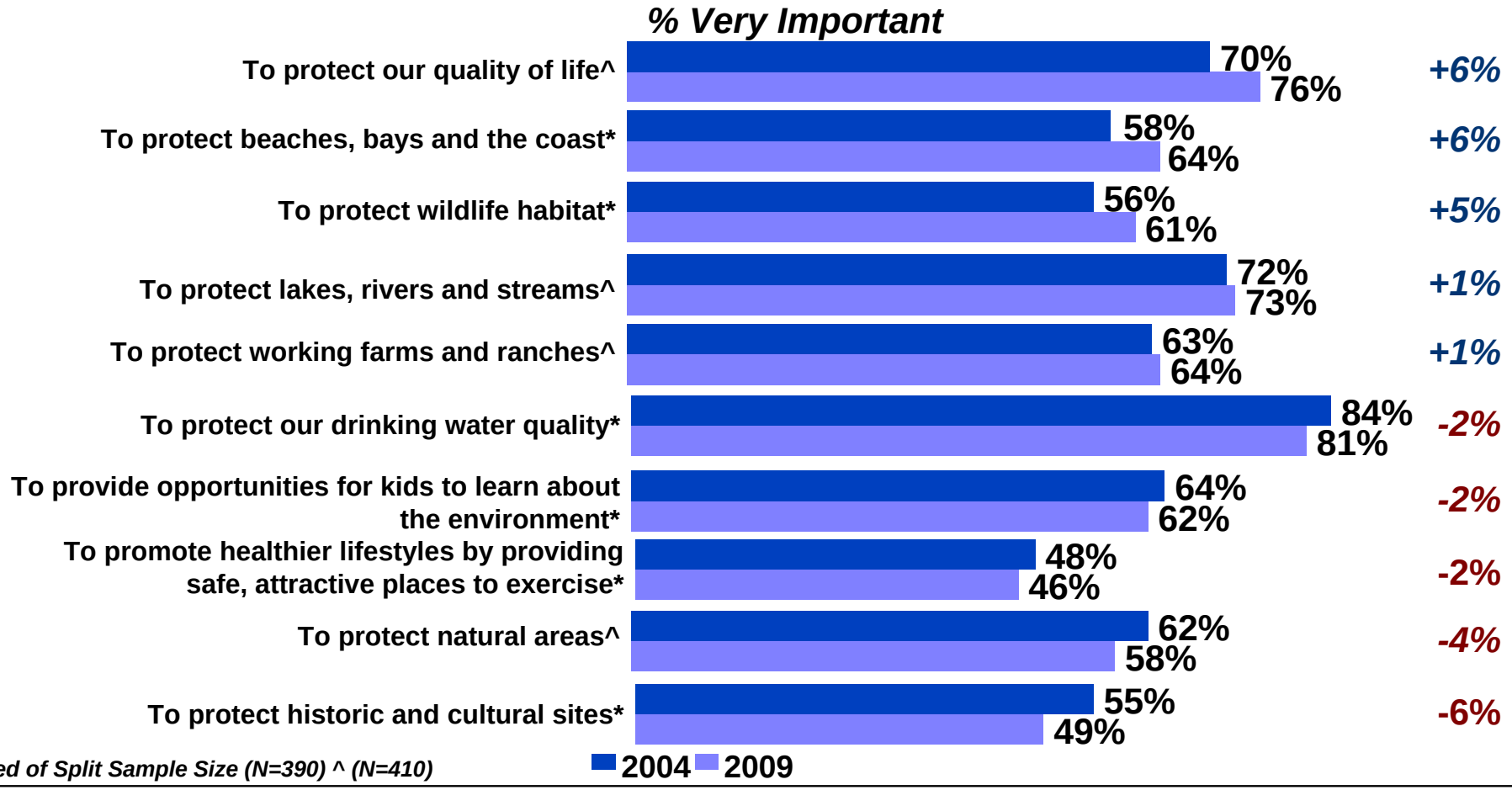
Protecting the coast and quality of life registered as increasingly important compared to 2004.



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