



- **Values-based messaging using public lands successfully reinforced that Rosendale was out-of-touch with regular Montanans.** LCV Victory Fund and SMP both ran ads that put a focus on Rosendale being an East Coast developer who bought up Montana’s land and supported selling off its public lands:

*“Matt Rosendale claims to be a rancher, but Rosendale is an East Coaster who bought a multimillion-dollar trophy ranch and doesn’t even own a single cow. He bought our land and supported selling off public lands, helping developers and hurting Montanans.”*

This drove the argument that, unlike Tester, Rosendale would sell out Montanans because he does not understand Montana’s values and way of life, and it was effective – 93% of Montana voters recall seeing or hearing this argument, which is significantly higher than any of the other messages tested. This message was also able to penetrate to almost all of swing voters<sup>1</sup> (98%). Among the voters who ultimately voted for Tester, 82% rated it as a convincing reason to vote against Rosendale.

- **Protecting Montana’s water and public lands are top-priorities for Montanans.** When asked to rate a series of priorities that Montana’s representatives in Washington could address, protecting Montana’s water from toxic pollution (76% saying it should be a major priority) topped the list, beating out improving access to quality, affordable health care (70% major priority), creating more high-paying jobs (72%), and improving Montana’s public schools (67%). Safeguarding the state’s public lands so future generations can hunt, fish, hike, and enjoy Montana’s outdoor heritage is also extremely important to Montana voters (67% major priority), putting it on par with improving access to health care and improving schools.
- **Public lands and conservation issues were winning campaign strategies for candidates in Montana and around the West.** This survey shows that messaging around public lands was critical to Tester’s victory, but more than that, the results of the 2018 elections proved that public lands specifically, and conservation issues more broadly, are winning campaign issues around the country – particularly in the West. In Montana, the Tester campaign itself focused on public lands in their first and final ads of the campaign. In New Mexico, lands and conservation played key roles in Xochitl Torres-Small’s upset victory in NM-2 as well as the Democratic victories of Michelle Lujan Grisham for governor, Martin Heinrich for Senate, and Stephanie Garcia Richard for Lands Commissioner. Climate change and clean air played a key role in Harley Rouda’s victory in CA-48, and clean energy played a central role in Mike Levin’s victory in CA-49, and Sean Casten’s win in IL-06. And in Colorado, a separate [post-election survey](#) conducted by GSG for the Immigration Hub showed that independent voters ranked “Energy and the Environment” as the issue that was most important in their vote for governor.

#### ABOUT THIS POLL

Global Strategy Group conducted a survey on November 7-11, 2018 of 800 2018 General Election voters in Montana. The results have a margin of error of +/-3.5%.

<sup>1</sup> Swing voters are defined as the 14 percent of the electorate that considered voting for the candidate whom they did not end up supporting.