



**SURVEY OF TEXAS VOTERS
 CONDUCTED FOR THE AMERICA'S WETLAND FOUNDATION
 MARCH 25, 2014**

Methodology

Four-hundred eighty-nine voters in the state of Texas were interviewed in a random sample conducted December 22 through January 3, 2014. An additional 200 interviews were conducted with voters in coastal areas of Texas. The sample was balanced according to all known demographic factors. All interviews were conducted using [The Kitchens Group](http://www.thekitchensgroup.com) Internet Voter Panel. The margin of error for this survey is ± 4.4%, with a 95% confidence level.

COASTAL AWARENESS

1. Do you think of Texas as a coastal state or a state with a coast?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
<i>State with a coast</i>	62%	51%
<i>Coastal state</i>	38%	49%

2. Please rank the following concerns in order of their importance to Texas:

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Average rank (1 = most important):		
<i>Fresh water supply</i>	2.4	2.9
<i>Good jobs</i>	2.9	3.0
<i>Domestic energy production</i>	3.1	3.4
<i>Hurricane preparedness</i>	3.9	3.5
<i>Coastal erosion</i>	3.9	3.8
<i>Fish & wildlife habitat and the industries & recreation they support</i>	4.6	4.4

Rate the following in terms of their importance to the future of Texas coastal communities.

3. Evacuation and emergency response capabilities

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Very important	76%	79%
Somewhat important	20%	19%
Not really very important	4%	1%
Not important at all	1%	1%

Ninety-six percent of Texas voters rate this as important to the future of Texas coastal communities, with 76% saying it is very important. This finding is consistent within all subgroups including coastal residents.

4. Adequate fresh water supply

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Very important	80%	79%
Somewhat important	16%	17%
Not really very important	3%	2%
Not important at all	1%	2%

Ninety-six percent of Texas voters rate this as important to the future of Texas coastal communities, with 80% saying it is very important.

5. Wetlands, dunes and barrier islands that buffer storms and storm surge

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Very important	55%	60%
Somewhat important	38%	35%
Not really very important	6%	4%
Not important at all	2%	1%

Ninety-three percent of Texas voters rate this as important to the future of Texas coastal communities, with 55% saying it is very important.

6. Man-made protective measures, such as dikes and sea walls

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Very important	52%	53%
Somewhat important	40%	40%
Not really very important	7%	5%
Not important at all	1%	2%

Ninety-two percent of Texas voters rate this as important to the future of Texas coastal communities, with 52% saying it is very important. This finding is consistent across all subgroups including coastal residents.

7. Building codes and other construction rules and regulations

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Very important	53%	59%
Somewhat important	39%	34%
Not really very important	7%	5%
Not important at all	1%	2%

Ninety-two percent of Texas voters rate this as important to the future of Texas coastal communities, with 53% saying it is very important. An even higher percentage of voters over the age of 65 fall into the "very important" response category.

8. Urban and environmental planning

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Very important	55%	53%
Somewhat important	36%	38%
Not really very important	8%	7%
Not important at all	1%	1%

Ninety-one percent of Texas voters rate this as important to the future of Texas coastal communities, with 55% saying it is very important. An even higher percentage of borderline and strong Democrats and big city residents fall into the "very important" response category.

9. Domestic energy production

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Very important	53%	51%
Somewhat important	37%	40%
Not really very important	8%	6%
Not important at all	3%	2%

Ninety percent of Texas voters rate this as important to the future of Texas coastal communities, with 53% saying it is very important. An even higher percentage of borderline Republicans and voters earning more than \$100,000 fall into the “very important” response category.

10. Strong tourism and recreation economy

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Very important	41%	42%
Somewhat important	44%	42%
Not really very important	13%	14%
Not important at all	2%	2%

Eighty-five percent of Texas voters rate this as important to the future of Texas coastal communities, with 41% saying it is very important. This finding is consistent across all subgroups.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

How much have you heard about the following?

11. Fresh water shortages

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
a lot	41%	32%
a little	40%	49%
nothing	19%	19%

Texas voters are fairly divided in their awareness of this issue. A higher percentage of men, voters over the age of 50, Hispanic have heard a lot about fresh water shortages, while a higher percentage of 35-49 year old voters, big city and midsize city residents have heard a little.

12. Hurricane protection

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
a lot	40%	70%
a little	42%	29%
nothing	18%	1%

Forty percent of Texas voters have heard a lot about hurricane protection. This response tends to be higher among voters earning between \$50,000-\$75,000, and big city residents. A plurality of voters earning less than \$50,000 and small town residents say they have heard a little. Coastal residents demonstrate a higher awareness of this issue, with seventy percent saying they have heard a lot about this issue.

13. Disaster preparedness

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
a lot	39%	52%
a little	49%	44%
nothing	12%	4%

14. Building communities that are stronger when natural disasters occur

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
a lot	26%	33%
a little	49%	41%
nothing	26%	26%

One-quarter of the Texas electorate say they have heard a lot about this issue versus a third of coastal residents.

14. Coastal erosion

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
a lot	23%	33%
a little	44%	47%
nothing	33%	20%

A plurality of Texas voters has heard little about coastal erosion. Only 20% of coastal residents say they have heard nothing about this issue compared to 33% statewide. By a 10-point margin, coastal residents are more likely to have heard a lot about the issue than voters statewide.

15. Wetlands and estuaries

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
a lot	20%	25%
a little	43%	43%
nothing	37%	32%

16. Dunes and barrier islands

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
a lot	19%	25%
a little	40%	43%
nothing	41%	32%

Forty-two percent of Texas voters have heard nothing at all about this issue. By a margin of 9 points, statewide voters are more likely than coastal residents to have heard nothing about this issue.

17. It is reasonable to expect that we can drill for oil in the Gulf of Mexico and still protect the environment of the Gulf Coast.

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Definitely possible	41%	47%
Probably possible	44%	42%
Probably not possible	13%	10%
Definitely not possible	2%	1%

Eighty-five percent think this is possible with 41% believing it is definitely possible. This response is even higher among voters over the age of 50, white voters, and strong Republicans.

18. Scientists maintain that restoring wetlands and forests would reduce carbon emissions in the air. This could provide opportunities to conserve the environment and to fund coastal restoration in areas of severe land loss. In addition, carbon could be recycled and reused.

Knowing this, do you believe:

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Using wetlands to capture and store carbon dioxide is a good way to help the environment.	74%	77%

Or

Climate change is not really a significant problem, so efforts to capture carbon are not really worth it, whether or not they could restore the ecosystem.	26%	23%
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------	------------

Three-quarters of the Texas electorate believe using wetlands to capture carbon dioxide is a good way to help the environment. This response is higher among borderline Republicans and strong Democrats, and voters in rural areas.

19. Do you believe that climate change is...

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
a serious problem threatening everyone	44%	44%
a somewhat serious problem	26%	24%
not nearly as serious a problem as others	18%	19%
not really a problem	10%	10%
Unsure	2%	3%

Seventy percent believe climate change is a serious problem, with 44% saying it is a serious problem
www.thekitchensgroup.com

threatening everyone. This response is higher among 18-34 year old voters, African American voters, and strong Democrats.

20. The Texas coast erodes at an average of four feet annually, with some areas losing more than 30 feet of land in a single year. Knowing this, how concerned are you about coastal erosion?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Extremely concerned	26%	28%
Very concerned	44%	41%
Somewhat concerned	23%	25%
Not too concerned	4%	5%
Unfamiliar with the issue	4%	2%

Seventy percent of Texas voters express concern over this issue with 26% saying they are extremely concerned. An even higher percentage of Hispanic voters fall into the “extremely concerned” response category.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

21. Do you feel that the Texas Coast is prepared for future hurricanes?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Yes	33%	45%
No	40%	38%
Unsure	28%	17%

Forty percent of Texas voters do not believe the Texas Coast is prepared for future hurricanes. This response is higher among borderline Republicans. A higher percentage borderline Democrats believe the coast is prepared, as do a plurality of coastal residents.

22. Do you feel that there are actions you could take to help your community better prepare for natural disasters?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Yes	64%	67%
No	11%	8%
Unsure	24%	24%

23. What worries you the most about your community’s preparedness for natural

disasters, such as hurricanes?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
<i>Evacuation</i>	62%	68%
<i>Emergency response</i>	56%	48%
<i>Vulnerable housing areas</i>	49%	46%
<i>Vulnerable infrastructure, industries & jobs</i>	21%	22%
<i>Deteriorating barrier islands, dunes</i>	13%	15%

The item that causes voters the most concern is being able to evacuate in the case of a natural disaster. Voters most concerned include women, independents, voters earning \$75,000 to \$100,000, and voters in the coastal counties.

24. In your opinion, how extensive is the loss of Texas' barrier islands, wetlands, dunes, shoreline and beaches?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
<i>Very extensive</i>	27%	29%
<i>Somewhat extensive</i>	55%	60%
<i>Not at all extensive</i>	8%	4%
<i>Not familiar with the issue</i>	11%	6%

Eighty-two percent of Texas voters think the loss of barrier islands, wetlands, dunes, shorelines and beaches is extensive, with 27% saying very extensive.

25. If we would restore our coast and bring back natural protections, such as wetlands and dunes, this issue would not be as much of a problem.

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
<i>Strongly agree</i>	36%	37%
<i>Somewhat agree</i>	51%	51%
<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	11%	11%
<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	2%	1%

Eighty-seven percent of Texas voters agree with this statement with 36% strongly agreeing. This response is higher among 18-34 year old voters, Hispanic voters, strong Democrats, and big city residents.

The federal government is considering ending subsidies that keep insurance rates low for homeowners and businesses located in coastal zones vulnerable to storm damage. This would mean a substantial rise in flood insurance rates in areas along the coast Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

26. Our Congressmen and Senators in Washington should never have allowed the flood insurance rates to be subsidized to keep premiums so low along coastal areas.

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Strongly agree	29%	26%
Somewhat agree	38%	37%
Somewhat Disagree	25%	27%
Strongly Disagree	8%	9%

Sixty-seven percent of Texas voters agree with this statement with 29% strongly agreeing. This response is higher among Hispanic voters and strong Republicans.

27. The federal government should continue to subsidize insurance premiums for most residents in coastal zones.

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Strongly agree	25%	27%
Somewhat agree	43%	44%
Somewhat Disagree	22%	21%
Strongly Disagree	10%	9%

Sixty-eight percent of Texas voters agree with this statement with 25% strongly agreeing. This response is higher among 18-34 year old voters and Hispanic voters.

28. The cost of property insurance is a huge issue in the Gulf Coast and is directly related to our wetlands and barrier islands.

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Strongly agree	31%	36%
Somewhat agree	51%	44%
Somewhat Disagree	14%	16%
Strongly Disagree	3%	5%

29. Do you feel more should be done to prepare for natural disasters, such as hurricanes?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Yes	83%	87%
No	6%	5%
unsure	11%	8%

Eighty-three percent respond in the affirmative. This finding is consistent across all subgroups.

30. Do you feel more should be done to prepare for natural disasters, such as hurricanes? If yes, who do you feel should do more?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
The State of Texas	70%	74%
Federal Government	51%	57%
Coastal Communities	49%	57%
Cities	47%	39%
Local Organizations	44%	41%
Individuals	44%	43%

The State of Texas is most likely to be chosen as the entity that needs to do more for disaster preparedness. At least 60% of all subgroups respond this manner.

ENERGY AND THE ECONOMY

31. Do you agree or disagree that a strong Texas economy depends on a healthy coastal environment?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Strongly agree	38%	43%
Somewhat agree	48%	49%
Somewhat Disagree	7%	9%
Strongly Disagree	1%	0%
Unsure	5%	1%

Eighty-six percent of Texas voters agree with this statement with 38% in strong agreement. An even higher percentage of 18-34 year old voters, African American voters, strong Democrats and coastal residents fall into the “strongly agree” response category.

32. The Gulf Coast is the source of roughly half of the oil and gas produced in the United States. The Texas Coast produces, refines or transports much of this energy. Knowing this, do you agree or disagree that Texas is vital to the nation's energy security and could be called the 'Star of America's Energy Coast'?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Strongly agree	58%	64%
Somewhat agree	35%	30%
Somewhat Disagree	4%	4%
Strongly Disagree	1%	2%
Unsure	2%	1%

Ninety-three percent agree with this statement with 58% strongly agreeing. This response is even higher among voters over the age of 50, white voters, coastal residents, and strong Republicans.

33. Perceived conflicts between energy production and environmental protection have become too politically divisive. To solve both problems, we need leaders to cooperate more and focus on how their interests overlap.

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Strongly agree	59%	59%
Somewhat agree	36%	36%
Somewhat Disagree	4%	5%
Strongly Disagree	0%	1%

Ninety-five percent of Texas voters agree with this statement with 59% strongly agreeing. This response is even higher among borderline Republicans, voters earning more than \$100,000, and suburban residents.

34. The federal government should provide a higher percentage of oil and gas revenues to the states that produce the oil and gas.

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Strongly agree	46%	45%
Somewhat agree	42%	43%
Somewhat Disagree	11%	12%
Strongly Disagree	2%	1%

Eighty-eight percent of Texas voters agree with this statement with 46% strongly agreeing. This response is even higher among strong Republicans and voters over the age of 65.

35. Since the BP oil spill, advertising by BP has...

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
<i>Been effective in showing that the company honestly has good intentions</i>	44%	49%
<i>Hurt the region and the energy sector because it has kept the oil spill on the minds of most Americans.</i>	32%	25%
<i>Falsely covered up untruths by BP</i>	24%	26%

Voters say the BP advertising campaign has been effective in showing that the company honestly has good intentions. This response is higher among voters 50 and older, strong Republicans, and voters earning more than \$100,000. A plurality of voters between the ages of 18-49 and Hispanic voters feel the advertising has hurt the region keeping the oil spill on the minds of Americans.

36. Which of the following best describes how you feel:

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
<i>Americans must learn to consume less of everything. It is the only way we can become energy independent and protect the quality of our environment.</i>	68%	64%
<i>There is plenty of oil off our shore, and we should free the oil companies to drill and find it.</i>	24%	23%
<i>Unsure</i>	8%	13%

A strong majority of voters feel Americans must learn to consume less of everything. This response is even higher among African American and Hispanic voters, borderline Democrats and independents.

COASTAL SUSTAINABILITY

37. Do you agree or disagree that stewardship of the Texas coast should be a high state priority?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
<i>Strongly agree</i>	49%	54%
<i>Somewhat agree</i>	46%	44%
<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	4%	2%
<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	1%	1%

Ninety-five percent agree with this statement with 49% strongly agreeing. An even higher percentage of 50-64 year-old voters, strong Republicans, coastal residents, and big city residents are in strong agreement.

38. Stronger storms are threatening the security of Texas port systems, which export more than \$250 billion worth of goods annually. It is important to invest in the coast to protect Texas ports, inland waterways and other shipping infrastructure.

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Strongly agree	54%	52%
Somewhat agree	41%	41%
Somewhat Disagree	4%	6%
Strongly Disagree	1%	1%

Ninety-five percent of Texas voters agree with this statement with 54% strongly agreeing. This response is even higher among strong Democrats and big city residents.

39. The Texas Coast is deteriorating in a way that could have negative impacts on people across the state and nation. What would motivate you to take action?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Fresh water shortages	62%	60%
The disruption of oil and gas refining and production and a rise in energy prices	49%	59%
The loss of critical fish, wildlife and migratory bird habitats	39%	35%
A loss of jobs in industries supported by the coast, such as shipping, refining and tourism	37%	34%
A rise in food prices, such as seafood	13%	13%

The shortage of fresh water is the item concerning voters the most. The concern is most likely to be expressed by women, voters 18 to 34 years of age, strong Democrats, independents, and voters in big cities. In the coastal counties, there is a significantly higher level of concern for the disruption of oil and gas production.

40. In Texas, barrier islands, bays, estuaries and wetlands make up wildlife habitat of world ecological significance, providing a vital nursery for valuable fish and shellfish species and a wintering ground for millions of migratory birds. How concerned are you about loss of coastal habitat?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Extremely concerned	38%	40%
Very concerned	39%	37%
Somewhat concerned	21%	22%
Not too concerned	2%	2%

Seventy-seven percent are concerned about the loss of coastal habitat with 38% saying they are

extremely concerned. This response is higher among Hispanic voters and big city residents.

41. When sufficient water from Texas' rivers and streams fails to reach the Gulf of Mexico, it can cause shortages that prevent communities, habitats, farms and ranch lands from getting the fresh water they need to stay healthy and productive. How concerned are you about the amount of fresh water that reaches the Texas coast?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Extremely concerned	38%	43%
Very concerned	39%	33%
Somewhat concerned	19%	19%
Not too concerned	3%	2%
Unfamiliar with the issue	2%	3%

Seventy-seven percent are concerned about the amount of fresh water that reaches the Texas coast. This response is even higher among strong Democrats, big city, midsize city, and coastal residents.

Please rate the following reasons to support a stronger Texas coast:

42. To conserve and restore natural protections, such as wetlands, dunes and barrier islands, that keeps coastal communities safer and more resilient

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
very good reason	62%	64%
somewhat good reason	36%	34%
somewhat poor reason	2%	1%
very poor reason	1%	1%

Ninety-eight percent of Texas voters rate this as a good reason to support a stronger Texas coast, with 62% saying it is a very good reason. This response is higher among 50-64 year old voters, African American voters, and strong Democrats.

43. To save some of the world's most important marine estuaries and fish and wildlife habitats

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
very good reason	61%	60%
somewhat good reason	32%	33%
somewhat poor reason	7%	6%
very poor reason	0%	1%

Ninety-three percent of Texas voters rate this as a good reason to support a stronger Texas coast, with 61% saying it is a very good reason. This response is higher among big city residents.

44. To maintain a strong state economy and good jobs

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
very good reason	66%	69%
somewhat good reason	30%	28%
somewhat poor reason	4%	1%
very poor reason	0%	2%

Ninety-six percent of Texas voters rate this as a good reason to support a stronger Texas coast, with 66% saying it is a very good reason. This response is higher among voters over the age of 65, strong Republicans, and big city residents.

45. So that future generations can know the culture and environment of coastal areas

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
very good reason	52%	52%
somewhat good reason	39%	39%
somewhat poor reason	7%	8%
very poor reason	1%	1%

Ninety-one percent of Texas voters rate this as a good reason to support a stronger Texas coast, with 52% saying it is a very good reason. This response is consistent across subgroups.

46. To stabilize the Texas water table and the state's fresh water supply

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
very good reason	66%	66%
somewhat good reason	28%	26%
somewhat poor reason	6%	7%
very poor reason	1%	1%

Ninety-four percent of Texas voters rate this as a good reason to support a stronger Texas coast, with 66% saying it is a very good reason. This response is higher among voters over the age of 65.

47. To protect the nation's domestic energy security, including ports, pipelines, refineries and other critical infrastructure

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
very good reason	61%	66%
somewhat good reason	32%	28%
somewhat poor reason	5%	5%
very poor reason	1%	1%

Ninety-three percent of Texas voters rate this as a good reason to support a stronger Texas coast, with 61% saying it is a very good reason. This response is higher among voters over the age of 65.

48. To conserve the state's beaches, fisheries, hunting grounds and other assets that support tourism and recreation

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
very good reason	56%	57%
somewhat good reason	36%	36%
somewhat poor reason	6%	6%
very poor reason	2%	2%

Ninety-two percent of Texas voters rate this as a good reason to support a stronger Texas coast, with 56% saying it is a very good reason. This response is higher among voters over the age of 65 and strong Republicans.

49. To protect military bases and critical national security infrastructure

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
very good reason	52%	53%
somewhat good reason	35%	34%
somewhat poor reason	10%	11%
very poor reason	2%	2%

Eighty-seven percent of Texas voters rate this as a good reason to support a stronger Texas coast, with 52% saying it is a very good reason. This response is higher among strong Republicans.

MESSAGING

50. Many people trying to save the Texas coast are reaching out to the public to help. If you saw the following headlines, which ones would most likely grab your attention and make you want to read or listen for more information?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
<i>Strong Coast, Strong Texas</i>	56%	55%
<i>The Texas Coast: Shoring up our future</i>	54%	53%
<i>Texas: Star of America’s Energy Coast</i>	49%	48%
<i>The Texas Coast: We control our destiny</i>	44%	41%
<i>Our Coast, our responsibility</i>	45%	48%
<i>The Texas Coast: Defend our star</i>	35%	33%
<i>A Stich in Time Saves Nine</i>	23%	21%

‘Strong Coast, Strong Texas’ is the most positive slogan. It is most likely to be chosen by strong Republicans and independents. The second most positive reaction is to “The Texas Coast, Shoring up our Future.” There is no significant difference between the results of the coastal counties and the entire state.

51. When you hear the term “Strong Coast, Strong Texas”, what does this mean to you?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
<i>The Texas coast is a critical part of the Texas economy and the state’s future economic growth</i>	38%	42%
<i>All Texans are proud of their lands and waters and must work together to be good stewards of the state’s natural resources</i>	20%	19%
<i>A vulnerable Texas coast threatens all Texans, so it’s important for the state to invest in keeping the coast strong</i>	14%	16%
<i>Texas needs to strengthen its coast to reduce the costs of future natural disasters</i>	14%	9%
<i>The Texas way of life depends on a strong Texas Coast</i>	8%	10%
<i>Texans who live on the coast should handle coastal problems on their own</i>	6%	5%

A plurality of voters fall into the “The Texas coast is a critical part of the Texas economy and the state’s future growth” category. This response is higher among borderline Republicans and rural area voters.

52. When you hear the term “America’s Energy Coast”, what area of the United States comes to mind?

	<u>Texas</u>	<u>Coastal</u>
Gulf Coast	46%	54%
Texas Coast	18%	20%
Don’t know	13%	8%
West Coast	11%	10%
East Coast	8%	7%
Alaska	3%	2%
None of these	1%	0%

Forty-six percent identify the Gulf Coast as “America’s Energy Coast”. This response is even higher among voters earning more than \$100,000, and small town, rural, and coastal residents.

CONCLUSIONS

Coastal counties have much more information and a greater awareness of disaster preparedness and hurricane protection than the rest of the state.

Fifty-two percent (52%) of the coastal county voters say they have heard “a lot” about disaster preparedness and 70% say they have heard “a lot” about hurricane protection. Coastal voters are two to three times more likely to have heard information about these topics. Voters in the coastal counties are more confident that they are prepared for hurricanes than the voters in the rest of the state.

There is a difference in the way voters in various areas view Texas.

Only 38% of the voters in the statewide survey view Texas as a coastal state, while 49% of the voters in the coastal counties view Texas in this manner. Other than in the coastal counties, a majority of voters view Texas as “a state with a coast.”

The biggest environmental concern is the supply of fresh water.

Throughout the state, the major environmental concern is the supply of fresh water. This concern is not related to a “moral value” or “community good”, but individual survival. In many environmental surveys our firm has conducted over the past 25 years, the concern for fresh water is always primary for voters.

After the basic needs for “fresh water”, the major concern becomes safety.

In several ways, the voters express worry that the coast does not have adequate evacuation plans in case of an emergency, such as a hurricane. After the basic needs of life, such as fresh water, the concern for shelter is next on the hierarchy of human needs.

Voters recognize the importance of the Texas Coast to the supply of energy.

Ninety-four percent (94%) of the voters say the Texas Coast is important to the nation's energy supply. While the voters recognize the environmental value of the coast, they also recognize its economic necessity for the nation. This attitude is reflected throughout the survey.

Voters believe that the insurance issue in coastal zones has historically been mishandled.

A majority of voters express the opinion that political leaders were unwise to allow high rates of insurance subsidization in coastal zones, which paved the way for high-risk development. Yet voters also agree that such subsidies now need to continue to a certain degree.

Similar to voters nationwide, Texas voters want solutions, not politics.

The voters see the energy industry and environmentalists taking extreme positions. The voters believe the problem can be solved through compromise and cooperation instead of partisan politics.

Texas voters clearly identify the issues that impact their lives. The environmental concern is fresh water and the economic concern is the jobs provided by the energy industry. While a large percentage of the voters perceive that it is the responsibility of coastal communities to prepare for disasters, they also believe it is the responsibility of the state and federal governments to strike a balance between energy and environmental concerns. The voters of Texas recognize the state's primary challenges and they are looking for leaders to provide solutions.