SURVEY OF PROPERTY OWNERS

REGARDING A PROPOSED WATER QUALITY MEASURE

DESIGNED & CONDUCTED FOR THE

CONTRA COSTA CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

NOVEMBER 2006

True North RESEARCH
741 GARDEN VIEW COURT SUITE 208
ENCINITAS, CALIFORNIA 92024
PHONE 760.632.9900 FAX 760.632.9993
WWW.TN-RESEARCH.COM

AND

SCI Consulting Group
2300 BOYNTON AVENUE SUITE 201
FAIRFIELD, CALIFORNIA 94533
PHONE 800.273.5167 FAX 707.426.0109
WWW.SCI-CG.COM

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of Figures

Introduction

The Contra Costa Clean Water Program is dedicated to improving water quality in Contra Costa's creeks, lakes, the Delta and the Bay. In order to comply with State and Federal regulations regarding stormwater and urban water runoff, Contra Costa County, all nineteen of its incorporated cities and the Contra Costa Flood Control & Water Conservation District have joined together to form the Contra Costa Clean Water Program. The Program was established to meet the Federal and State water quality and pollution control requirements throughout the County. The Program works year-round to reduce total pollution from reaching bodies of water in the County, and takes additional actions for environmentally sensitive areas. The Program's services include locating and eliminating the major sources of pollution, installing filters and catch basins to remove pollution, regular street sweeping, regular trash pickup and removal, and the restoration of natural habitats and wetland areas that serve as a natural filter to improve water quality.

Purpose of Study The primary purpose of this survey was to estimate property owner and voter support for establishing a fee to clean-up polluted stormwater and runoff, keep trash and pollution out of rivers, lakes, the Delta and the Bay, prevent flooding, and protect sources of clean drinking water. Broadly defined, the survey was designed to:

- Estimate property owners' initial, baseline support for the proposed Water Quality Measure;
- Evaluate sensitivity to different fee rates that may be associated with the measure;
- Identify the types of service improvements and enhancements that property owners are most interested in funding;
- Expose property owners to arguments in favor of and against the proposed measure to gauge how information affects support for the measure; *and*
- Estimate property owners' support for the Water Quality Measure once they have been provided with more information about the proposed measure

Overview of Methodology A full description of the methodology used for this study is included later in this report (see *Methodology* on page 36). The initial phase of the study, conducted June 6 through June 13, 2006, involved administering a telephone survey to 500 randomly selected residential property owners and voters in the County. The interviews averaged 12 minutes. The second phase of the study, conducted in September and October of 2006, consisted of a mail-out/mail-back survey of a broader universe of 2,107 residential, commercial, industrial, and apartment property owners who are eligible to participate in the ballot proceeding.

Organization of Report This report is designed to meet the needs of readers who prefer a summary of the findings as well as those who are interested in the details of the results. For those who seek an overview of the findings, the sections titled *Just the Facts* and *Conclusions* are for you. They provide a summary of the most important factual findings of the study in bullet-point format and a discussion of their implications. For the interested reader, this section is followed by a more detailed question-by-question discussion of the results from the surveys by topic area (see *Table of Contents*), as well as a description of the methodology employed for collecting and analyzing the data. The results of mail survey are discussed first, then the telephone

survey. And, for the truly ambitious reader, the questionnaire used for the telephone interviews is contained at the back of this report, a complete set of crosstabulations for the phone survey is contained in Appendix A, and crosstabulations for the mail survey are contained in Appendix B.

DISCLAIMER The statements and conclusions in this report are those of the authors—Dr. Timothy McLarney and Richard Sarles at True North Research, Inc., and Gerard van Steyn and John Bliss at SCI Consulting Group—and not necessarily those of the Clean Water Program. Any errors and omissions are the responsibility of the authors.

PROPERTY-RELATED FEE EXPLAINED The funding mechanism primarily being considered in this study is a property related fee. Proposition 218 defines property-related fees as those fees imposed "as an incident of property ownership." Local governments may impose a property-related fee only for services and improvements tied directly to the ownership of property after complying with the required procedures. Any property-related fee must be proportional to the cost of service attributable to the parcel and the total revenue from the fee cannot exceed the funds required to provide the property related service. This proportionality requirement is met for stormwater fees by assigning relative weights, SFEs, to each parcel in estimated proportion to the cost of providing the service to the parcel. For the Clean Water Program, the fees for each parcel were based on estimated runoff from impervious area, which is very similar to the approach used for the Program's existing assessment.

A distinction between special taxes and property-related fees is that only registered voters vote on special taxes, which includes tenants and others who do not own property and who would not pay the tax. Conversely, all property owners, including the owners of businesses, apartments, and agricultural property, have the opportunity to vote in property-related fee proceedings. These types of property owners are largely excluded from, or have no real say in, a special tax election.

For new or increased property related fees, each property owner must receive a notice and ballot by mail indicating the reason for the fees and the amount of proposed fee for his or her property. Property owners receive one vote for each parcel they own, and they can respond in support or opposition to the fees over a 45-day balloting period. At the end of the balloting period, the fees are approved if over 50% of the returned ballots are in support, with each ballot weighted by the number of parcels it represents. The State Appellate Court in *Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association v. City of Salinas* supported the use of property-related fees, subject to property owner approval as defined in Proposition 218, for stormwater quality services.

JUST THE FACTS

The following is an outline of the main factual findings from the surveys. For the reader's convenience, we have organized the findings according to the section titles used in the body of this report. Thus, if you would like to learn more about a particular finding, simply turn to the appropriate report section.

MAIL SURVEY

Whereas the telephone survey focused on just single family residential property owners who were also high propensity registered voters, the mail survey was inclusive of *all* types of property owners who are eligible to participate in a property-related fee ballot, including other residential property owners who are either low propensity voters or are not registered to vote, and commercial, industrial, and apartment property owners who are traditionally less supportive of revenue measures. The key results from the mail survey were:

- Although support for the proposed Water Quality Measure varied somewhat depending on the version of the measure tested, as well as the fee rate, support generally ranged between 50% and 57% at the Initial and Final Ballot Tests.
- Property owners displayed considerable price sensitivity with respect to the total fee for their property that would be associated with the measure. Sixty-two percent (62%) of those who received fees less than $25 supported the Water Quality Measure. At the other extreme, just 28% of property owners who received fees of $70 or more indicated that they would support the measure.
- Support for the Water Quality Measure was highest (56%) among owners of single-family residential property.

GENERAL DIRECTION

- Only 28% of residential property owners in Contra Costa County think that things in the State of California are headed in the right direction.
- About half (48%) perceive that Contra Costa County is on the right path.
- Fifty-nine percent (59%) of respondents felt that things are going in the right direction in their city.

IMPORTANCE OF SERVICES

- When asked to rate seven issues facing residents in terms of their importance, property owners ranked protecting water quality the highest, with 88% considering it extremely or very important, followed by improving public education and protecting the Bay and Delta.
- Preventing local tax increases was rated least important of the seven issues tested, with 56% of respondents citing it as extremely or very important.

INITIAL BALLOT TEST

- With only the information provided in the ballot language, 65% of single family residential property owners indicated they would definitely (37%) or probably (28%) support the proposed Water Quality Measure. Thirty-one percent (31%) indicated they would oppose the measure, whereas 4% were unsure or unwilling to share their vote choice.
- When supporters were asked *why* they favor the measure, the most frequently mentioned reasons included that water quality and pollution are important issues (39%), that they are concerned with the quality of drinking water (16%), and that they are concerned about the quality of life in their community and for future generations (10%).
- When those who voted no at the Initial Ballot Test were asked *why* they opposed the measure, concern about existing tax rates being too high and the need for the County to work within its existing budget was the most commonly stated reasons (30%). Other reasons included concern over the County's ability to responsibly manage the funds from such a measure (21%), and the perception that a water quality measure is simply unnecessary (7%).

FEE THRESHOLD

- Support for the Water Quality Measure varied according to the proposed fee rate. At the highest fee rate tested, which was adjusted to approximate the amount the respondent could expect to pay given the size of their property,[1] 68% of residential property owners indicated they would support the measure. At the lowest rate tested,[2] three-quarters (75%) supported the measure.

PROJECTS & SERVICES

- Among the projects and services that could be funded by the measure, home owners most favored the following: protecting sources of drinking water from contamination and pollution; keeping creeks, lakes, Delta, and the Bay free of dangerous bacteria and toxic chemicals; keeping trash and pollution out of the Bay, the Delta, and off shorelines; and reducing illegal discharges of pollution into water sources through improved monitoring, investigation and prosecution.

POSITIVE ARGUMENTS

When presented with arguments in favor of the measure, residential property owners found the following arguments to be the most persuasive:

- *By passing this measure, we can help protect wildlife and fish from harmful pollution and toxics that now end up in our lakes, the Delta, and the Bay.*
- *Nothing is more important than having clean water to drink. This measure will protect our clean water sources and waterways from contamination to ensure that we always have a stable and safe supply of clean water.*
- *This measure is needed to protect our natural resources and quality of life for future generations.*

1. The highest rates tested for large, medium, and small parcels were $43, $25, and $18, respectively.
2. The lowest rates tested for large, medium, and small parcels were $15, $9, and $6, respectively.

INTERIM BALLOT TEST

- After hearing arguments in favor of the Water Quality Measure, overall support for the proposed measure among residential property owners increased slightly to 67%, with 43% indicating that they would *definitely* vote in favor of the measure. Approximately 28% of respondents opposed the measure at this point in the survey, and an additional 5% were unsure or unwilling to share their vote choice.

NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS

Of the arguments in opposition to the measure, residential property owners found the following arguments to be the most persuasive:

- *The tax rate can be increased each year and there is no sunset provision, which means that the tax will last forever.*
- *Developers are the ones causing the growth and increased pollution, so they should be the ones to pay for cleaning-up our water.*
- *Residents already pay taxes for clean water. Now they want us to pay twice? It's not fair.*

FINAL BALLOT TEST

- After being presented with projects that could be funded by the Water Quality Measure, possible fee rates, as well as arguments both in favor and against the measure, 63% of single family property owners indicated they would support the measure at the Final Ballot Test. Approximately 30% of residential property owners were opposed to the measure at the Final Ballot Test, and an additional 7% were unsure or unwilling to state their vote choice.

CONCLUSIONS

The bulk of this report is devoted to conveying the details of the study findings. In this section, however, we attempt to 'see the forest for the trees' and note how the collective results of the survey answer the key questions that motivated the research. The following conclusions are based on the True North's and SCI's interpretations of the survey results and the firms' collective experience conducting revenue measure studies for public agencies throughout the State.

Should the Contra Costa Clean Water Program take the next steps toward placing a Water Quality Measure before property owners?

Improving efforts to clean-up and protect water quality in Contra Costa County are widely viewed by property owners as important issues that are worthy of additional funding. The first portion of this research project, a phone survey of likely voters who own their homes, found solid support for a clean water funding measure. The subsequent mail survey of all property owners conducted in September and October found lower support from all property owner types. The diminished level of support is likely due to the overlap of the proposed local Clean Water Measure with the statewide parks and water bond, Proposition 84, which was also marketed as a clean water and water pollution control measure. Moreover, the decline in the local housing market and deteriorating situation in Iraq may have also contributed to the reduced levels of support.

Even though the most recent survey results found somewhat diminished levels of support, the results still show that residents in the County highly desire clean water and the removal of dangerous materials from their water sources. Given the high priority for clean water and pollution controls, the study results suggest that success will be more likely if the Program first engages in a broad public education effort to more fully inform the public about the Program, its clean water services, and additional clean water needs in the County.

The study results suggest that, if packaged properly and preceded by a broad-based and well-orchestrated public education effort, a local Water Quality Measure has a good chance of being successful in the future.

Having recommended that the Clean Water Program move forward, it is important to note that this recommendation to take the next steps toward presenting a stormwater user fee to property owners comes with several qualifications and conditions. Indeed, although the results are promising, all revenue measures must overcome significant challenges prior to being successful. The proposed measure is no exception. The following paragraphs discuss some of the challenges and the next steps that True North and SCI recommend.

How might the economic or political climate impact support for the measure?

An important component of any ballot measure's potential for success is the economic and political climate surrounding the election. Although the recession has relaxed its grip on the State in some ways, the recovery has been largely a jobless one—and it has done little to raise consumer confidence. Together with the state of the economy, a softening real estate market, lingering concerns about the aftermath of the war in Iraq and the State budget crisis combine to create an economic and political climate that is not as favorable to quality-of-life revenue measures as it has been in prior years.

The results of this study also indicate that the recent passage of statewide bonds—namely Proposition 84 and the Disaster Preparedness and Flood Prevention Bond Act of 2006, Proposition 1E—presents some additional challenges with respect to passing a local Water Quality Measure in the short-term. Put simply, by promising to clean-up and protect California's drinking water, protect coastal water quality, prevent flooding, and protect rivers, lakes and streams in every region in the State, Proposition 84 and Proposition 1E likely create an expectation among some property owners that these State bonds could fund the needs of the Clean Water Program.

Although there are short-term influences that introduce some obstacles to passing a local water quality measure, there are also opportunities improve the local political climate through effective public education and outreach.

How might a public information campaign affect support for the proposed measure?

As noted in the body of this report, individuals' opinions about revenue measures are often not rigid, especially when the amount of information presented to the public on a measure has been limited. Thus, in addition to measuring current support for the measure, one of the goals of this study was to explore how the introduction of additional information about the Water Quality Measure may affect property owners' opinions about the measure.

It is clear from the survey results that property owners' opinions about the proposed measure are somewhat sensitive to the nature, and amount, of information that they have about the measure. Information about the types of projects and services that could be funded by the Water Quality Measure, as well as arguments in favor of the measure, were found by many respondents to be compelling reasons to support the measure. Although this information did not generate significant increases in aggregate support over the course of the survey, it did help solidify the opinions of those who were initially inclined to support the measure.

Accordingly, one of the keys to creating an improved political climate for the proposed Water Quality Measure and maintaining current levels of

support will be the presence of an effective, well-orchestrated public education campaign that primarily targets owners of single-family residences—as they hold approximately 86% of the overall vote—and focuses on the need for clean water/pollution control measures. With the passage of Proposition 84, the campaign should also explain how the state bond will not solve local clean water needs and that a reliable, local source of funding is required. Also, if Proposition 84 requires local matching funds, we have often found that support for a local funding measure increases if the funds raised locally will be matched by other State or Federal funds.

Is there a need for additional research to help track support and package a future measure for success?

Once the Clean Water Program has implemented its branding and public outreach campaign, it is strongly recommended that a tracking poll be conducted prior to presenting a Water Quality Measure to property owners. The tracking poll will gauge the impacts of the campaign, determine whether the timing is right for moving forward with a measure, and help package the measure for success.

MAIL SURVEY

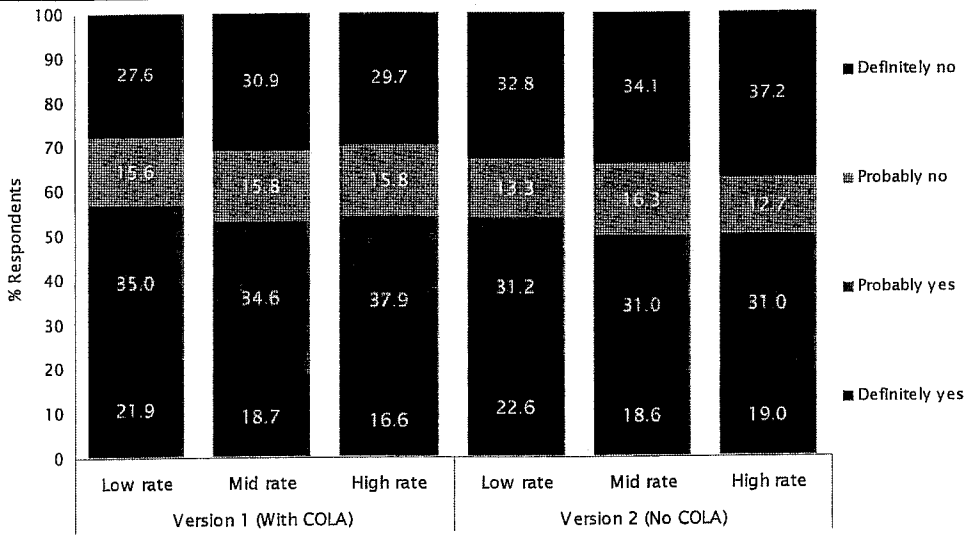
The mail survey was designed to simulate a mailed-ballot and was accompanied by an information sheet that provided background information about the proposed measure. Although the mail survey was administered *after* the phone survey in this study, it is most appropriate to discuss the results of the mail survey first because the findings are more recent and the methodology more closely mimics an actual mail ballot election. Whereas the telephone survey was administered to likely voter residential property owners only, the mail survey was administered to the full spectrum of property owners eligible to participate in a stormwater user fee ballot proceeding—including commercial, industrial and apartment property owners, and other residential property owners. Furthermore, the verbiage included in the mail survey represented refined versions of that originally tested in the phone survey.

MAIL SURVEY INITIAL BALLOT TESTS Two versions of the proposed measure were tested in the mail survey—one that included a cost of living adjustment (COLA) not to exceed 3% per year, and one that did not. In addition to being randomly assigned one of the two versions, respondents were also randomly assigned to one of three possible fee rate groups corresponding to base fee rates of $17 (low), $25 (mid), or $34 (high). The actual amount presented to each respondent reflected the estimated *total* fee amount for their property, which varied according to the land use and size of their parcel. The ballot language used for both versions, as well as the results of the Initial Ballot Tests by the associated fee rate level, are presented below.

Question 1: Mail Survey, Version 1 *In order to: clean up polluted water and storm water; keep trash and pollution out of creeks, lakes, the Delta, and the Bay; prevent flooding, and protect sources of clean drinking water, would you support an assessment in the amount of _____ per year, with an annual inflation adjustment in future years not to exceed 3% per year?*

Question 1: Mail Survey, Version 2 *In order to: clean up polluted water and storm water; keep trash and pollution out of creeks, lakes, the Delta, and the Bay; prevent flooding, and protect sources of clean drinking water, would you support an assessment in the amount of _____ per year?*

FIGURE 1 INITIAL BALLOT TEST BY VERSION & FEE RATE



As shown in Figure 1 on the previous page, support levels were slightly higher among those who received the version that included a COLA when compared to the version that did not, although the difference was not statistically significant. As one *would* expect, support was highest among respondents in the lowest fee rate group, although because that total fee amount presented to a respondent varied greatly by property size and land use, it is difficult to gain a clear picture of price sensitivity from Figure 1. Figure 2 below is better for this purpose, as it displays support levels by a range of the *total* fee amount presented to respondents.

Nearly 62% of those with a total fee of less than $25 indicated they would support the proposed measure. At a total fee of $25 to $34, support dipped to 54% and continued to decline at higher amounts, which in most cases were received by large land owners and those who own apartments, commercial, or industrial properties.

FIGURE 2 INITIAL BALLOT TEST BY TOTAL ASSESSMENT AMOUNT

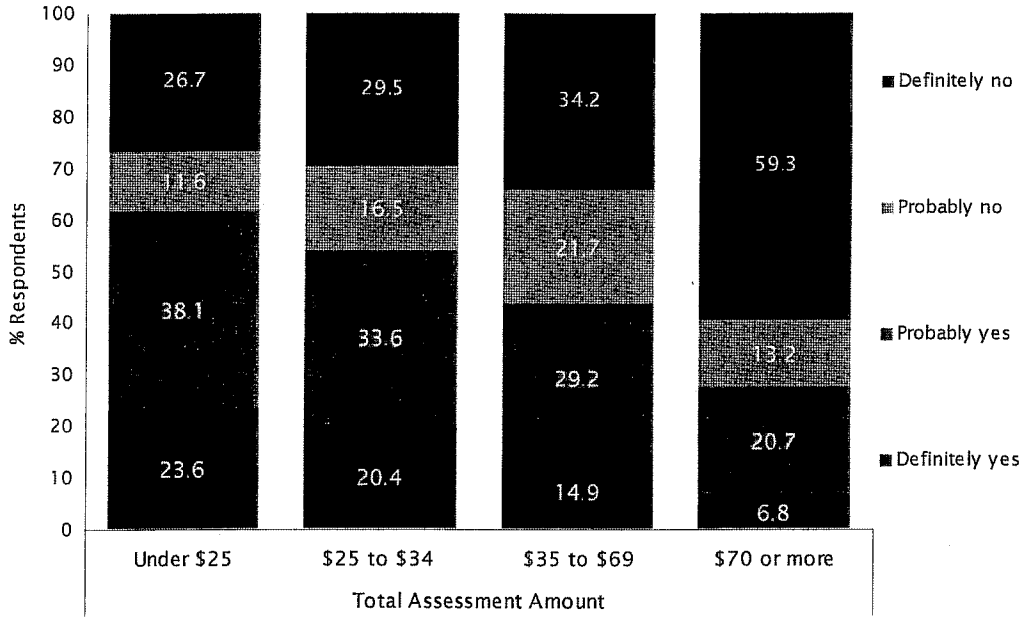
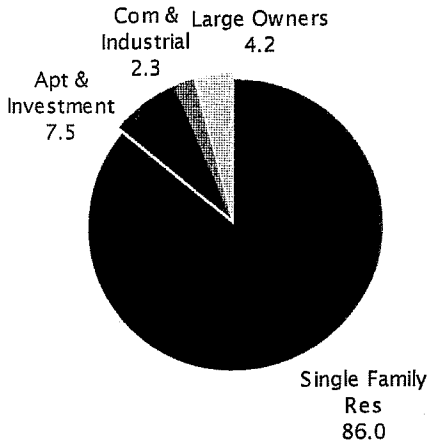


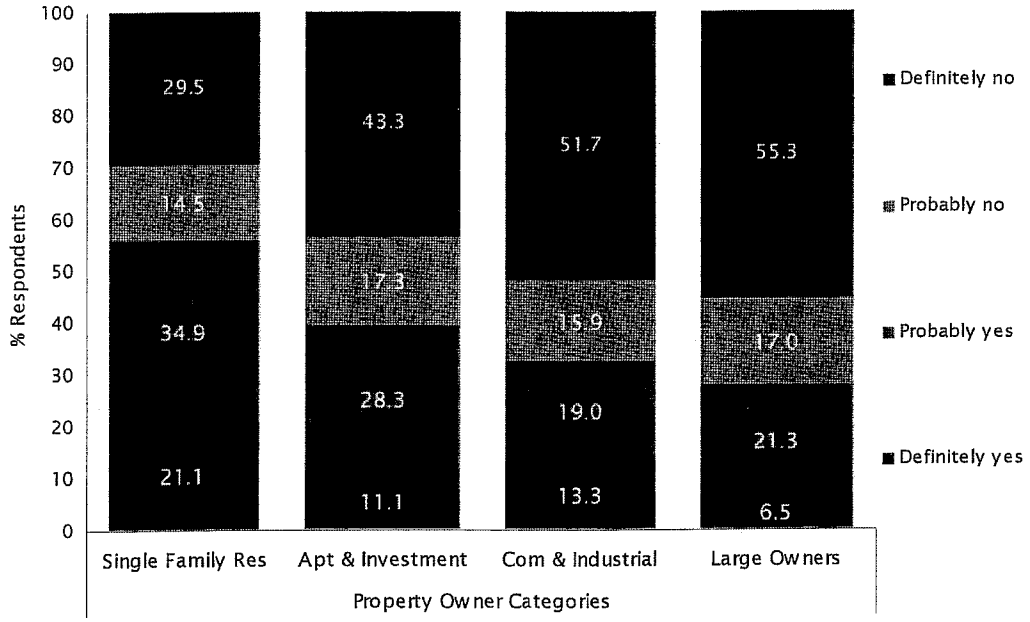
FIGURE 3 EXPECTED WEIGHTED VOTE BY PROPERTY OWNER CATEGORIES



As discussed in *Property-Related Fee Explained* on page 2, all property owners are eligible to participate in the proposed stormwater user fee, including commercial and industrial property owners, apartment and investment property owners, as well as all residential property owners, whether they are registered to vote or not. For the interested reader, Figure 3 shows the percentage of the vote held by each property owner group in Contra Costa County. At 86% of the expected vote, single-family residential property owners make up the largest group.[3]

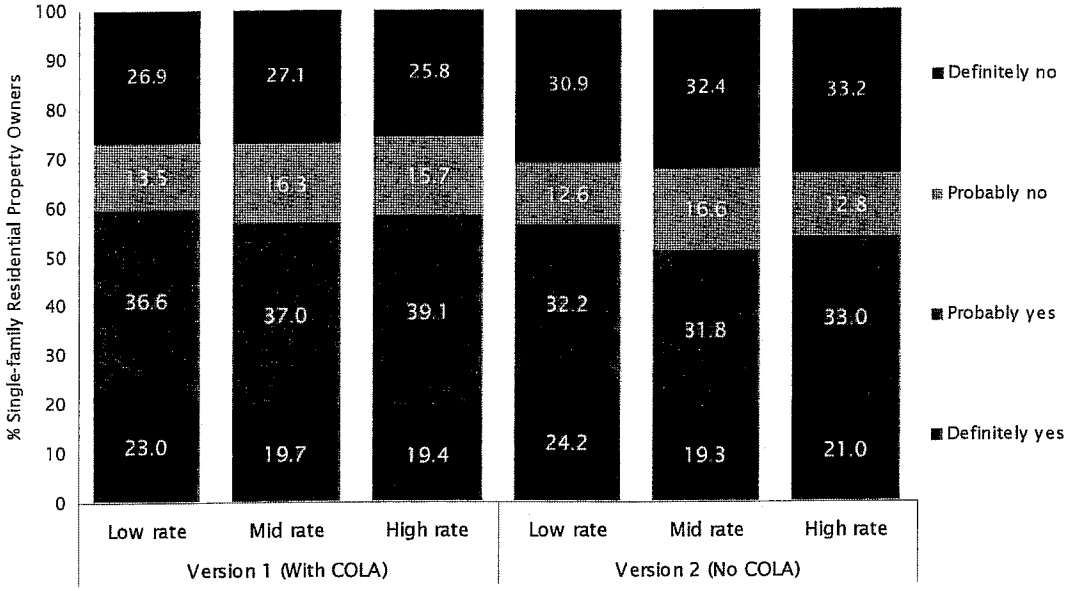
SUPPORT AMONG SINGLE FAMILY HOMEOWNERS Given that owners of single-family residential properties represent the largest group of property owners in the County and will exert the greatest influence on the outcome of the proposed Water Quality Measure, it is important to examine their support in detail. Figure 4 presents overall support for the proposed measure by property owner category. In general, owners of single-family residential properties were considerably more supportive of the measure than those who own other types of property in the County. Keep in mind that Figure 4 combines support levels across all rate levels tested, whereas the next figure displays how support varies by the proposed fee rate only among owners of single-family residences.

FIGURE 4 INITIAL BALLOT TEST BY PROPERTY OWNER CATEGORIES



3. Large owners are the property owners with the highest total number of parcels, and therefore highest weighted votes. For a property-related fee ballot, they hold approximately 4% of the overall votes.

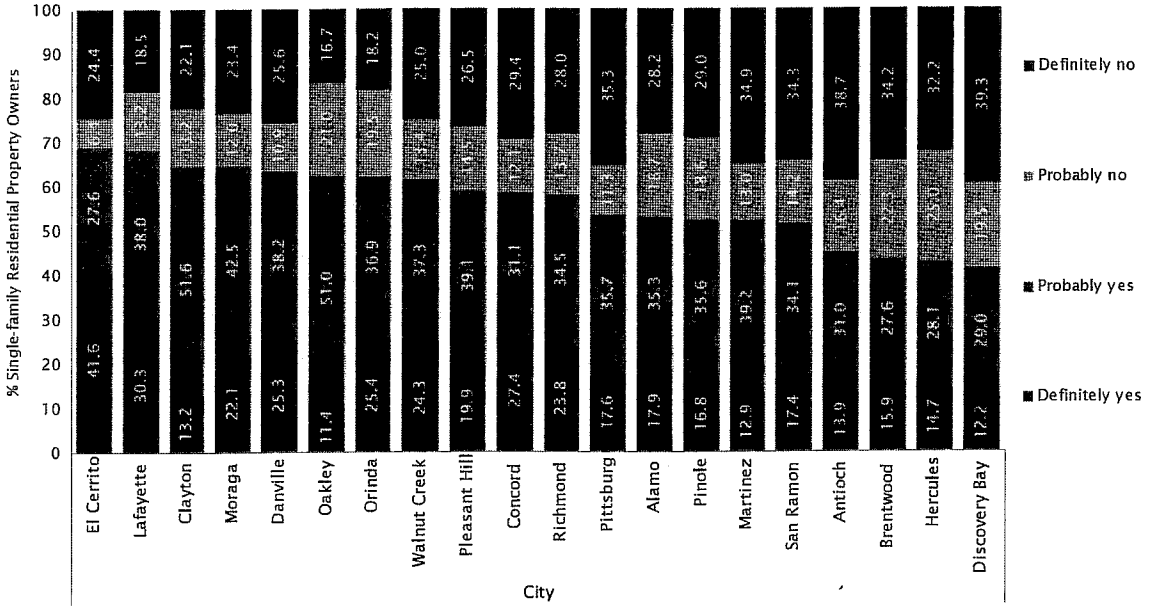
FIGURE 5 INITIAL BALLOT TEST BY VERSION & FEE RATE: SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY OWNERS



As shown above in Figure 5, support among owners of single-family residences differed only slightly between fee rates tested, with 60% indicating they would vote yes at the lowest rate compared with 59% at the highest rate for Version 1 of the survey, which included mention of a COLA.

Figure 6 displays how overall support for the measure varied by the city in which the property is located. Keep in mind that this figure combines support levels across all rate levels tested, and because of the large margin of error associated with small sample sizes (see *Statistical Margin of Error* on page 36), only cities with at least 25 respondents are displayed.

FIGURE 6 INITIAL BALLOT TEST BY CITY: SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY OWNERS

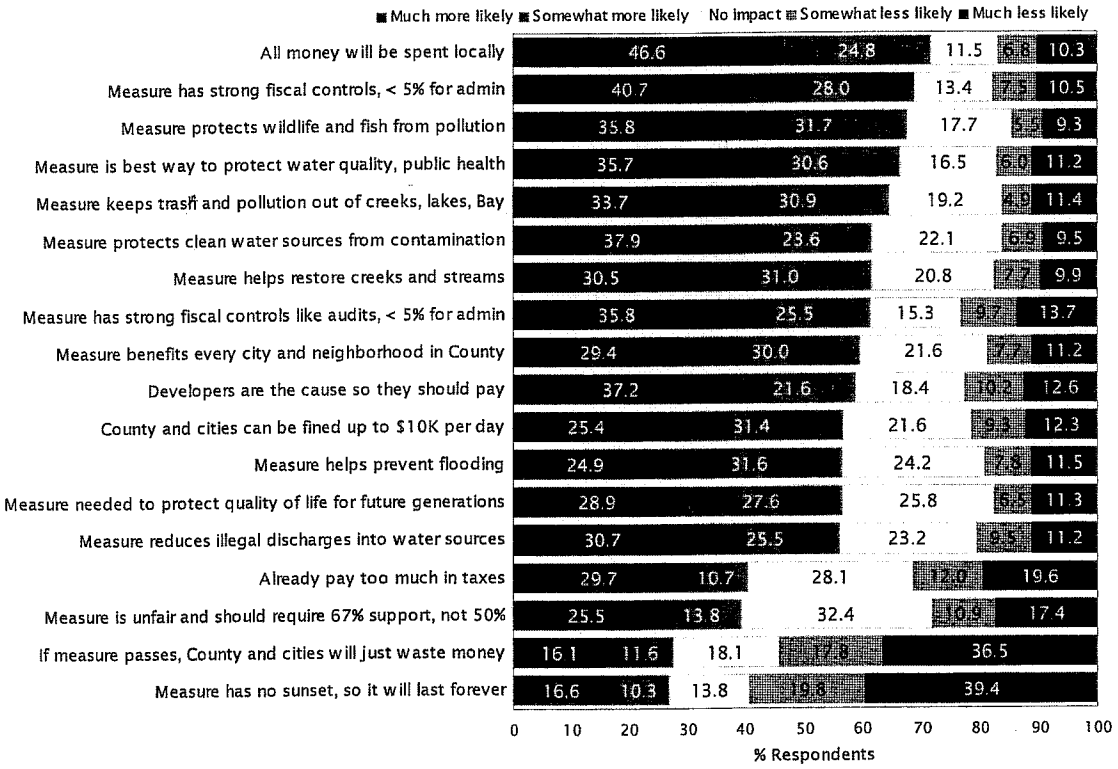


RANKING OF STATEMENTS Following the initial ballot question, the surveys provided a list of positive and negative statements about the measure. For each item, respondents were asked if they would be more or less likely to support the measure, given the information. Figure 7 displays the percentage of property owners that indicated they would be more or less likely to support the proposed measure following each information item.

As seen below, the most compelling item of information among property owners concerned the fact that all funds raised by the measure would be spent locally and that strong fiscal measures would ensure responsible spending. Mentions of the measure protecting water quality and public health, and preventing pollution and contamination of water sources also prompted at least 60% of property owners to be at least somewhat more likely to support the measure.

Questions 2~13: Mail Survey *Now, please read the following arguments and statements regarding the proposed clean water measure. For each one, please indicate whether they make you more or less likely to support the measure.*

FIGURE 7 INFORMATION ITEMS



Once respondents had been presented with the additional background information discussed above, they were once again asked whether they would vote yes or no on the proposed measure. Overall, support levels found for the respective measures at the informed ballot tests were virtually identical to those found at the initial ballot tests. The two figures below display support levels among all property owners by version and fee rate, as well as by property owner category.

Question 14, Mail Survey *Now that you have read more about the proposed measure, and arguments for and against, would you vote yes or no on the proposed clean water measure?*

FIGURE 8 INFORMED BALLOT TEST BY VERSION & FEE RATE

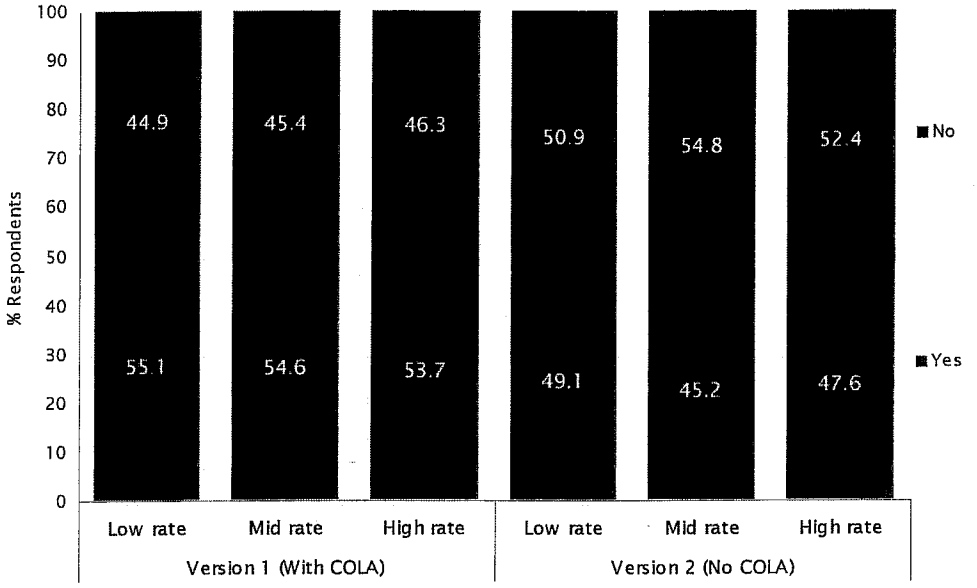
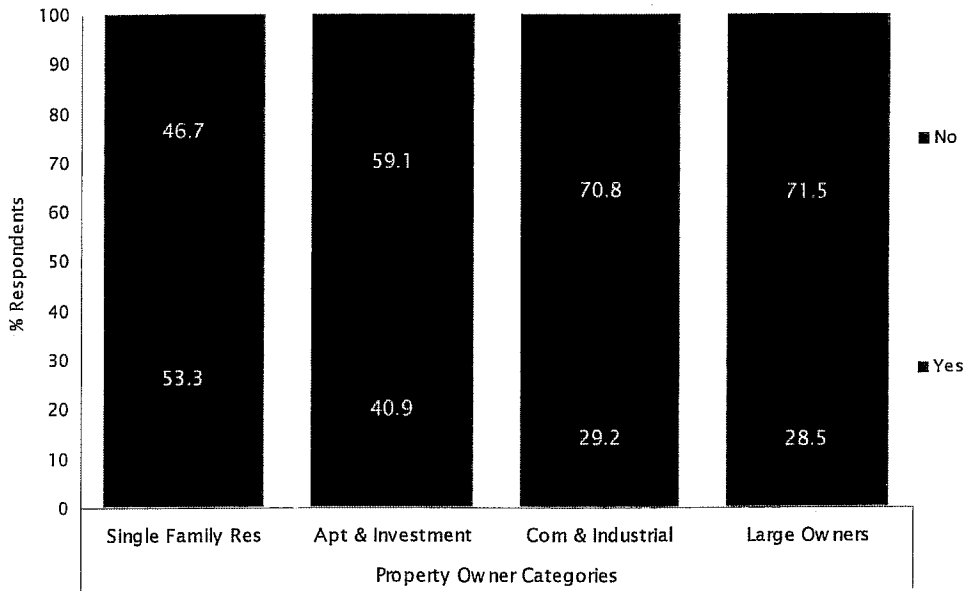


FIGURE 9 INFORMED BALLOT TEST BY PROPERTY OWNER CATEGORIES



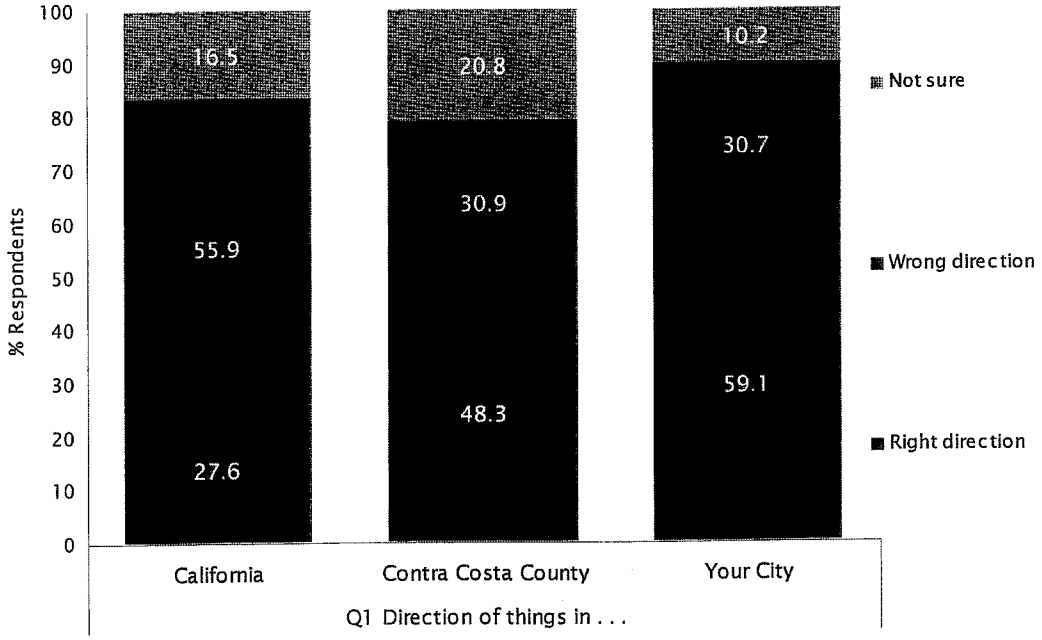
General Direction

Administered first in this study, the telephone survey included two exploratory sections designed to gauge property owners' opinions regarding the overall state of affairs in the State of California, Contra Costa County and, for those who reside in an incorporated area of the County, their city or town. For each reference, respondents were simply asked whether they feel that things are generally going in the right or wrong direction. Below, Figure 10 combines the responses to Question 1 for each of the three reference areas.

The results of the survey clearly indicate that property owners distinguish between the activities, events, and affairs of the State of California, the County of Contra Costa, and their local community. The majority of property owners indicated that California is generally headed in the wrong direction (56%) or were unsure (17%), with just over one-quarter (28%) feeling the State is on the right path. When it comes to Contra Costa County and their local communities, property owners were more positive in their assessments. Almost half (48%) stated that Contra Costa County is headed in the right direction, and 59% felt their city is on the right path.

Question 1 *Generally speaking, do you think things in _____ are going in the right or wrong direction?*

Figure 10 Opinion of General Direction



PERCEPTIONS BY SUBGROUP For the interested reader, the next two figures display how responses to Question 1 varied by age and area of the County, showing the percentage who replied 'right direction' for each reference area.

FIGURE 11 OPINION OF GENERAL DIRECTION BY AGE

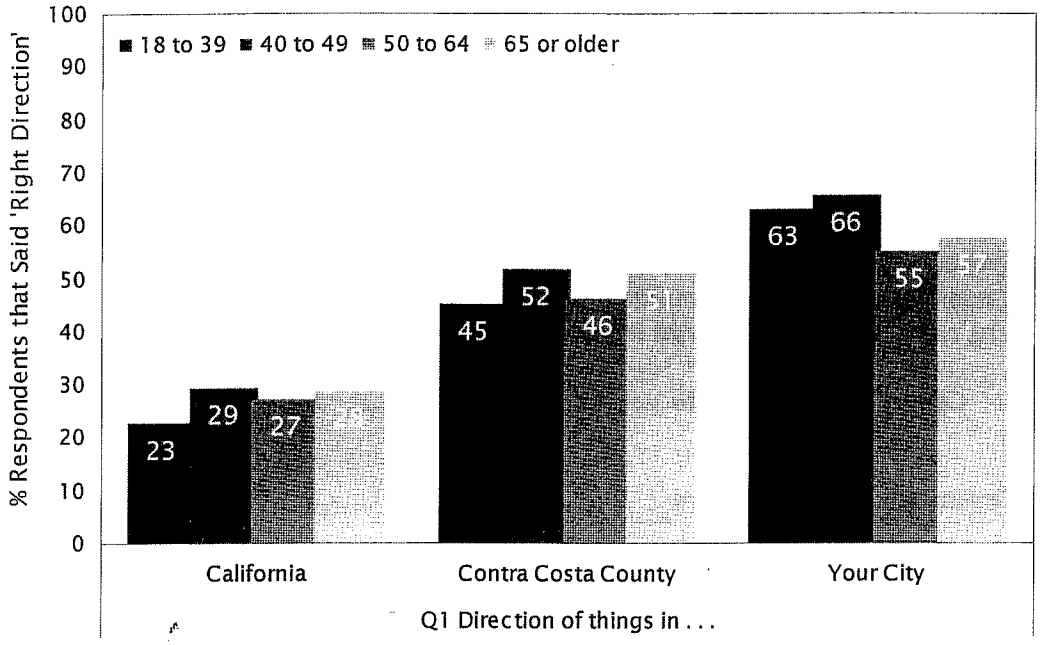
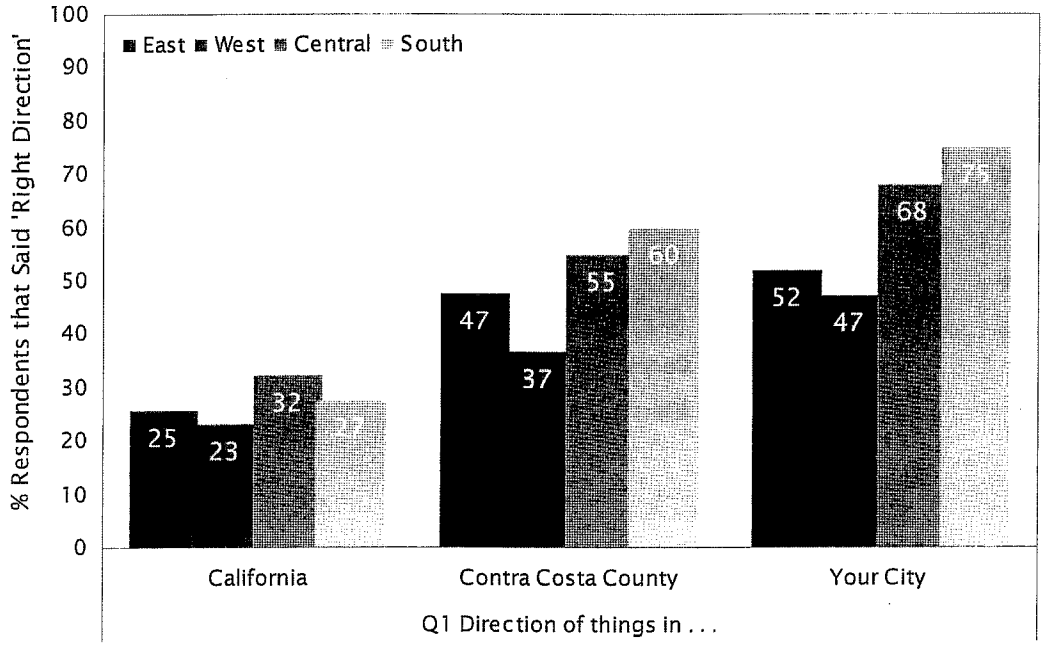


FIGURE 12 OPINION OF GENERAL DIRECTION BY AREA OF COUNTY



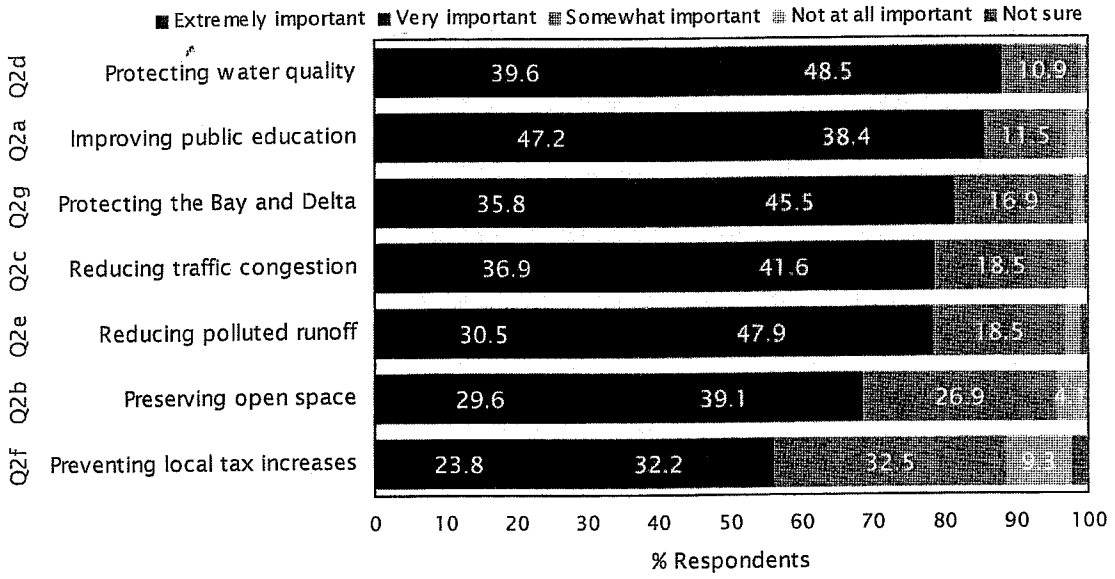
IMPORTANCE OF ISSUES

The next section of the phone survey presented respondents with several issues facing residents in the County and asked them to rate the importance of each. Because the same response scale was used for each issue, the results provide an insight into how important each issue is on a scale of importance, *as well as* how each ranks in importance relative to the other issues tested.[4]

Figure 13 presents each issue tested, and the importance assigned to it by survey participants, ranked by order of importance.[5] Overall, protecting water quality received the highest percentage of respondents indicating the issue was either extremely or very important (88%), followed by improving public education (86%) and protecting the Bay and Delta (81%). Given the purpose of this study, it is also instructive to note that preventing local tax increases was rated last of the seven issues tested and considerably lower in importance (56%) when compared with the water quality issues that would be addressed by the proposed measure.

Question 2 *For each of the following issues, please tell me how important you feel the issue is to you, using a scale of extremely important, very important, somewhat important or not at all important. Here is the first issue: _____. Do you think this issue is extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?*

FIGURE 13 IMPORTANCE OF ISSUES



4. To avoid a systematic position bias, the order in which the issues were read to respondents was randomized for each respondent.
5. Issues were ranked by the percentage of respondents who indicated the issue was either extremely important or very important.

PERCEPTIONS BY SUBGROUP For the interested reader, the next three figures display how responses to the water quality items in Question 2 (Q2d, Q2g, and Q2e) varied by party, age, and area of the County, showing the percentage who said very or extremely important for each issue.

FIGURE 14 IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING WATER QUALITY BY PARTY, AGE & AREA OF COUNTY

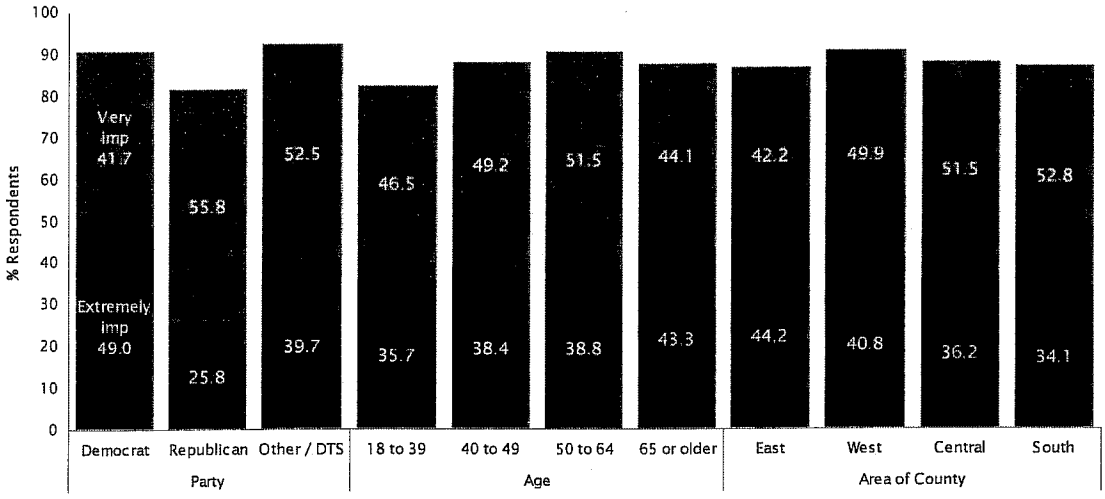


FIGURE 15 IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING BAY AND DELTA BY PARTY, AGE & AREA OF COUNTY

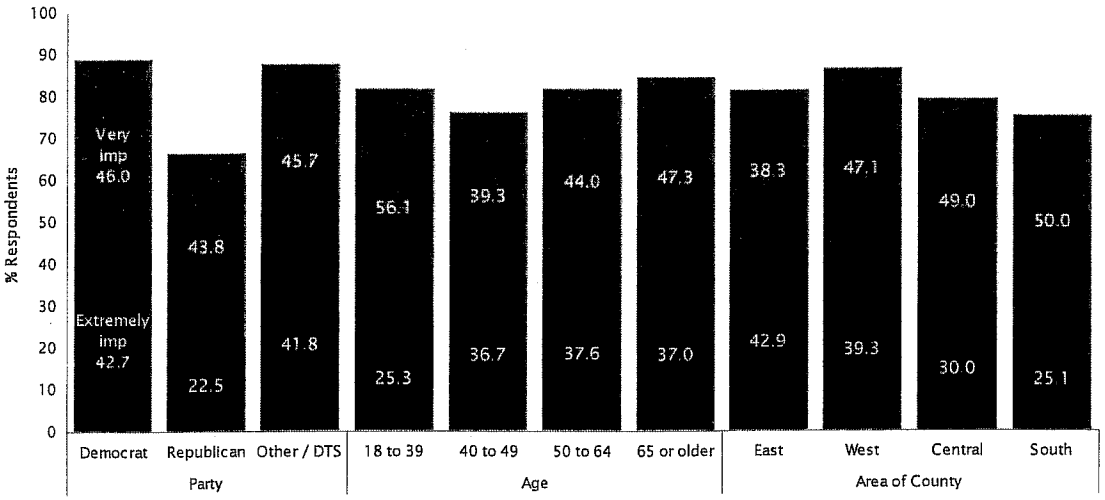
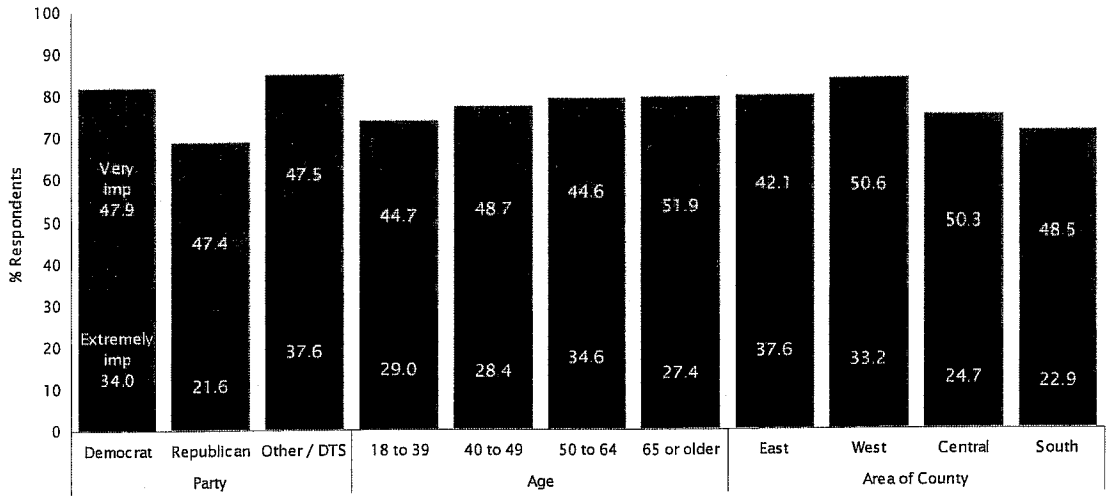


FIGURE 16 IMPORTANCE OF REDUCING POLLUTED RUNOFF BY PARTY, AGE & AREA OF COUNTY



Initial Ballot Test

The primary objective of the phone survey was to estimate residential property owners' support for a revenue measure that would assess a fee to clean-up polluted stormwater and runoff, keep trash and pollution out of rivers, lakes, the Delta and the Bay, prevent flooding, and protect sources of clean drinking water. To this end, Question 3 was designed to take an early gauge of residential property owners' support for the proposed measure.

Because the total amount assessed to each residential property for this measure would vary between owners based on their property type and size, respondents received the Initial Ballot Test with a fee that approximated the *total* assessment amount that would apply to their property, given the highest proposed base rate (shown as *Rate A* in the question below).

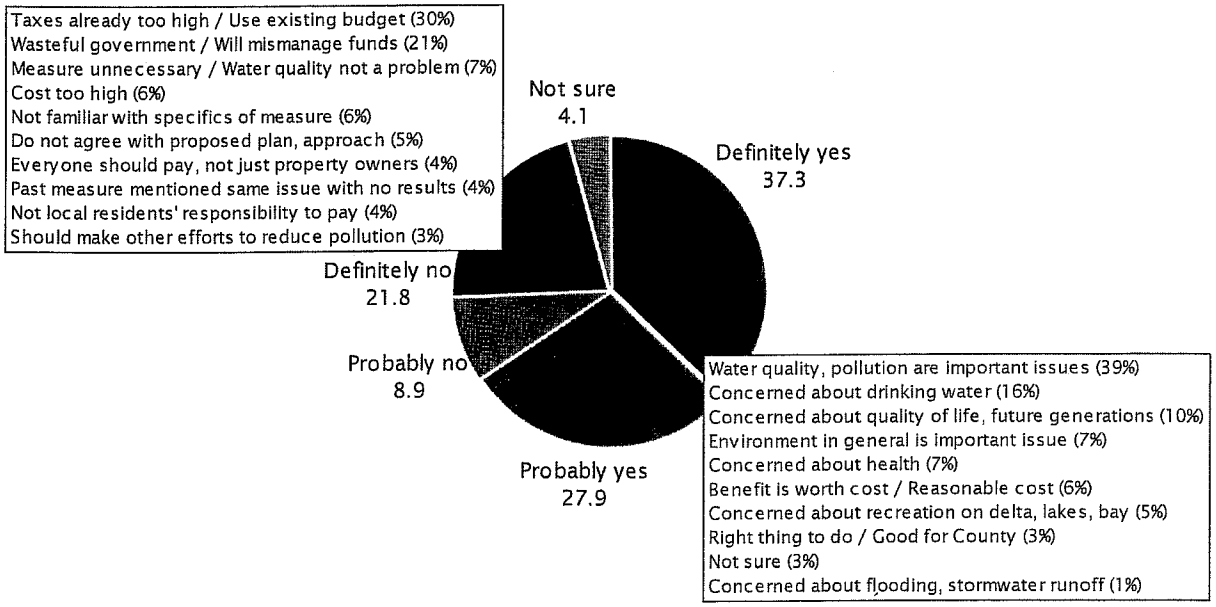
Following the Initial Ballot Test, questions 4 and 5 explored the reasons that underlay property owners' initial positions with respect to the measure. The results to all three questions are combined in Figure 17 shown below.

Question 3 *Next year, voters in Contra Costa County may be asked to vote on local ballot measures. Let me read you one of the proposals. In order to: clean-up polluted water and stormwater; keep trash and pollution out of rivers, lakes, the Delta and the Bay; prevent flooding; and protect sources of clean drinking water, shall property owners in Contra Costa County be assessed up to $<Rate A> per year for each property that they own in the County?*

Question 4 *Is there a particular reason why you do not support the Water Quality Measure I just described?*

Question 5 *Is there a particular reason why you support the Water Quality Measure I just described?*

Figure 17 Initial Ballot Test & Top Reasons for Supporting or Opposing Measure



The motivation for placing Question 3 near the front of the survey is twofold. First, support for a measure often depends on the amount of information they have about a measure. At this point in the survey, the respondent has not been provided information about the proposed measure beyond what is presented in the ballot language. This situation is analogous to a property owner returning a mail ballot with limited knowledge about the measure, such as what might occur in the absence of an effective education campaign. Question 3, also known as the Initial Ballot Test, is thus a good measure of residential property owner support for the proposed measure *as it is* in the absence of an information campaign. Because the Initial Ballot Test provides a gauge of 'uninformed' support for the measure, it also serves a second purpose in that it provides a useful baseline from which to judge the impact of various information items conveyed later in the survey on support for the measure.

As seen in Figure 17 on page 20, 65% of residential property owners indicated they would definitely (37%) or probably (28%) support the Water Quality Measure at this stage in the phone survey, whereas 31% stated they would oppose the measure, and 4% were unsure or unwilling to share their vote choice. When supporters were asked *why* they support the measure, the most frequently mentioned reasons included that water quality and pollution are important issues (39%), that they are concerned with the quality of drinking water (16%), and that they are concerned about the quality of life in their community and for future generations (10%).

On the other hand, when those who voted no at the Initial Ballot Test were asked why they opposed the measure, concern about existing tax rates being too high and the need for the County to work within its existing budget was the most commonly stated reasons (30%). Other reasons included concern over the County's ability to responsibly manage the funds from such a measure (21%), and the perception that a water quality measure is simply unnecessary (7%).

SUPPORT BY SUBGROUPS For the interested reader, Table 1 on the next page shows how support for the measure at the Initial Ballot Test varied by key demographic traits. The light blue column indicates the approximate percentage of the universe that each subgroup category comprises. One of the most striking patterns in the table is that support levels at the Initial Ballot Test exceed 60% for all but a few subgroups presented.

TABLE 1 DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF SUPPORT AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST

		Approximate % of Residential Property Owner Universe	% Probably or Definitely Yes	% Not sure
Overall		100	65.2	4.1
Years in Contra Costa County	Less than 5	10	70.1	3.8
	5 to 9	11	68.6	2.6
	10 to 14	11	67.9	1.5
	15 or more	67	63.4	4.9
Children in Household	Yes	68	68.2	4.7
	No	30	58.3	2.8
Environmentalist	Yes, strong	26	66.4	7.4
	Yes, moderate	43	67.9	3.3
	No	29	59.4	2.5
Gender	Male	50	62.2	2.5
	Female	50	68.2	5.7
Party	Democrat	49	69.8	5.0
	Republican	33	55.5	2.9
	Other / DTS	18	69.9	3.3
Age	18 to 39	11	67.9	2.7
	40 to 49	22	57.8	3.0
	50 to 64	38	68.0	3.7
	65 or older	29	65.7	5.6
Household Party Type	Single dem	27	65.6	4.3
	Dual dem	17	73.1	5.9
	Single rep	13	57.6	3.5
	Dual rep	12	52.2	4.0
	Mixed or other	31	69.0	3.2
Supervisorial District	One	18	66.8	7.1
	Two	18	70.4	3.5
	Three	23	66.2	3.5
	Four	20	64.1	4.0
	Five	21	59.4	2.8
Area of County	East	29	62.3	2.6
	West	26	66.0	5.7
	Central	39	67.5	4.5
	South	7	61.6	2.0
Property Size	Small	23	69.4	5.5
	Medium	68	65.0	3.7
	Large	9	56.0	3.2

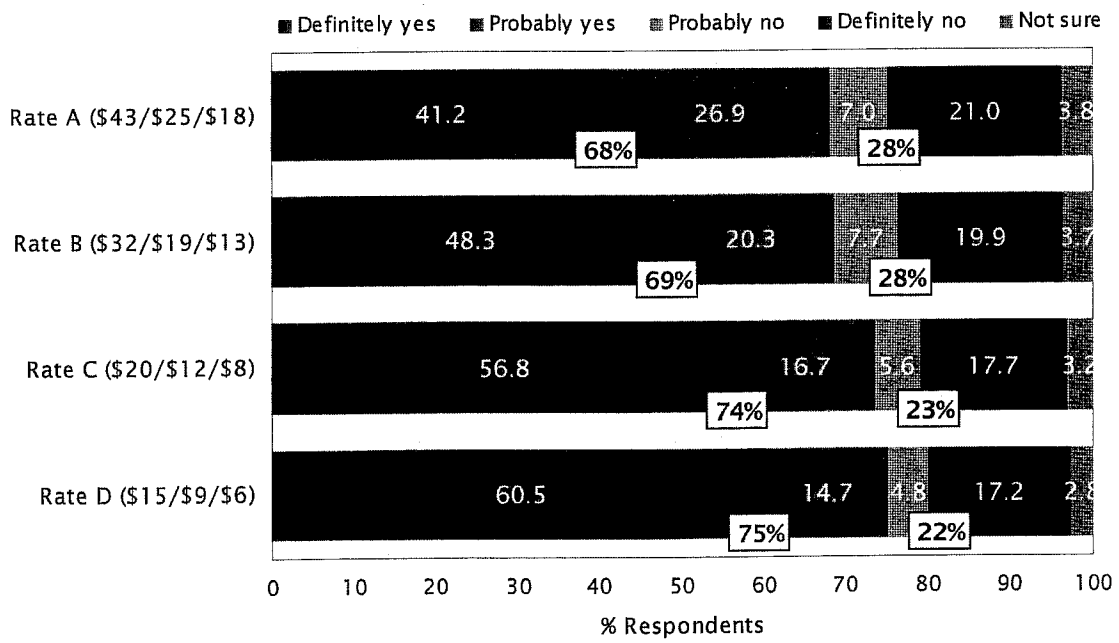
Fee Threshold

Naturally, support for a measure is often contingent on its cost. The higher the fee, all other things being equal, the less likely a voter is to support the measure. One of the goals of this study was thus to gauge the impact that changes in the fee rate can be expected to have on property owner support for the proposed Water Quality Measure.

Question 6 was designed to do just that. Respondents were first instructed that the Water Quality Measure would raise money through annual property taxes paid by property owners in the County, and that the fee amount had yet to be decided. They were then presented with the highest proposed fee rate (*Rate A*: $43, $25, or $18 per year for each property owned in the County, depending on property size, which was identified prior to conducting the interviews) and asked if they would support the proposed measure at that rate. If a respondent did not answer 'definitely yes', they were asked if they would support the measure at the next lowest fee rate, based on property size.[6] The four rate levels and the corresponding fees, given a property size grouping, as well as the percentage of respondents who indicated they would vote in favor of the measure at each rate, are shown in Figure 18 below.

Question 6 *The Water Quality Measure would raise money through annual property taxes paid by property owners in the County. However, the fee amount has yet to be decided. If you knew that your household would pay _____ per year for each property that you own in the County, would you vote yes or no on the Water Quality Measure?*

Figure 18 Fee Threshold



6. If a respondent answered 'definitely yes', it is assumed they would support the measure at the lower fee rates. Their support at each rate is factored into the percentages shown in Figure 18.

Even with the high levels of support shown in Figure 18 on page 23, it is apparent that single family residential property owners are price sensitive when it comes to their support for the proposed Water Quality Measure. At the highest fee rate tested, 68% of those surveyed indicated they would vote in favor of the measure. Incremental reductions in the fee rate resulted in incremental increases in support for the measure, with three-quarters (75%) of those surveyed indicating that they would support the proposed measure at lowest annual fee rate tested. Moreover, the percentage of definitely yes respondents decreases even more significantly as the proposed rate increases.

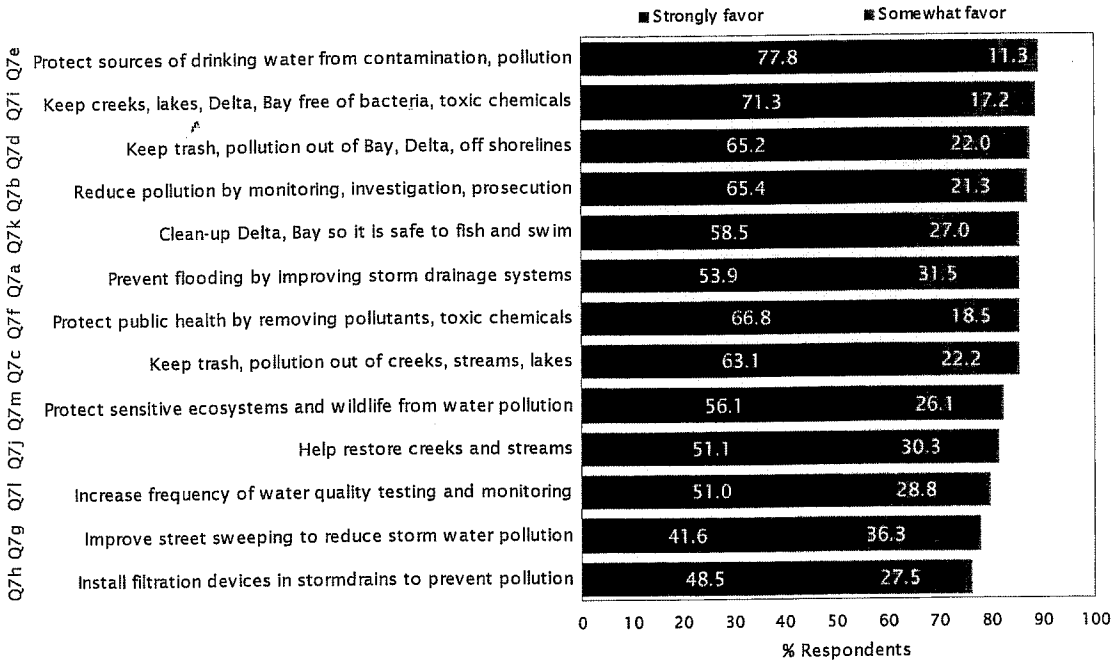
PROJECTS & SERVICES

The ballot language presented in Question 3 indicated that the proposed measure would be used to clean-up polluted stormwater and runoff, keep trash and pollution out of rivers, lakes, the Delta, and the Bay, prevent flooding, and protect sources of clean drinking water. The purpose of Question 7 was to provide respondents with additional examples of the types of projects and services that could be funded by the proposed measure, as well as identify which of these projects and services generated the most support for the measure. The information items were administered in random order to avoid a systematic position bias

After hearing about a project or service, respondents were asked if they would favor or oppose spending some of the money on that particular project or service assuming the measure passed. Truncated descriptions of the items tested, as well as home owners' responses, are shown in Figure 19 below.

Question 7 *The Water Quality Measure we've been discussing could fund a variety of projects and services in the County. If the measure passes, would you favor or oppose using some of the money to: _____, or do you not have an opinion?*

FIGURE 19 FAVORABILITY OF PROJECTS AND SERVICES



Overall, the item that resonated with the largest percentage of respondents was protecting sources of drinking water from contamination and pollution (89% strongly or somewhat favor), followed by keeping creeks, lakes, Delta, and the Bay free of dangerous bacteria and toxic chemicals (89%), keeping trash and pollution out of the Bay, the Delta, and off shorelines (87%), and reducing illegal discharges of pollution into water sources through improved monitoring, investigation and prosecution (87%). It is also worth noting that even the least compelling service—installing filtration devices in stormdrains to prevent pollution from entering streams, the Delta, and the Bay—was favored by three-quarters (75%) of residential property owners.

PROJECT INFORMATION BY INITIAL SUPPORT Respondents occasionally exhibit different preferences for the types of improvements that may be funded by a measure. Table 2 shows the five most compelling projects according to whether respondents initially supported or opposed the proposed Water Quality Measure at the Initial Ballot Test. Although the favorability of projects and their relative ranking did vary depending on respondents' initial positions with respect to the measure, it is worth noting that the most compelling project for both supporters and opponents was protecting sources of clean drinking water.

TABLE 2 TOP FIVE PROJECTS AND SERVICES BY POSITION AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST

Position at Initial Ballot Test (Q3)	Item	Project / Service Summary	% Strongly Favor
Probably or Definitely **Yes** (*n* = 261)	Q7e	Protect sources of drinking water from contamination, pollution	88
	Q7i	Keep creeks, lakes, Delta, Bay free from bacteria, toxic chemicals	82
	Q7f	Protect public health by removing pollutants, toxic chemicals	79
	Q7d	Keep trash, pollution out of Bay, Delta, off shorelines	77
	Q7c	Keep trash, pollution out of creeks, streams, lakes	75
Probably or Definitely **No** (*n* = 123)	Q7e	Protect sources of drinking water from contamination, pollution	55
	Q7b	Reduce pollution through monitoring, investigation, prosecution	47
	Q7i	Keep creeks, lakes, Delta, Bay free from bacteria, toxic chemicals	46
	Q7f	Protect public health by removing pollutants, toxic chemicals	41
	Q7d	Keep trash, pollution out of Bay, Delta, off shorelines	39

Positive Arguments

Ballot measures do not succeed or fail in a political vacuum. Proponents of a measure will present arguments to try to persuade voters to support a measure, just as opponents will present arguments to achieve the opposite goal. The objective of Question 8 was thus to present respondents with arguments in favor of the proposed Water Quality Measure and to identify whether they felt the arguments were convincing reasons to support the measure. Arguments in opposition to the measure were also presented and will be discussed later in this report. The arguments were administered in random order to avoid a systematic position bias.

Question 8 *Supporters of the measure say: _____. Do you think this is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to SUPPORT the measure?*

Figure 20 Positive Arguments

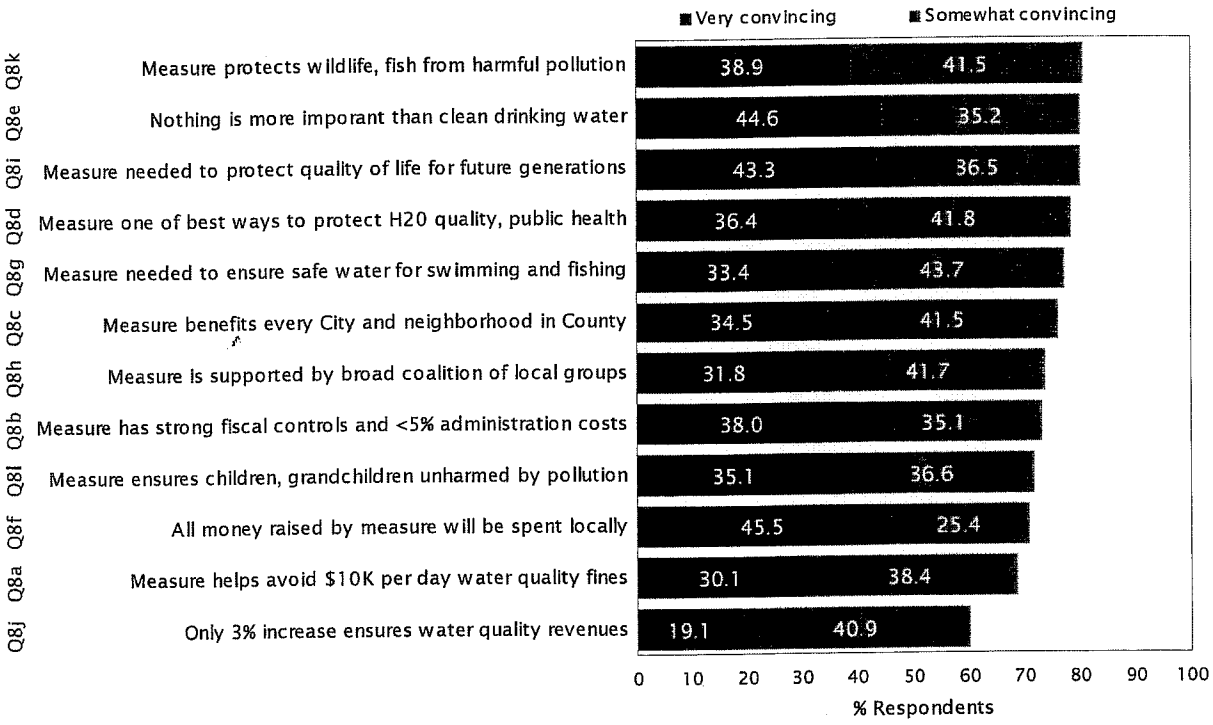


Figure 20 above presents the truncated positive arguments tested, as well as residential property owners' reactions to the arguments. The arguments are ranked from most convincing to least convincing based on the percentage of respondents who indicated that the argument was either a 'very convincing' or 'somewhat convincing' reason to support the measure. Overall, the most compelling positive argument was, 'By passing this measure, we can help protect wildlife and fish from harmful pollution and toxics that now end up in our lakes, the Delta, and the Bay' (80% very or somewhat convincing), followed by 'Nothing is more important than having clean water to drink. This measure will protect our clean water sources and waterways from contamination to ensure that we always have a stable and safe supply of clean water' (80%), and 'This measure is needed to protect our natural resources and quality of life for future generations' (80%).

POSITIVE ARGUMENTS BY INITIAL SUPPORT For the interested reader, Table 3 lists the top five most convincing positive arguments according to respondents' vote choice at the Initial Ballot Test, ranked by the percentage that indicated the argument was very or somewhat convincing.

TABLE 3 TOP FIVE POSITIVE ARGUMENTS BY POSITION AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST

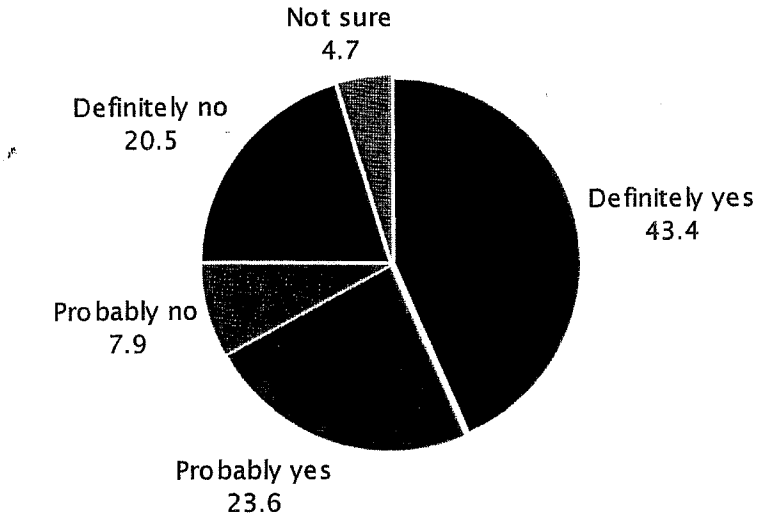
Position at Initial Ballot Test (Q3)	Item	Positive Argument Summary	% Very or Somewhat Convincing
Probably or Definitely **Yes** (*n* = 261)	Q8i	Measure needed to protect quality of life for future generations	93
	Q8k	Measure protects wildlife, fish from harmful pollution	91
	Q8d	Measure is one of best ways to protect water quality and public health	91
	Q8e	Nothing is more imporant than clean drinking water	90
	Q8g	Measure needed to ensure water is safe for swimming and fishing	90
Probably or Definitely **No** (*n* = 123)	Q8e	Nothing is more imporant than clean drinking water	58
	Q8k	Measure protects wildlife, fish from harmful pollution	56
	Q8c	Measure benefits every City and neighborhood in County	52
	Q8i	Measure needed to protect quality of life for future generations	51
	Q8d	Measure is one of best ways to protect water quality and public health	50

Interim Ballot Test

Having exposed respondents to the types of information items and positive arguments they may encounter during an election cycle, the survey again presented property owners with the ballot language used previously to gauge how their support for the Water Quality Measure may have changed. As shown in Figure 21 below, overall support for the measure at this point increased by 2%, with 43% of single family residential property owners indicating they would *definitely* vote yes on the measure. Approximately 28% of respondents opposed the measure at this point in the survey, whereas an additional 5% were unsure or unwilling to state their vote choice.

Question 9 *Sometimes people change their mind about a measure once they have more information about it. Now that you have heard a bit more about the Water Quality Measure, let me read you a summary of it again. In order to: clean-up polluted water and stormwater; keep trash and pollution out of rivers, lakes, the Delta and the Bay; prevent flooding; and protect sources of clean drinking water, shall property owners in Contra Costa County be assessed up to $<Rate A> per year for each property that they own in the County?*

Figure 21 Interim Ballot Test



Support by Subgroups For the interested reader, Table 4 shows how support for the measure at this point in the survey varied by key demographic subgroups, as well as the percentage change in subgroup support when compared with the Initial Ballot Test. As was the case at the Initial Ballot Test, support for the measure at the Interim Test was broad-based, with nearly every subgroup at or above 60% support.

TABLE 4 DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF SUPPORT AT INTERIM BALLOT TEST

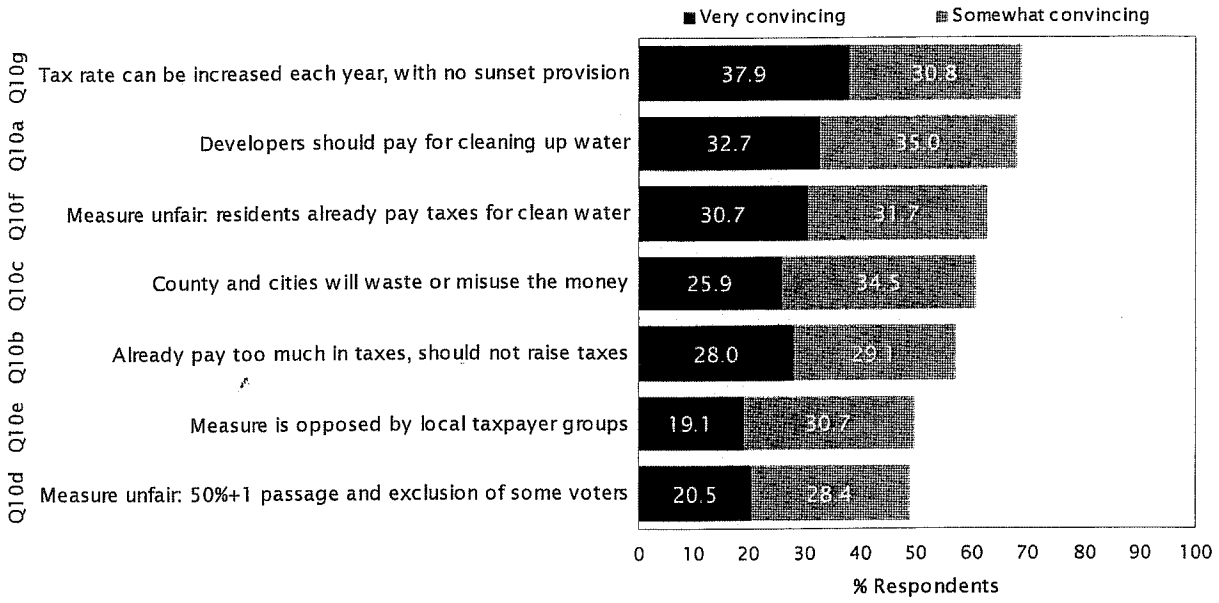
		Approximate % of Residential Property Owner Universe	% Probably or Definitely Yes	Change from Initial Ballot Test (Q3)	% Not sure
Overall		100	67.0	+1.8	4.7
Years in Contra Costa County	Less than 5	10	67.6	-2.5	3.9
	5 to 9	11	72.8	+4.2	4.0
	10 to 14	11	73.4	+5.5	3.3
	15 or more	67	64.9	+1.5	5.2
Children in Household	Yes	68	69.1	+0.9	4.1
	No	30	62.2	+3.8	6.2
Environmentalist	Yes, strong	26	70.6	+4.2	4.4
	Yes, moderate	43	68.6	+0.7	5.2
	No	29	60.7	+1.3	4.4
Gender	Male	50	62.5	+0.3	2.4
	Female	50	71.5	+3.3	6.9
Party	Democrat	49	75.3	+5.5	4.8
	Republican	33	55.4	-0.1	4.6
	Other / DTS	18	66.6	-3.3	2.9
Age	18 to 39	11	70.6	+2.7	4.1
	40 to 49	22	59.5	+1.7	7.1
	50 to 64	38	69.7	+1.7	2.1
	65 or older	29	68.4	+2.8	5.6
Household Party Type	Single dem	27	71.7	+6.1	5.9
	Dual dem	17	78.1	+5.1	4.6
	Single rep	13	59.9	+2.4	5.7
	Dual rep	12	51.6	-0.6	4.0
	Mixed or other	31	66.0	-3.1	3.5
Supervisorial District	One	18	70.2	+3.5	5.6
	Two	18	71.9	+1.5	5.8
	Three	23	66.2	+0.1	5.0
	Four	20	67.2	+3.1	1.4
	Five	21	60.8	+1.3	5.8
Area of County	East	29	63.7	+1.4	5.5
	West	26	69.1	+3.2	4.6
	Central	39	69.1	+1.7	4.0
	South	7	60.9	-0.7	5.3
Property Size	Small	23	73.9	+4.5	2.8
	Medium	68	65.6	+0.7	5.8
	Large	9	59.4	+3.4	0.8

Negative Arguments

Whereas Question 8 presented respondents with arguments in favor of the measure, Question 10 presented respondents with arguments designed to elicit opposition to the measure. In the case of Question 10, however, respondents were asked whether they felt that the argument was a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to *oppose* the measure. The truncated arguments tested, as well as respondents' opinions about the arguments, are presented in Figure 22 below.

Question 10 *Opponents of the measure say: _____. Do you think this is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to OPPOSE the measure?*

Figure 22 Negative Arguments



The most obvious pattern when comparing the negative arguments (Figure 22) to the positive arguments (Figure 20) is that, in general, respondents were less receptive to the negative arguments. Among the negative arguments tested, the most compelling was, 'The tax rate can be increased each year and there is no sunset provision, which means that the tax will last forever' (69%), followed by 'Developers are the ones causing the growth and increased pollution, so they should be the ones to pay for cleaning-up our water' (68%) and 'Residents already pay taxes for clean water. Now they want us to pay twice? It's not fair' (62%). Table 5 on the next page displays the results to Question 10 by position at the Initial Ballot Test.

TABLE 5 TOP FIVE NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS BY POSITION AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST

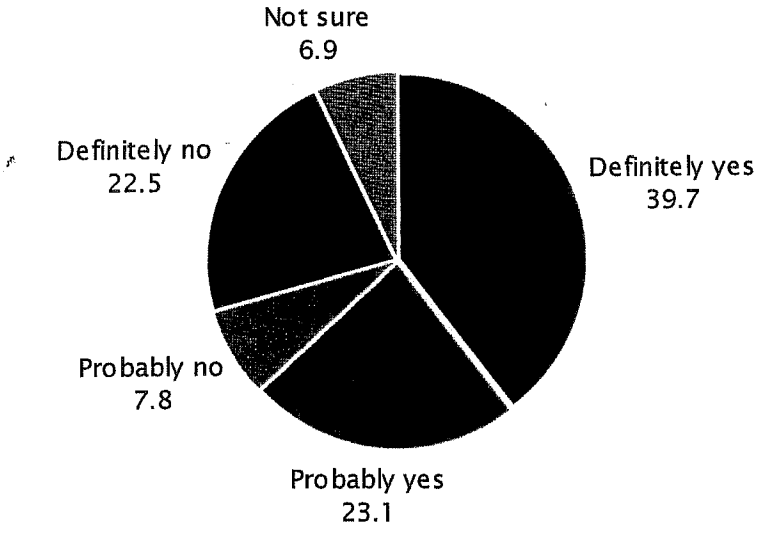
Position at Initial Ballot Test (Q3)	Item	Negative Argument Summary	% Very or Somewhat Convincing
Probably or Definitely **Yes** (*n* = 261)	Q10a	Developers should pay for cleaning up water	64
	Q10g	Tax rate can be increased each year, with no sunset provision	62
	Q10f	Measure unfair because residents already pay taxes for clean water	50
	Q10c	County and cities will waste or misuse the money	49
	Q10b	Already pay too much in taxes, should not raise taxes	44
Probably or Definitely **No** (*n* = 123)	Q10f	Measure unfair because residents already pay taxes for clean water	90
	Q10b	Already pay too much in taxes, should not raise taxes	87
	Q10c	County and cities will waste or misuse the money	84
	Q10g	Tax rate can be increased each year, with no sunset provision	83
	Q10e	Measure is opposed by local taxpayer groups	76

Final Ballot Test

Opinions about ballot measures are often not rigid, especially when the amount of information presented to the public on a measure has been limited. An important goal of the survey was thus to gauge how property owners' opinions about the proposed Water Quality Measure may be affected by the information they could encounter during the course of a campaign. After providing respondents with the wording of the proposed measure, possible fee rates, the projects and improvements that could be funded by the measure, as well as arguments both in favor and against the proposal, respondents were once again asked whether they would vote 'yes' or 'no' on a measure to fund water quality improvements in the County.

Question 11 *Now that you have heard more about the measure, let me read you a summary of it one more time. In order to: clean-up polluted water and stormwater; keep trash and pollution out of rivers, lakes, the Delta and the Bay; prevent flooding; and protect sources of clean drinking water, shall property owners in Contra Costa County be assessed up to $<Rate A> per year for each property that they own in the County?*

Figure 23 Final Ballot Test



At this point in the survey, support for the Water Quality Measure was found among 63% of respondents, with 40% indicating that they would definitely support the measure. Approximately 30% of respondents were opposed to the measure at the Final Ballot Test, and an additional 7% were unsure or unwilling to state their vote choice.

Change in Support Between Ballot Tests

Table 6 provides a closer look at how support for the measure changed over the course of the interview by calculating the difference in support between the Initial, Interim, and Final Ballot Tests within various subgroups of property owners. The percentage of support for the measure at the Final Ballot Test is shown in the second column, and to the right are columns showing the difference between the Final and the Initial, as well as the Final and Interim Ballot Tests. If support for the measure increased, the positive percentage difference appears in green font. If support for the measure declined between the Final and one of the prior ballot tests, the negative percentage difference appears in red font.

Although the general trend was one of declining support by the Final Ballot Test, it is important to recognize that even at this point support for the proposed measure remained broad-based. With the exception of dual-republican households, all subgroups supported the proposed measure at greater than 50% at the Final Ballot Test.

Table 6 Demographic Breakdown of Final Ballot Test

		Approximate % of Residential Property Owner Universe	% Probably or Definitely Yes	Change from Initial Ballot Test (Q3)	Change from Interim Ballot Test (Q9)
Overall		100	62.8	-2.4	-4.2
Years In Contra Costa County	Less than 5	10	62.9	-7.2	-4.7
	5 to 9	11	71.9	+3.3	-0.8
	10 to 14	11	66.6	-1.3	-6.8
	15 or more	67	60.9	-2.5	-4.0
Children In Household	Yes	68	63.8	-4.3	-5.3
	No	30	60.9	+2.5	-1.3
Environmentalist	Yes, strong	26	68.0	+1.6	-2.7
	Yes, moderate	43	62.5	-5.4	-6.1
	No	29	58.5	-0.9	-2.3
Gender	Male	50	59.6	-2.6	-2.9
	Female	50	66.0	-2.2	-5.5
Party	Democrat	49	69.2	-0.5	-6.1
	Republican	33	53.1	-2.5	-2.4
	Other / DTS	18	64.0	-6.0	-2.7
Age	18 to 39	11	67.3	-0.6	-3.3
	40 to 49	22	57.1	-0.7	-2.4
	50 to 64	38	68.4	+0.4	-1.3
	65 or older	29	58.5	-7.1	-9.9
Household Party Type	Single dem	27	66.3	+0.7	-5.4
	Dual dem	17	67.4	-5.7	-10.7
	Single rep	13	58.5	+1.0	-1.4
	Dual rep	12	48.5	-3.7	-3.1
	Mixed or other	31	64.7	-4.4	-1.3
Supervisorial District	One	18	65.8	-0.9	-4.4
	Two	18	69.3	-1.1	-2.7
	Three	23	62.1	-4.1	-4.1
	Four	20	65.3	+1.2	-1.8
	Five	21	53.1	-6.4	-7.7
Area of County	East	29	57.9	-4.4	-5.8
	West	26	66.9	+0.9	-2.3
	Central	39	64.7	-2.8	-4.4
	South	7	57.4	-4.2	-3.5
Property Size	Small	23	69.6	+0.2	-4.3
	Medium	68	61.5	-3.5	-4.1
	Large	9	55.0	-1.0	-4.4

Whereas Table 6 displays change in support for the measure over the course of the interview at the group level, Table 7 profiles individual-level changes that occurred between the Initial and Final Ballot Tests. On the left side of the table is shown each of the response options to the Initial Ballot Test and the percentage of respondents in each group. The cells in the body of the table depict movement within each response group (row) based on the information provided throughout the course of the survey as recorded by the Final Ballot Test. For example, in the first row we see that of the 37.3% of respondents who indicated they would definitely support the measure at the Initial Ballot Test, 32.6% also indicated they would definitely support the measure at the Final Ballot Test. Approximately 3.2% of respondents moved to the probably support group, none moved to the probably oppose group, 0.4% moved to the definitely oppose group, and 1.2% percent became unsure of their vote choice.

To ease interpretation of the table, the cells are color coded. Red shaded cells indicate declining support, green shaded cells indicate increasing support, and white cells indicate no movement. Moreover, within the cells, a white font indicates a fundamental change in the vote: from yes to no, no to yes, or not sure to either yes or no.

TABLE 7 MOVEMENT FROM INITIAL TO FINAL BALLOT TEST

Initial Ballot Test (Q3)		Final Ballot Test (Q11) Definitely support	Probably support	Probably oppose	Definitely oppose	Not sure
Definitely support	37.3% →	32.6%	3.2%	0.0%	0.4%	1.2%
Probably support	27.9% →	6.0%	15.2%	2.5%	1.7%	2.6%
Probably oppose	8.9% →	2.0%	2.3%	3.4%	1.3%	0.0%
Definitely oppose	21.8% →	0.4%	0.6%	1.7%	17.2%	1.9%
Not sure	4.1% →	0.3%	0.4%	0.2%	0.5%	1.2%

As one might expect, the information conveyed in the survey had the greatest impact on individuals who either weren't sure about how they would vote at the Initial Ballot Test or were tentative in their vote choice (*probably* yes or *probably* no). Moreover, Table 7 makes clear that although the information did impact some property owners, it did not do so in a consistent way for everyone. Some respondents found the information conveyed during the course of the interview to be a reason to become more supportive of the measure, whereas a slightly larger percentage found the same information to be a reason to be less supportive.

METHODOLOGY

The following sections outline the methodology used in the telephone survey and the mail survey, as well as the motivation for using certain techniques.

QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT Dr. McLarney of True North Research worked closely with SCI and the Clean Water Program to develop a telephone questionnaire that covered the topics of interest and avoided the many possible sources of systematic measurement error, including position-order effects, wording effects, response-category effects, scaling effects and priming. Several questions in the telephone survey included multiple individual items. Because asking the items in a set order can lead to a systematic position bias in responses, the items were asked in a random order for each respondent. The mail surveys were developed by SCI based on the initial results of the telephone survey.

PROGRAMMING & PRE-TEST Prior to fielding the telephone survey, the questionnaire was CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) programmed to assist the live interviewers when conducting the telephone interviews. The CATI program automatically navigates the skip patterns, randomizes the appropriate question items, and alerts the interviewer to certain types of keypunching mistakes should they happen during the interview. The integrity of the questionnaire was pre-tested internally by True North and by dialing into random homes in the County prior to formally beginning the survey.

SAMPLES The sample for the telephone survey was developed using a stratified sample of residential property owners in the County who are registered to vote. The sample was stratified and clustered by household party type, location and parcel size prior to randomly selecting individual residential property owners into the sample. This method ensured that if a person in a particular cluster refused to participate in the study, they were replaced by an individual who shares their same profile on key demographics.

The sample for the mail surveys was developed from an inclusive list of property owners in the County, including commercial, industrial, and apartment property owners. Owners were randomly assigned to one of the six options for survey version and fee rate tested in the study.

STATISTICAL MARGIN OF ERROR Because this study consisted of two random samples drawn from the voter and property owner universes in the County, the results can be used to estimate the opinions of all property owners in the County. Because not all property owners participated in the study, however, the results have what is known as a statistical margin of error due to sampling. The margin of error refers to the difference between what was found, for example, in the telephone survey of 500 residential property owners for a particular question and what would have been found if all of the approximately 273,000 residential property owners in the County had been surveyed for the study.

Continuing with the above example, to estimate the percentage of property owner voters who would support the proposed measure at the Initial Ballot Test (Question 3 of the telephone survey), the margin of error can be calculated if one knows the size of the population, the size of

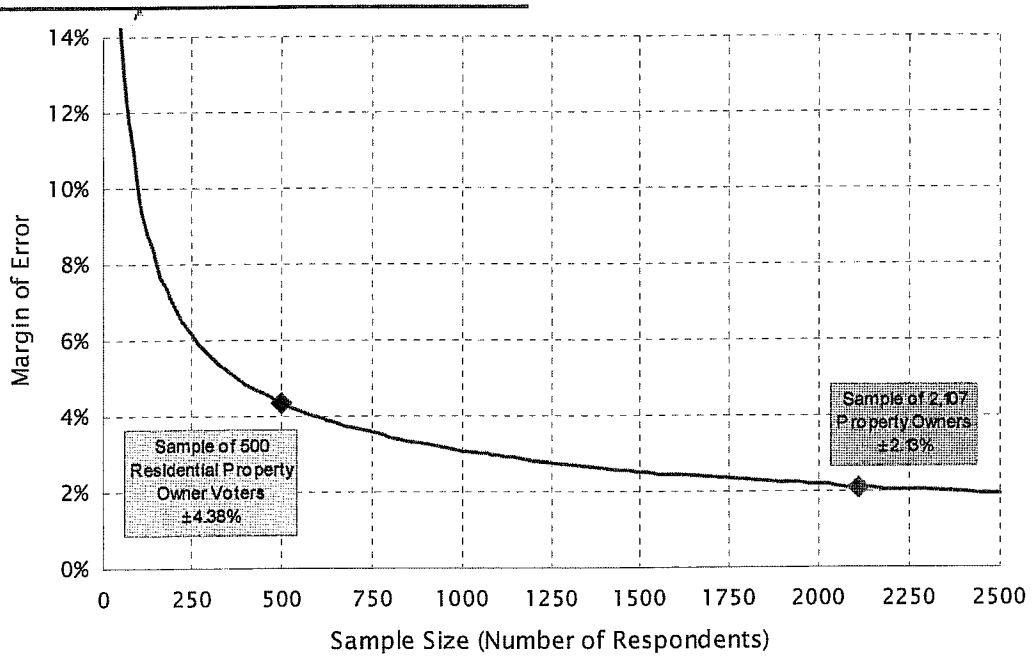
the sample, a confidence level, and the distribution of responses to the question. The appropriate equation for estimating the margin of error, in this case, is shown below:

$$\hat{p} \pm t\sqrt{\left(\frac{N-n}{N}\right)\frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{n-1}}$$

where $\hat{p}$ is the proportion of property owner voters who indicated they would support the measure at the Initial Ballot Test (0.65 for 65%, for example), N is the population size of residential property owner voters (273,000), n is the sample size that received the question (500), and t is the upper $\alpha/2$ point for the t-distribution with $n-1$ degrees of freedom (1.96 for a 95% confidence interval). Solving this equation using these values reveals a margin of error of ±4.18%. This means that, with 65% of respondents indicating they would support the measure at the Initial Ballot Test, we can be 95% confident the actual percentage of residential property owners who would support the measure at the Initial Ballot Test is between 61% and 69%.

Figure 24 presents the margin of error equation as a graph, plotting sample sizes along the bottom axis. There are two lines represented in the graph, which largely overlap—one for the telephone survey and one for the mail survey. As seen in the figure, the maximum margin of error in the telephone survey for questions answered by all 500 residential property owner voters is ±4.38%, whereas the maximum margin of error for questions answered by all 2,107 property owners in the mail survey is ±2.13%. For questions answered by fewer respondents, the margin of error increases accordingly.

FIGURE 24 MAXIMUM MARGIN OF ERROR



DATA COLLECTION The 500 telephone interviews were conducted during weekday evenings (5:30PM to 9PM) and on weekends (10AM to 5PM) between June 6 and June 13, 2006. It is standard practice not to call during the day on weekdays because most working adults are unavailable and thus calling during those hours would bias the sample. The telephone interviews averaged 12 minutes in length.

A total of 14,215 mail surveys were distributed on September 19, 2006. At the close of the data collection period of October 25, 2,107 completed interviews had been received, resulting in a response rate of 15%.

DATA PROCESSING & WEIGHTING Data processing consisted of electronically scanning the returned mail surveys, checking phone and mail data for errors or inconsistencies, coding and recoding responses, categorizing open-ended responses, and preparing frequency analyses and crosstabulations. The data were also weighted to account for disproportionate participation rates in mailed-ballot elections.

ROUNDING Numbers that end in 0.5 or higher are rounded up to the nearest whole number, whereas numbers that end in 0.4 or lower are rounded down to the nearest whole number. These same rounding rules are also applied, when needed, to arrive at numbers that include a decimal place in constructing figures and charts. Occasionally, these rounding rules lead to small discrepancies in the first decimal place when comparing tables and pie charts for a given question.

True North RESEARCH

Contra Costa Clean Water Program
Revenue Measure Survey
June 2006

Section 1: Introduction to Study
Hi, may I please speak to _____. Hi, my name is _____ and I'm calling on behalf of TNR, a public opinion research firm. We're conducting a survey of voters about important issues in Contra Costa County and I'd like to get your opinions.
If needed: This is a survey about important issues in Contra Costa County – I'm NOT trying to sell anything. *If needed:* The survey should take about 12 minutes to complete. *If needed:* If now is not a convenient time, can you let me know a better time so I can call back? *If the person says they are an elected official or is somehow associated with the survey, politely explain that this survey is designed to the measure the opinions of those not closely associated with the study, thank them for their time, and terminate the interview.*

Section 2: Screener for Inclusion in the Study			
SC1	Before we begin, could you please tell me whether you currently rent or own your home?		
	1	Rent	*Terminate*
	2	Own	*Continue*
	99	Don't Know/Refused	*Terminate*
SC2	And please tell me if you are the person in your household who pays your property tax bill – which often is included in your mortgage.		
	1	Respondent pays bill	*Continue with survey*
	2	Someone else pays bill	*Ask to speak with this person*
	3	It depends	*Continue with survey*
	99	Don't Know/Refused	*Terminate*
NOTE WHICH INDIVIDUAL YOU ARE SPEAKING WITH ON THE SAMPLE SHEET IN ORDER TO COLLECT THE CORRECT PERSON'S INFORMATION ON THE VOTER FILE. IF PERSON IS NOT LISTED ON VOTER FILE, NOTE THIS BEFORE CONTINUING WITH INTERVIEW.			

Section 3: General Direction					
Q1	Generally speaking, do you think things in _____ are going in the right or wrong direction?				
	Randomize	Right Direction	Wrong Direction	Not sure	Refused
A	the State of California	1	2	98	99
B	Contra Costa County	1	2	98	99
Do NOT ask Q1c if City code on Sample=ZZ (unincorporated)					
C	Your City	1	2	98	99

Section 4: Importance of Issues

Q2 For each of the following issues, please tell me how important you feel the issue is to you, using a scale of extremely important, very important, somewhat important or not at all important.

Here is the first issue: _____. Do you think this issue is extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?

	Randomize	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all Important	Not sure	Refused
A	Improving public education	1	2	3	4	98	99
B	Preserving open space	1	2	3	4	98	99
C	Reducing traffic congestion	1	2	3	4	98	99
D	Protecting water quality	1	2	3	4	98	99
E	Reducing polluted runoff	1	2	3	4	98	99
F	Preventing local tax increases	1	2	3	4	98	99
G	Protecting the Bay and Delta	1	2	3	4	98	99

Section 5: First Ballot Test

Q3 Next year, voters in Contra Costa County may be asked to vote on local ballot measures. Let me read you one of the proposals:

In order to:

- Clean-up polluted water and stormwater
- Keep trash and pollution out of rivers, lakes, the Delta and the Bay
- Prevent flooding
- And protect sources of clean drinking water

Shall property owners in Contra Costa County be assessed up to $<<Rate A>> per year for each property that they own in the County?

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure? *Get answer, then ask:* Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?

1	Definitely Yes	*Skip to Q5*
2	Probably Yes	*Skip to Q5*
3	Probably No	*Ask Q4*
4	Definitely No	*Ask Q4*
98	Don't Know/Not Sure	*Skip to Q6*
99	Refused	*Skip to Q6*

Q4	Is there a particular reason why you do not support the Water Quality Measure I just described?		
	Record Verbatim Response – Record first response.		
	98	Don't Know	*Skip to Q6*
	99	Refused	*Skip to Q6*
Q5	Is there a particular reason why you support the Water Quality Measure I just described?		
	Record Verbatim Response – Record first response.		
	98	Don't Know	
	99	Refused	

Section 6: Tax Threshold

Q6 The Water Quality Measure would raise money through annual property taxes paid by property owners in the County. However, the fee amount has yet to be decided.

If you knew that your household would pay _____ per year for each property that you own in the County, would you vote yes or no on the Water Quality Measure? *(Get answer, then ask)*: Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?

Read in sequence starting with the highest amount (A), then the next highest (B), and so on. If respondent says 'definitely yes', record 'definitely yes' for all LOWER dollar amounts and go to next section.

	Ask in Order	Definitely Yes	Probably Yes	Probably No	Definitely No	Not Sure	Refused
A	$<<Rate A>>	1	2	3	4	98	99
B	$<<Rate B>>	1	2	3	4	98	99
C	$<<Rate C>>	1	2	3	4	98	99
D	$<<Rate D>>	1	2	3	4	98	99

Section 7: Projects & Services							
Q7	The Water Quality Measure we've been discussing could fund a variety of projects and services in the County. If the measure passes, would you favor or oppose using some of the money to: _____, or do you not have an opinion? (*Get answer, if favor or oppose, then ask):* Would that be strongly (favor/oppose) or somewhat (favor/oppose)?						
	Randomize	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion	Refused
A	Help prevent flooding by improving and maintaining storm drainage systems	1	2	3	4	98	99
B	Reduce illegal discharges of pollution into water sources through improved monitoring, investigation and prosecution	1	2	3	4	98	99
C	Keep trash and pollution out of creeks, streams and lakes	1	2	3	4	98	99
D	Keep trash and pollution out of the Bay, the Delta, and off the shorelines	1	2	3	4	98	99
E	Protect sources of drinking water from contamination and pollution	1	2	3	4	98	99
F	Protect public health by removing dangerous pollutants, toxic chemicals, and bacteria from water sources and stormwater runoff	1	2	3	4	98	99
G	Improve street-sweeping to reduce pollution that ends up in stormdrains and our water supply	1	2	3	4	98	99
H	Install filtration devices in stormdrains to prevent pollution from entering streams, the Delta and the Bay	1	2	3	4	98	99
I	Keep creeks, lakes, the Delta and the Bay free from dangerous bacteria and toxic chemicals	1	2	3	4	98	99
J	Help restore creeks and streams	1	2	3	4	98	99
K	Help clean-up the Delta and the Bay so that it is safe to fish and swim	1	2	3	4	98	99
L	Increase the frequency of water quality testing and monitoring	1	2	3	4	98	99
M	Protect sensitive ecosystems and wildlife from water pollution	1	2	3	4	98	99

Section 8: Positive Arguments

What I'd like to do now is tell you what some people are saying about the measure we've been discussing.

Q8 Supporters of the measure say: _____. Do you think this is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to SUPPORT the measure?

	Randomize	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Not At All Convincing	Don't Believe	Don't Know/No Opinion	Refused
A	When cities or the County do not meet the State's water quality standards, they are fined up to 10 thousand dollars per day. This measure will help ensure that we avoid these fines that take money away from important services and programs.	1	2	3	4	98	99
B	This measure has strong fiscal controls including annual financial audits and a requirement that over 95% of the money raised will be used for projects. Less than 5% will be used for administration.	1	2	3	4	98	99
C	This measure will benefit every City and neighborhood in the County by eliminating pollution, preventing flooding and improving water quality.	1	2	3	4	98	99
D	Stormwater runoff carries tons of trash, dangerous bacteria and other pollution directly to our water sources and the Bay. This measure is one of the best ways to protect our water quality and public health.	1	2	3	4	98	99
E	Nothing is more important than having clean water to drink. This measure will protect our clean water sources and waterways from contamination to ensure that we always have a stable and safe supply of clean water.	1	2	3	4	98	99
F	All of the money raised by this measure will be spent locally. It can not be taken away by politicians in Sacramento or Washington to be used for other purposes.	1	2	3	4	98	99
G	We need this measure to ensure that our waters are safe for swimming and recreation, and that the fish are safe to eat.	1	2	3	4	98	99
H	This measure is supported by a broad coalition of business, environmental and community groups who all agree that this measure is an important investment in our environment and our water quality	1	2	3	4	98	99
I	This measure is needed to protect our natural resources and quality of life for future generations	1	2	3	4	98	99

J	A small rate increase of only 3% per year will ensure that the revenues for water quality and pollution control services stay in line with inflation	1	2	3	4	98	99
K	By passing this measure, we can help protect wildlife and fish from harmful pollution and toxics that now end up in our lakes, the Delta and the Bay	1	2	3	4	98	99
L	This measure will ensure that our children and grandchildren are not harmed by pollution and toxic chemicals in our water sources	1	2	3	4	98	99

Section 9: Interim Ballot Test

Q9 Sometimes people change their mind about a measure once they have more information about it. Now that you have heard a bit more about the Water Quality Measure, let me read you a summary of it again:

In order to:

- Clean-up polluted water and stormwater
- Keep trash and pollution out of rivers, lakes, the Delta and the Bay
- Prevent flooding
- And protect sources of clean drinking water

Shall property owners in Contra Costa County be assessed up to $<<Rate A>> per year for each property that they own in the County?

If asked to vote today, would you vote yes or no on this measure? *(Get answer, then ask):* Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?

1	Definitely Yes	
2	Probably Yes	
3	Probably No	
4	Definitely No	
98	Don't Know/Not Sure	
99	Refused	

Section 10: Negative Arguments

Now let me tell you what opponents of the measure are saying.

Q10 Opponents of the measure say: _____. Do you think this is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to OPPOSE the measure?

	Randomize	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Not At All Convincing	Don't Believe	Don't Know/No Opinion	Refused
A	Developers are the ones causing the growth and increased pollution, so they should be	1	2	3	4	98	99

	the ones to pay for cleaning-up our water.						
B	We already pay too much in taxes. The County and cities should just figure out how to pay for this without raising taxes.	1	2	3	4	98	99
C	If we pass this measure, the County and cities will just waste or misuse the money.	1	2	3	4	98	99
D	This measure is unfair because it can be passed with just a 50% vote and some voters are excluded from participating.	1	2	3	4	98	99
E	This measure is opposed by local taxpayer's groups	1	2	3	4	98	99
F	Residents already pay taxes for clean water. Now they want us to pay twice? It's not fair.	1	2	3	4	98	99
G	The tax rate can be increased each year and there is no sunset provision, which means that the tax will last forever.	1	2	3	4	98	99

Section 12: Final Ballot Test

Q11 Now that you have heard more about the measure, let me read you a summary of it one more time:

In order to:

- Clean-up polluted water and stormwater
- Keep trash and pollution out of rivers, lakes, the Delta and the Bay
- Prevent flooding
- And protect sources of clean drinking water

Shall property owners in Contra Costa County be assessed up to $<<Rate A>> per year for each property that they own in the County?

If asked to vote today, would you vote yes or no on this measure? *(Get answer, then ask):* Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?

1	Definitely Yes	
2	Probably Yes	
3	Probably No	
4	Definitely No	
98	Don't Know/Not Sure	
99	Refused	

Section 13: Background Questions

Thank you so much for your participation. I have just a few more questions for statistical purposes.

D1	How long have you lived in Contra Costa County?		
	1	Less than 1 year	
	2	1 year to less than 5 years	
	3	5 years to less than 10 years	
	4	10 years to less than 15	
	5	15 years or more	
	99	Refused	
D2	How many children under the age of 18 do you have living in your household?		
	0	None	
	1	One	
	2	Two	
	3	Three or more	
	99	Refused	
D3	Do you consider yourself to be an environmentalist? *If yes, ask:* Would that be a strong or a moderate environmentalist?		
	1	Yes, strong environmentalist	
	2	Yes, moderate environmentalist	
	3	No, not an environmentalist	
	99	Refused	
D4	In your opinion, is water pollution a big problem, moderate problem, small problem, or not a problem in your area?		
	1	Big Problem	
	2	Moderate Problem	
	3	Small Problem	
	4	Not a Problem	
	5	Don't Know/Not Sure	
	99	Refused	

D5	In your opinion, is flooding a big problem, moderate problem, small problem, or not a problem in your area?		
	1	Big Problem	
	2	Moderate Problem	
	3	Small Problem	
	4	Not a Problem	
	5	Don't Know/Not Sure	
	99	Refused	
Thank you for participating!			

Section 11: Post-Interview & Sample Items			
S1	Gender (*Determined by voice of respondent*)		
	1	Male	
	2	Female	
S2	Party		
	1	Democrat	
	2	Republican	
	3	Other	
	4	DTS	
S3	Age on Vote File		
	1	18-29	
	2	30-39	
	3	40-49	
	4	50-64	
	5	65 or older	
	99	Not Coded	
S4	Registration Date		
	2003 to 2006		
	2000 to 2002		
	1997 to 1999		
	1990 to 1996		
	Before 1990		

S5	Household Party Type		
	1	Single Dem	
	2	Dual Dem	
	3	Single Rep	
	4	Dual Rep	
	5	Single Other	
	6	Dual Other	
	7	Dem & Rep	
	8	Dem & Other	
	9	Rep & Other	
	0	Mixed (Dem + Rep + Other)	
S6	Zip Code		
		5-digit zip	
S7	Precinct		
		Precinct numbers	

S8	Voting History			
		Yes, Voted in Person	Yes, Voted by Mail	No, Didn't Vote
A	Primary Election 2000	1	2	0
B	General Election 2000	1	2	0
C	Primary Election 2002	1	2	0
D	General Election 2002	1	2	0
E	Recall Election 2003	1	2	0
F	Primary 2004	1	2	0
G	General 2004	1	2	0

S9	Times Voted In Last Seven Elections		
	0	None	
	1	One	
	2	Two	
	3	Three	
	4	Four	
	5	Five	
	6	Six	
	7	Seven	
S10	Likely November 2008		
	1	Yes	
	0	No	
S11	Home Owner Flag		
	1	Yes	
	2	No	
S12	Supervisorial District		
	1	District 1	
	2	District 2	
	3	District 3	
	4	District 4	
	5	District 5	
S13	City		
	1		
	2		
	3		
	4		
	5		

S14	Zone		
	1	East	
	2	West	
	3	Central	
	4	South	
S15	Property Size		
	1	Small	
	2	Medium	
	3	Large	