



Greater Montana Foundation
A Montana Field Guide to 2020 Election Polls

Webinar
Thursday, July 9, 2020

Speakers with Contact Information

Ms. Nicole McCleskey, a partner with *Public Opinion Strategies*, set the discussion stage by highlighting national trends in polling - and initial key questions about them. In the 2018 election cycle, Ms. McCleskey polled in five gubernatorial races, helping to win four. Since 2004, Public Opinion Strategies has been a partner on the bipartisan polling team conducting the NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll, one of the most respected surveys of public opinion on political, cultural, and economic issues. It has been described as the “gold standard” of public polling.

Nicole@pos.org

Dr. Eric Raile discussed election and political polling conducted by the HELPS Lab at MSU-Bozeman, as well as survey modes and margins of error. Dr. Raile is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Montana State University. He received his Ph.D. in Political Science from Michigan State University in 2008. The MSU Human Ecology Learning and Problem Solving (HELPS) Lab that Dr. Raile directs conducts polling in Montana and our region. The HELPS Lab recently published the Western States Coronavirus Survey which contained polling on Montana’s upcoming political races.

eric.raile@montana.edu

Mr. John Baldrige of the University of Montana’s Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) discussed recent and upcoming Montana-based policy opinion polling. Mr. Baldrige is Director of Survey Research at BBER. With a Master’s Degree from the University of Chicago, Mr. Baldrige has conducted survey research for 30 years, including initially at the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. He had recently completed the third in a series of polls that examined Montanans’ top public policy issues of interest, preferred Montana news sources about those issues, and perceptions of news source credibility.

john.baldrige@business.umt.edu

Dr. Andrew Smith, director of the University of New Hampshire Survey Center, presented overall poll quality takeaways. On the American Association for Public Opinion Research Task Force for Evaluation of 2020 Election Polls, Dr. Smith has more than 30 years' experience in academic survey research. He is Professor of Practice in Political Science in the UNH Department of Political Science where he focuses on survey methodology, elections, and public policy. A leader in professional public opinion research organizations, Dr. Smith's methodological research has included work on question wording effects, the issue of non-attitudes in surveys, and methods of improving the accuracy of pre-election surveys. He is a widely sought-after commentator on election polling, with special focus on New Hampshire and other regional elections.

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Dr. Bill Whitsitt, GMF Chairman Emeritus and BBER Executive-in-Residence, was the webinar moderator. Dr. Whitsitt has managed highly-successful public opinion and communication research projects at national, regional and state levels.

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A recording of the July 9, 2020, *Montana Field Guide to 2020 Election Polls* webinar is available on the websites of the Greater Montana Foundation (<http://greatermontana.org/>) and the University of Montana Bureau of Business and Economic Research (<http://www.bber.umt.edu/>).