



# A Tool For The Advocacy Tool Box: Opinion Research

Presentation to the  
Oregon Environmental Education Conference

By DHM Research, Inc

March 20, 2015

# DHM Research Expertise

- **Opinion Research For Private, Public, and Non-Profit Organizations**
- **35 Years**
- **Qualitative and Quantitative**
- **Independent and Non-Partisan**
- **Client list: Nike, Microsoft, Governor's Office, Metro, City of Portland, Port of Portland, Foundations for a Better Oregon, Grantmakers of Oregon and SW Washington, Northwest Health Foundation, United Way of the Columbia-Willamette, Black Parent Initiative, Oregon Public Broadcasting**
- **Oregon Values & Beliefs and Your City, Your Choice studies**

# Presentation Topics

- **Value of Opinion Research For Public Policy Advocates**
- **Opinion Research Basics**
- **Case Studies**
- **Discussion**

# Value of Opinion Research For Public Policy Advocates

- **Current demographic and psychographic information**
- **Current attitudes information—values and beliefs**
- **Current behavior information**
- **Issue awareness and knowledge levels**
- **Message development**
- **Message testing**
- **Messenger testing**
- **Message targeting**
- **Message control**
- **Initiative or proposal testing**
- **Program evaluation**
- **Monitoring changes in awareness, knowledge, attitudes, and behavior over time**
- **Client and public education/relations**

# Opinion Research Basics

- **Qualitative techniques**
- **Quantitative techniques**
- **Validity and Statistical Reliability**
- **Research design issues**

# Qualitative Techniques

- **More than focus groups**
- **Project stages**
- **Video**
- **Advantages and disadvantages**
- **Best in combination with quantitative**



# Quantitative Techniques

- **Surveys: telephone, mail, online**
- **Project stages**
- **Tradeoff methodologies**
- **Advantages and disadvantages**
- **Best in combination with qualitative**



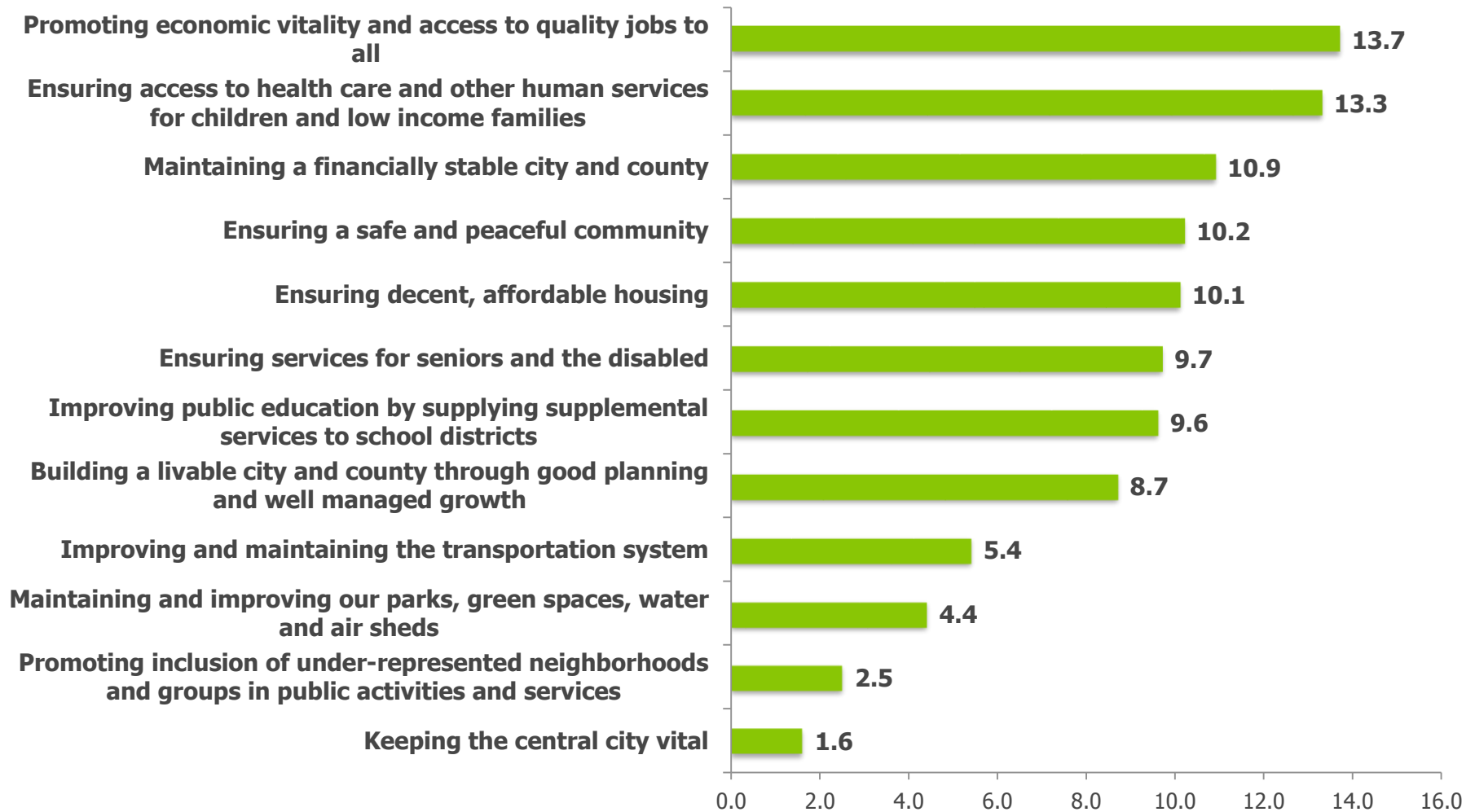
# Validity and Statistical Reliability

- **There's a difference**
- **Focus groups: recruiting, written exercises, group-to-group validation**
- **Surveys: questionnaire development (triangulation), sample size (full population vs. subgroups (stratification))**



# MaxDiff Importance Scores

Among the following items, which is most...least important for your local government officials to fund with taxpayer dollars?



# Research Design Issues

- **Research objectives?**
- **Who is your audience?**
- **Budget?**
- **Timeline?**
- **Benchmark potential?**

# Case Study 1



## Reservoir Operations Study

# Case Study 1 - TVA

**To determine public values and beliefs regarding TVA's integrated energy and river management system. Secure support at federal level for funding natural resources management.**

- Current demographic and psychographic information
- Current attitudes information—values and beliefs
- Current behavior information
- Issue awareness and knowledge level
- Message control
- Client and public education/relations

# Case Study 1 - TVA

- **Large group studies throughout 7-state region – discussions and administration of policy capturing written exercise**
- **Regional survey, n=3,600 (150 voters in 24 congressional districts)**

# Case Study 1 - TVA

**Perceived Highest Priority of TVA.** Respondents were read a list of 6 ways TVA manages the Tennessee River system of lakes and reservoirs and were asked which one they believe is TVA's single highest priority.

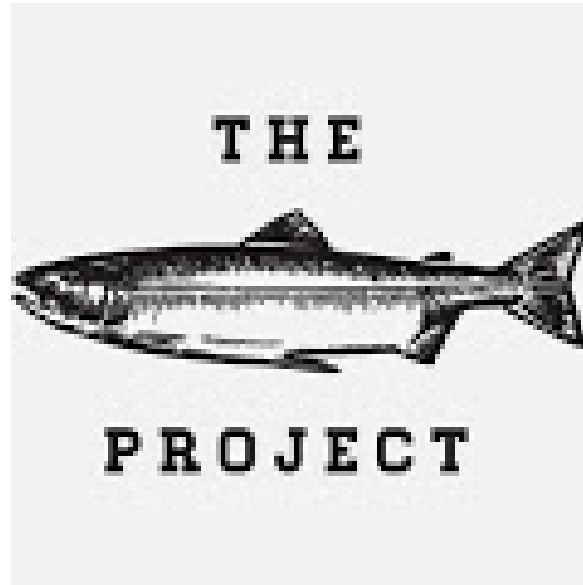
<b>Management Method</b>	<b>% Perceived Highest Priority</b>	<b>% Desired Highest Priority</b>
<b>Electricity Production</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Protecting the Natural Environment</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>Water Supply</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Flood Control</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>Providing Recreation</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Commercial Navigation</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Unsure/No Response</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>3%</b>

# Case Study 1 - TVA

<b>Future Trend (in next 10 years)</b>	<b>Probability<sup>1</sup> (mean score)</b>	<b>Desirability<sup>2</sup> (mean score)</b>
<b>The population in your area will grow considerably</b>	3.96	3.20
<b>There will be stronger regulations in your area protecting the Environment</b>	3.46	3.95
<b>Your area will have more jobs</b>	3.44	4.10
<b>Your area will have a greater variety of businesses and Industries</b>	3.42	3.78
<b>More protection will be extended to fish and wildlife habitat in your Area</b>	3.40	3.99
<b>Environmental protection will become more important in your area than economic growth</b>	3.04	3.56
<b>Growth in your area will be concentrated in existing cities, and undeveloped areas will be left undeveloped</b>	2.88	3.13

1. Probability scale: 1=very unlikely, 3=neutral, 5=very likely)
2. Desirability scale: 1=very undesirable, 3=neutral, 5=very desirable)

## Case Study 2



## The Salmon Project



# Research Summary

- **7 Focus Groups**

- Fairbanks (2), Mat-Su (1), Kenai/Soldotna (1), Anchorage (3)
- 39 participants (14 women + 25 men)
- Discussion and written exercises

- **25 In-depth Interviews With Leaders From:**

- Native Alaskan organizations (for profit, non-profit, tribal orgs)
- Business and industry (fishing and other)
- Government
- Academia
- Conservation

# Alaskan Values

- **Not crowded**
- **Unspoiled**
- **Wilderness**
- **Natural beauty**
- **Fish and wildlife**
- **Outdoor recreation opportunities**
- **People**
- **Friendliness**
- **History**
- **Freedom**



# Associations with Wild Salmon

• <b>Lifeblood of Alaska:</b>	“It’s the basis of life up here” – Interview
	“A lot of Alaskan identity is tied to wild salmon” – Interview
• <b>Cultural:</b>	“I listened to one of the Native elders explaining what the fish camp meant to them. It was amazing” – Anchorage
• <b>Economic:</b>	“It brings a lot of dollars up here” – Anchorage
• <b>Environmental:</b>	“The pristine, rich, unspoiled environment—salmon epitomize that” – Interview
• <b>Political:</b>	“I used to say Native politics was rough until I started listening to fish politics” – Interview
	“I think the state has pretty good laws and processes to protect the resource. I hope they have the courage and wherewithal to follow them” – Interview
• <b>Multivalent:</b>	“I think all my values connected back [to salmon] with a ‘yes,’ in some way or some form” – Fairbanks

# Wild Salmon Free Association – Regional Rankings

PW/SE		Cook Inlet		SW		Interior		North	
Good eating	17%	Good eating	15%	Economic value	13%	Good eating	14%	Food / subsistence	16%
Economic value	16%	Need protection	13%	Need protection	11%	Food / subsistence	13%	Good eating	15%
Food / subsistence	13%	General value	12%	Food / subsistence	10%	Diminishing	11%	Diminishing	15%
Need protection	9%	Diminishing	10%	General value	9%	General value	10%	General value	10%
General value	9%	Economic value	9%	Good eating	7%	Need protection	9%	Need protection	8%
Diminishing	6%	Food / subsistence	9%	Sustainable	6%	I fish	6%	Pebble Mine	6%

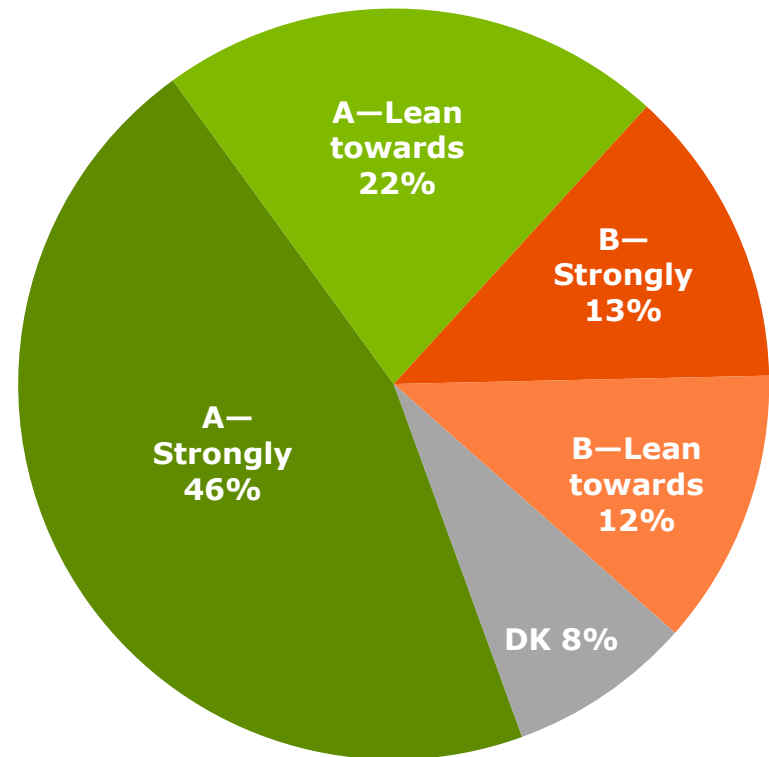
- Top row values illustrative of regional differences throughout survey
  - Economic value in SW
  - Subsistence culture in North

# Attitudes Toward Development – Statewide

**Statement A:** Lower energy costs from hydropower, and jobs and income from mining and other development projects, are important, but we need to develop these industries in a balanced way that ensures the future health of the wild salmon resource—even if that means paying significantly more to plan and build a project or, in some cases, foregoing such projects altogether.

**Statement B:** Protecting wild salmon is important, and we need to pay attention to that resource in our planning for dams and other development projects, but we don't need to make significant extra costs or sacrifices. Salmon are a resilient species and they will find a way to come back even if we build the dams and mines we need.

## Statewide



## Case Study 3

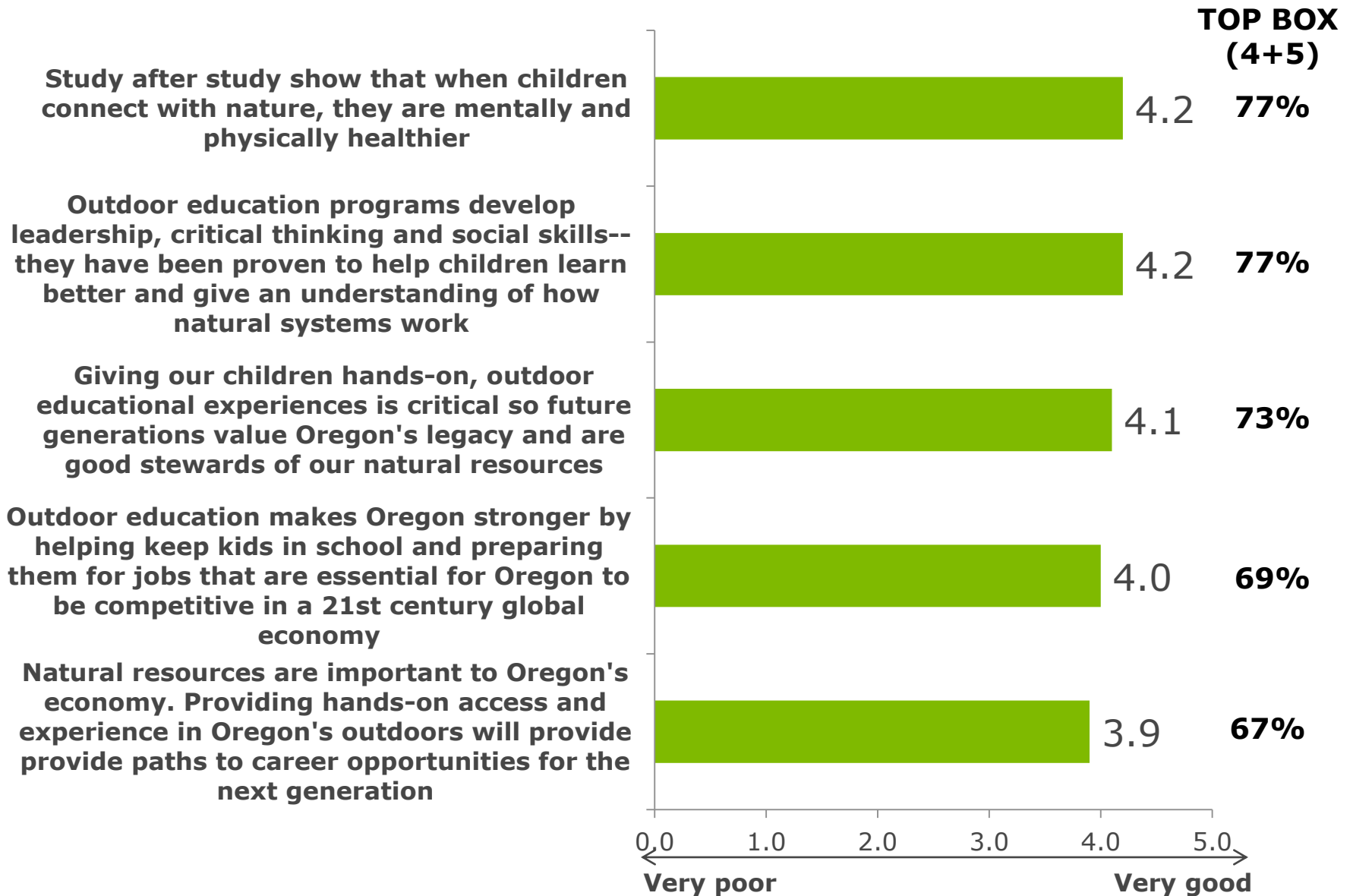


**Gray Family Foundation  
Oregon Outdoor School**

# Survey Specifications

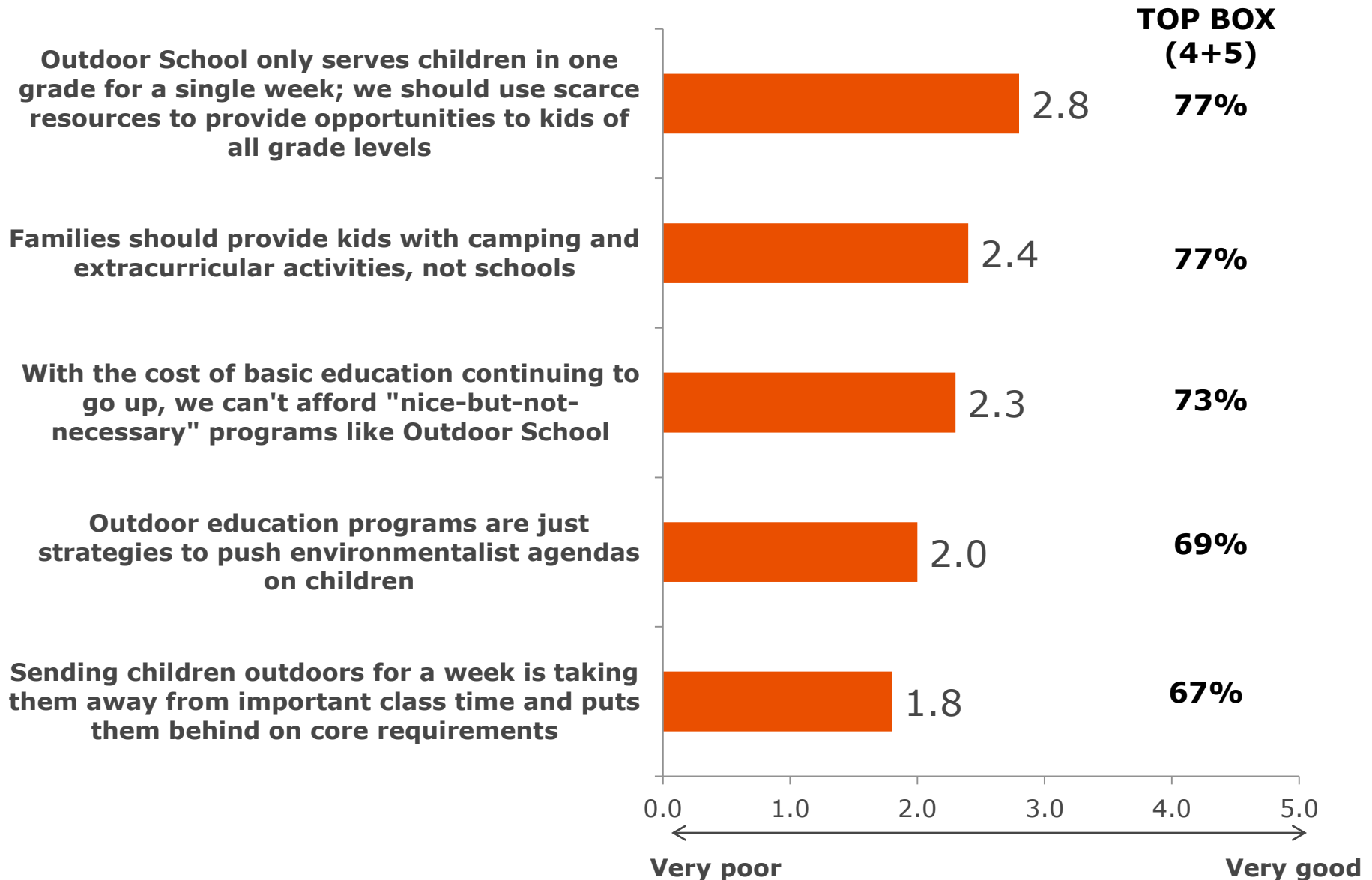
- From September 4-7, 2014, Davis, Hibbitts & Midghall, Inc. (DHM Research) conducted a telephone survey of 400 registered voters in Oregon.
- The survey covered several topical subjects, including reason to support funding for Outdoor School, and reasons to oppose funding for Outdoor School.

# Supporting Statements

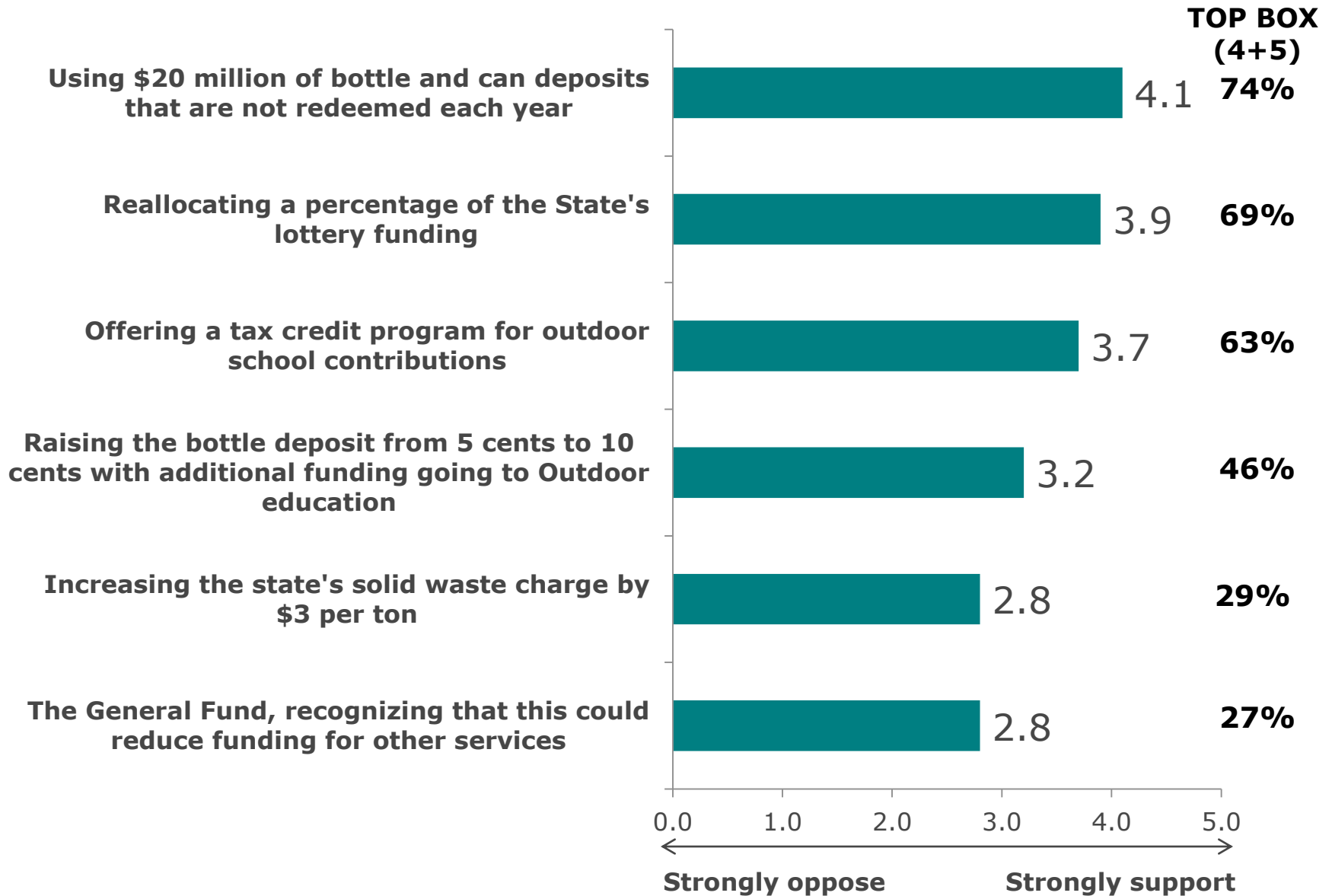




# Opposing Statements



# Funding Sources





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