

6-2009

## An Examination of rural residents' perceptions of environmental activities at the Nevada Test Site: Results of a mail questionnaire 2008 – 2009

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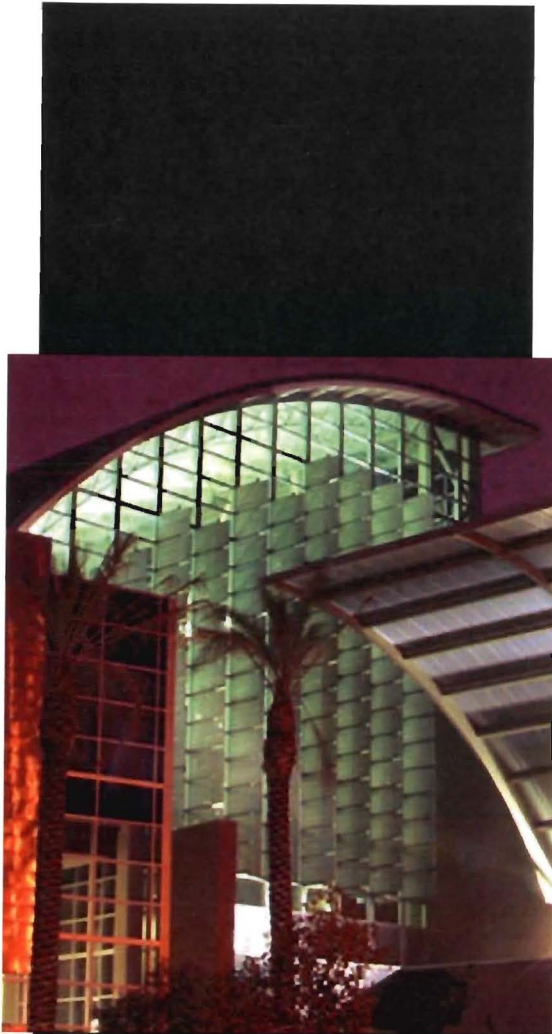
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### Repository Citation

Neill, H. R. (2009). An Examination of rural residents' perceptions of environmental activities at the Nevada Test Site: Results of a mail questionnaire 2008 – 2009. U.S. Department of Energy. [https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/sea\\_fac\\_articles/141](https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/sea_fac_articles/141)

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# Rural residents' perceptions of environmental activities at the Nevada Test Site: Mail questionnaire 2008 - 2009

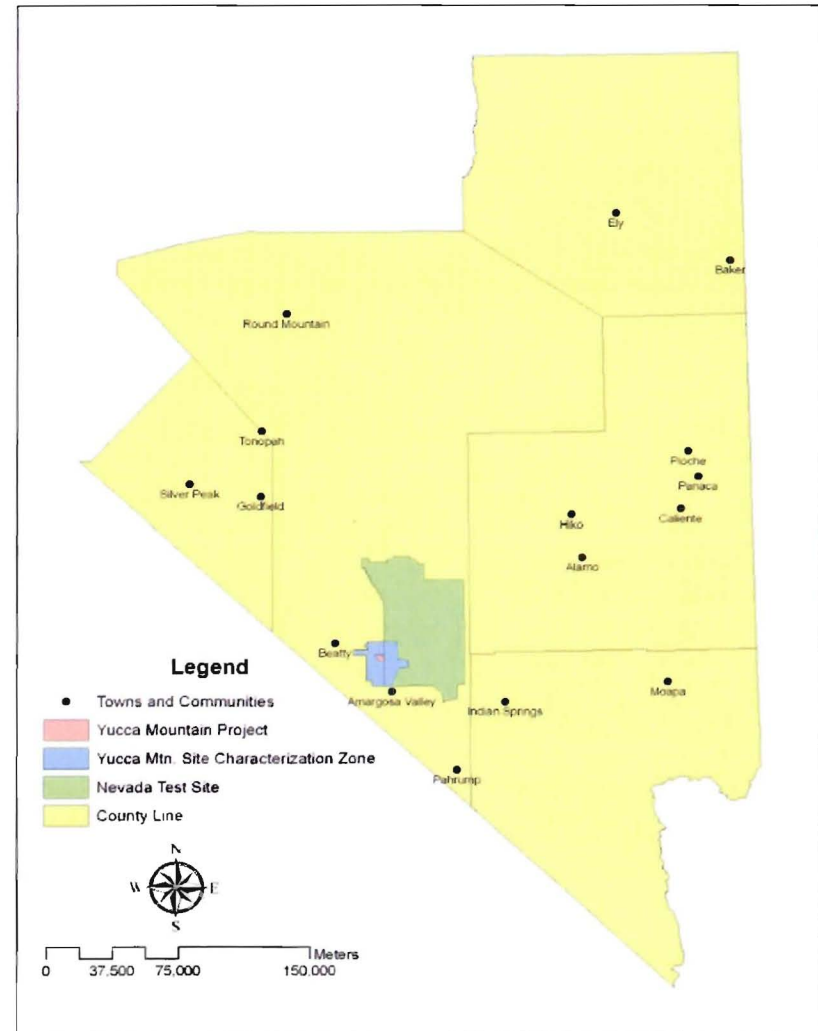
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Funded by DOE Cooperative Agreement  
DE-FC52-98NV13499

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# Purpose

- Given the U.S. DOE's Environmental Management activities at the Nevada Test Site, what matters to rural residents living nearby?
- DOE provided a grant to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas to conduct a questionnaire and analyses.



# Questions

- (1) How aware are residents of Environmental Management activities at the NTS?
- (2) How important are environmental issues to residents?
- (3) How important are socioeconomic and geographic characteristics for predicting whether respondents are aware?
- (4) Does awareness predict whether respondents select an environmental issue?

# Approach

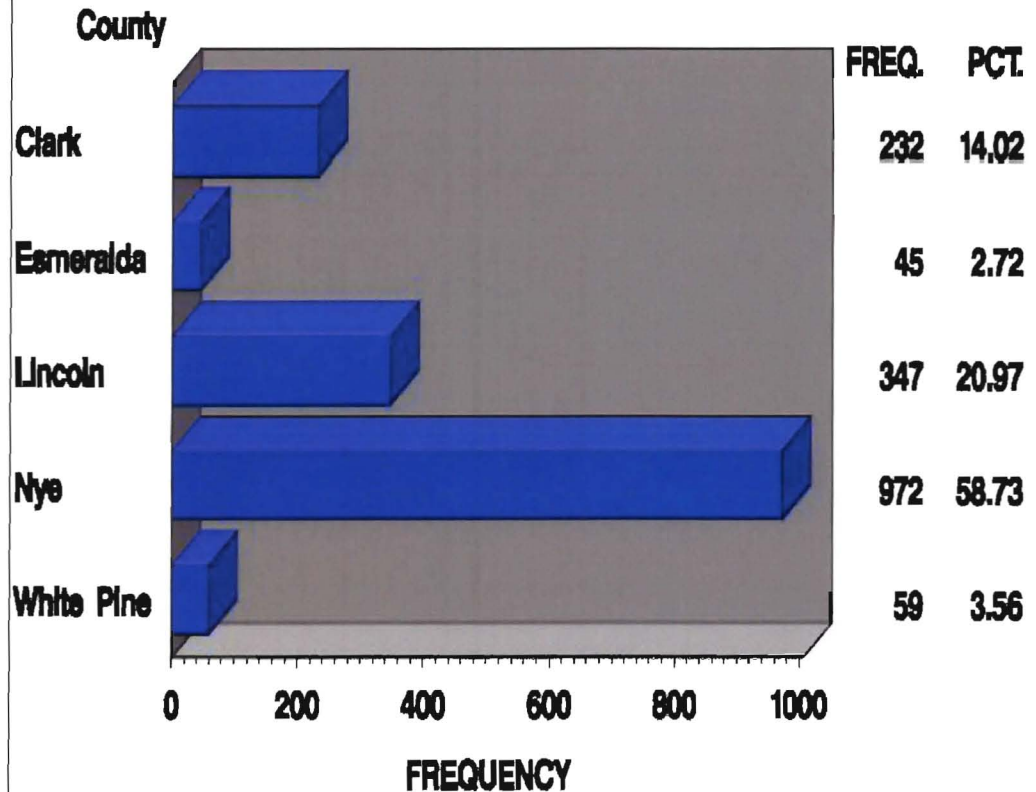
- (1) Summarize responses to awareness questions
- (2) Summarize responses to environmental issue questions
- (3) Use logistic regression to model respondent awareness ( $Awareness = f(\text{socioeconomic, information, community})$ )
- (4) Use logistic regression to model respondent identification of environmental activity as an issue ( $Issue = f(\text{awareness})$ )

- Developed a mail questionnaire reviewed by both UNLV and DOE
- Sent to 14,083 residents living near the Nevada Test Site
- Received 1,732 responses
- 12.2% response rate

**Figure 4: Total mail questionnaires received**

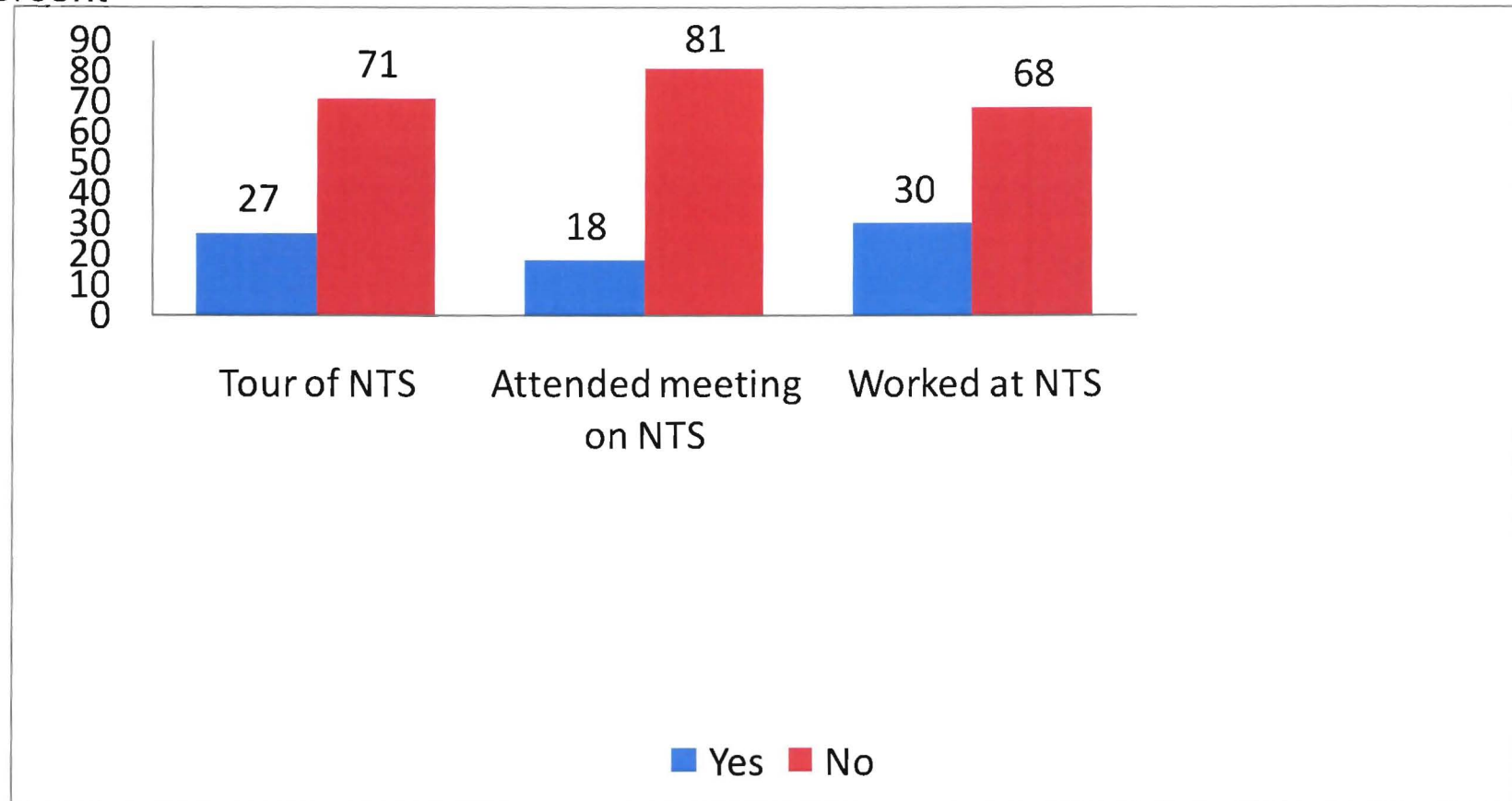
**by county in Nevada, 2008**

Data entered at UNLV, Department of Environmental Studies April 2008 – May 2009



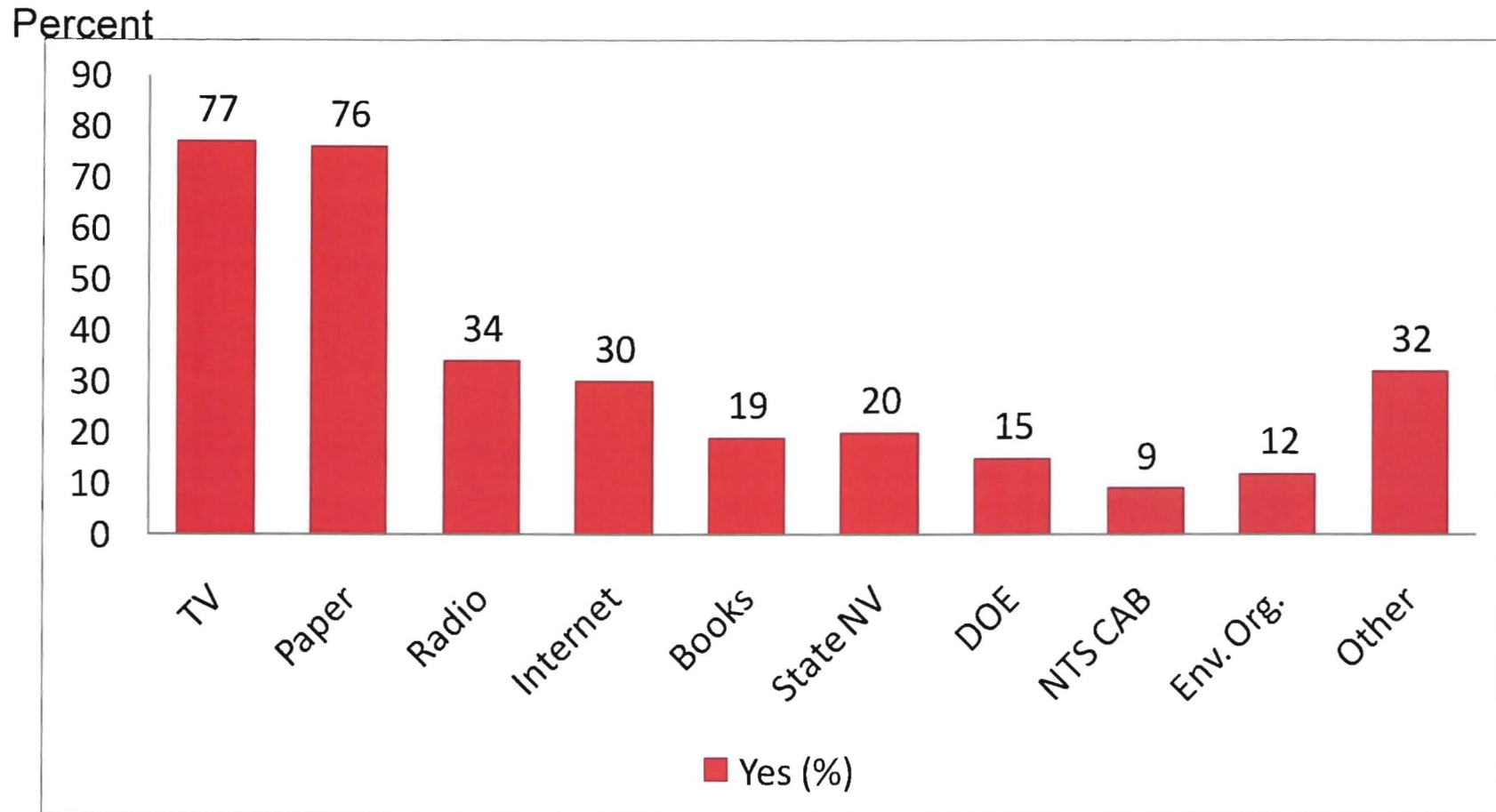
# Experience with the NTS

Percent



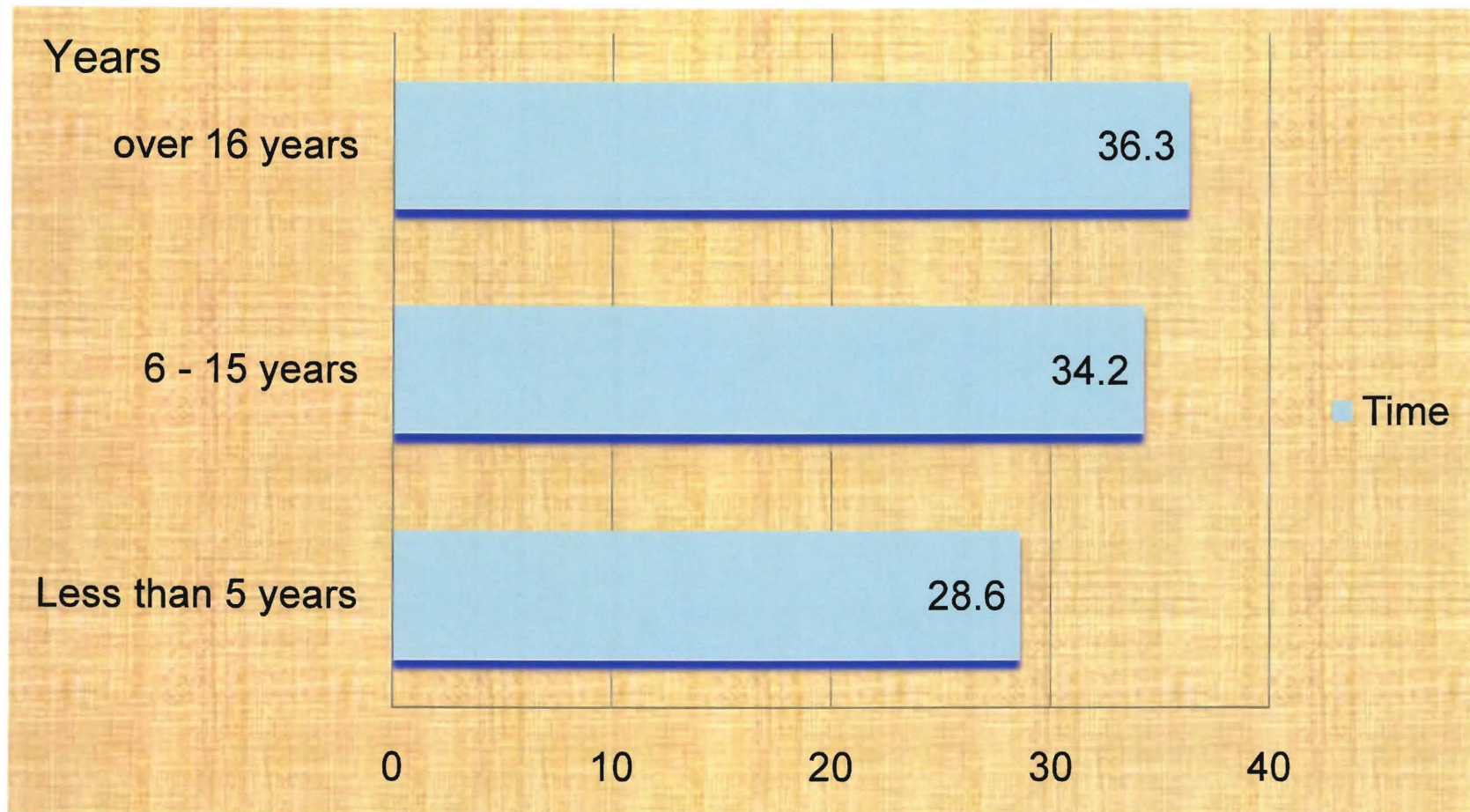
Sample size 1,732

# Information Source





# Time in neighborhood

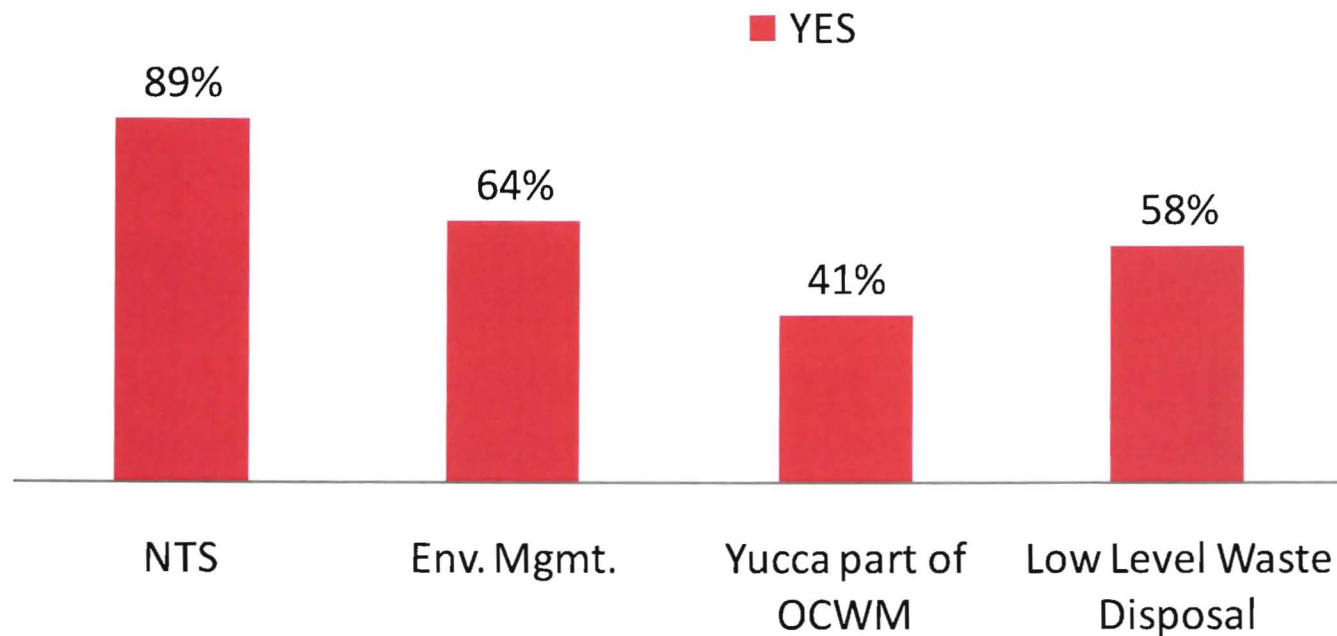


Sample size 1,732

Percent

# (1) How aware are respondents about the Nevada Test Site?

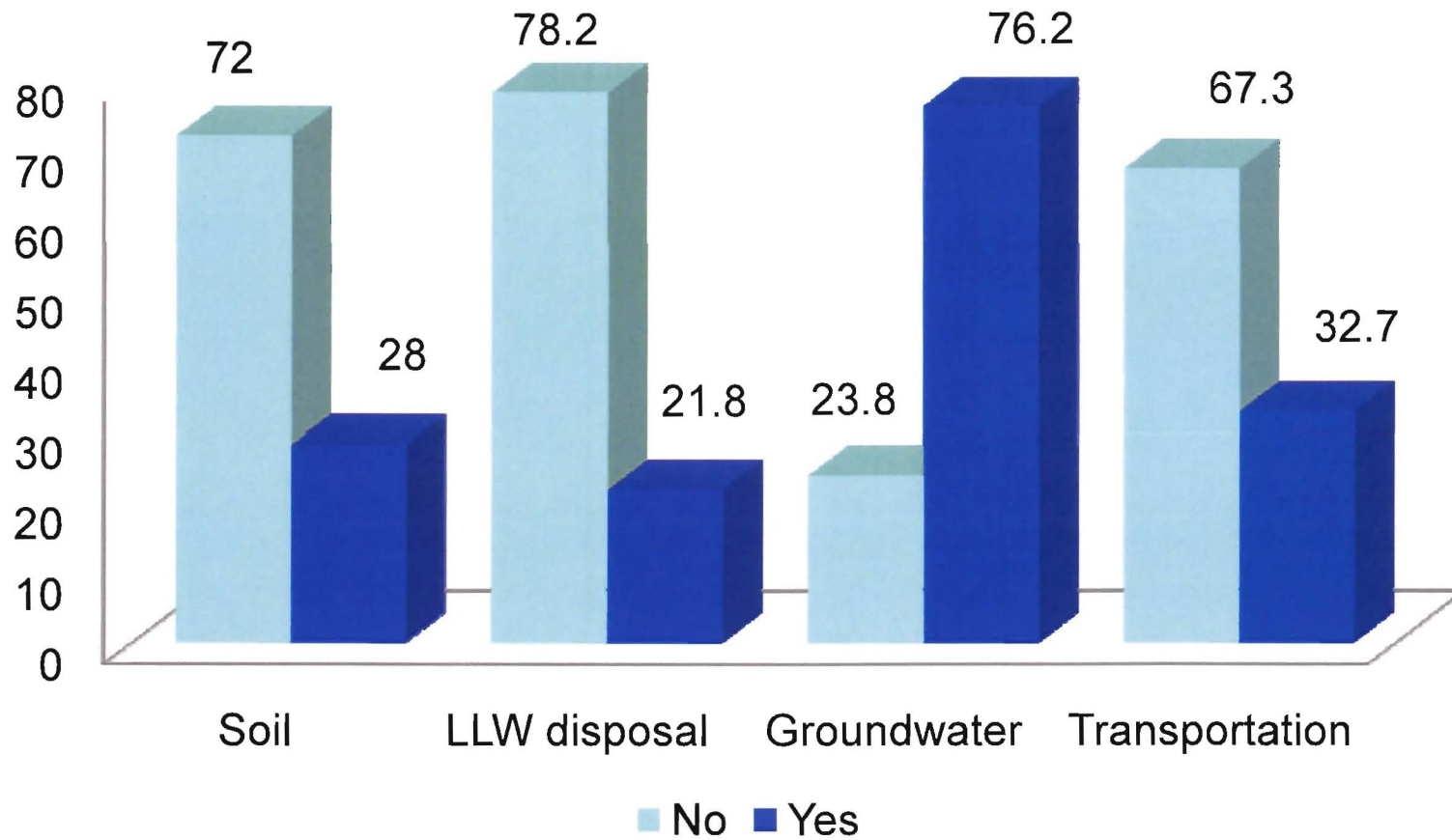
Percent



Sample size 1,732

## (2) Environmental Issues?

Percent



Sample size 1,732

### (3) What predicts awareness?

- Time16 years (+, \*\*\*)
- Communities are not statistically significant
  - With the exception Beatty ( + , significant) with respect to low level waste disposal
- Female respondents (-, \*\*\*)
- DOE info source (+, \*\*\*)
- NTS CAB info source (+, \*\*\*)

Note: \*\*\*, \*\*, \* represent statistical significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively. (N = 1,732)

## (4) Does awareness reduce likelihood of selecting an env. issue?

- Awareness of environmental programs (-, \*\*\*)
- Note: \*\*\*, \*\*, \* represent statistical significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively. (N = 1,732)

# Discussion & Conclusions

- There is a potential response bias given only approximately 12% responded to the questionnaire.
- Presentation limited to brief summary of results – questionnaire included open ended questions.
- Our results suggest differences for socioeconomic groups on awareness; potential opportunities to increase involvement
- Our results suggest awareness may reduce likelihood of identifying an environmental issue; needs to be explored further given recent developments in the risk literature on values/beliefs and environmental concern.

# Acknowledgements

- Thank you to the respondents
- UNLV Students and ENV office support staff for data entry: Jennifer Ward, Kelli Doeller, Henry Weckesser and Dottie Shank.
- UNLV reprographics and AMS staff
- UNLV ENV 490 Seminar class
- Participants in WM09 session on EM Community Advisory Board