

Here are two key Western races. The contrast between candidates on environment and energy is striking.

Arizona: Sinema v. McSally (primary Aug. 28). Incumbent Jeff Flake (R) isn't running for reelection. Flake's lifetime score from the League of Conservation Voters (LCV) was a mere 9%. The likely match-up is Martha McSally, a Republican with a lifetime 6% LCV score, versus Democrat Kyrsten Sinema, with an LCV score of 78%.

Nevada: Rosen v. Heller. Incumbent Dean Heller (R) has a 13% lifetime score from LCV. The Democratic opponent is Rep. Jacky Rosen, who has a 97% LCV lifetime score.

Energy issues have gained a higher profile in Nevada. Heller's views may be a bit out of touch with the voters, judging from recent renewable energy initiatives in the state. Maybe for that reason, his campaign website doesn't cover energy or environment (not even a tab for the Yucca Mountain waste disposal site, a big issue locally). His [Senate website](#) has a bland endorsement of the usual GOP "all of the above" kind, combined with a pro-development view of public lands:

"As a lifelong Nevadan and rancher, I am fighting hard to ensure that Nevadans have access to our public lands for multiple-use purposes such as grazing, economic development, and recreation. Without a doubt, the federal government owns too much land in the West. Because 87 percent of Nevada's land is managed by the federal government, I believe Congress should transfer some of our lands to the state and local governments."

Rosen's [campaign website](#) emphasizes her environmental credentials (and also gives her LCV score, the first time I've seen that):

"Jacky is committed to Nevada's leadership on solar and other forms of renewable energy. As the former president of Nevada's largest synagogue, Jacky led a team to build one of the largest solar projects by a nonprofit in the city of Henderson, cutting energy costs by up to 70 percent. As the threat of climate change looms, she will continue advocating for action that reduces carbon pollution, defends our clean air and water, and promotes clean energy jobs."

These two western races illustrate the huge gulf between the parties on environment and energy. Which is one of many reasons that elections matter.

