

TRUMP ON AG

Groups assess president-elect’s impact on range of policy questions

EO Media Group

With the surprise election of Donald Trump to the U.S. presidency, agriculture groups expect the reversal of environmental policies enacted under the Obama administration.

“He’s very much in line with us on regulatory reform,” said Cody Lyon, director of advocacy and political affairs for the American Farm Bureau Federation.

The Republican president-elect is expected to nullify the controversial “waters of the U.S.” rule, or WOTUS, which groups such as AFBF and the National Milk Producers Federation considered a drastic expansion of federal jurisdiction over private property.

“That’s basically sunk, so to speak,” said Chris Galen, senior vice president of communications for NMPP.

Apart from overturning WOTUS, Trump is likely to take a less “confrontational” approach to enforcing the Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act and Endangered Species Act, said Lyon.

Republican control over Congress also raises the possibility of reforms to the Endangered Species Act, depending on the priorities of lawmakers, he said.

“The law itself has a poor track record of recovering species,” Lyon said.

Another positive factor for farmers and ranchers is the potential for a pro-agriculture chief of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, he said.

The Obama administration will likely try to push through new regulations before leaving office, which would require time to reverse, but the Trump administration can overturn “guidance documents” for how to enforce existing rules, he said.

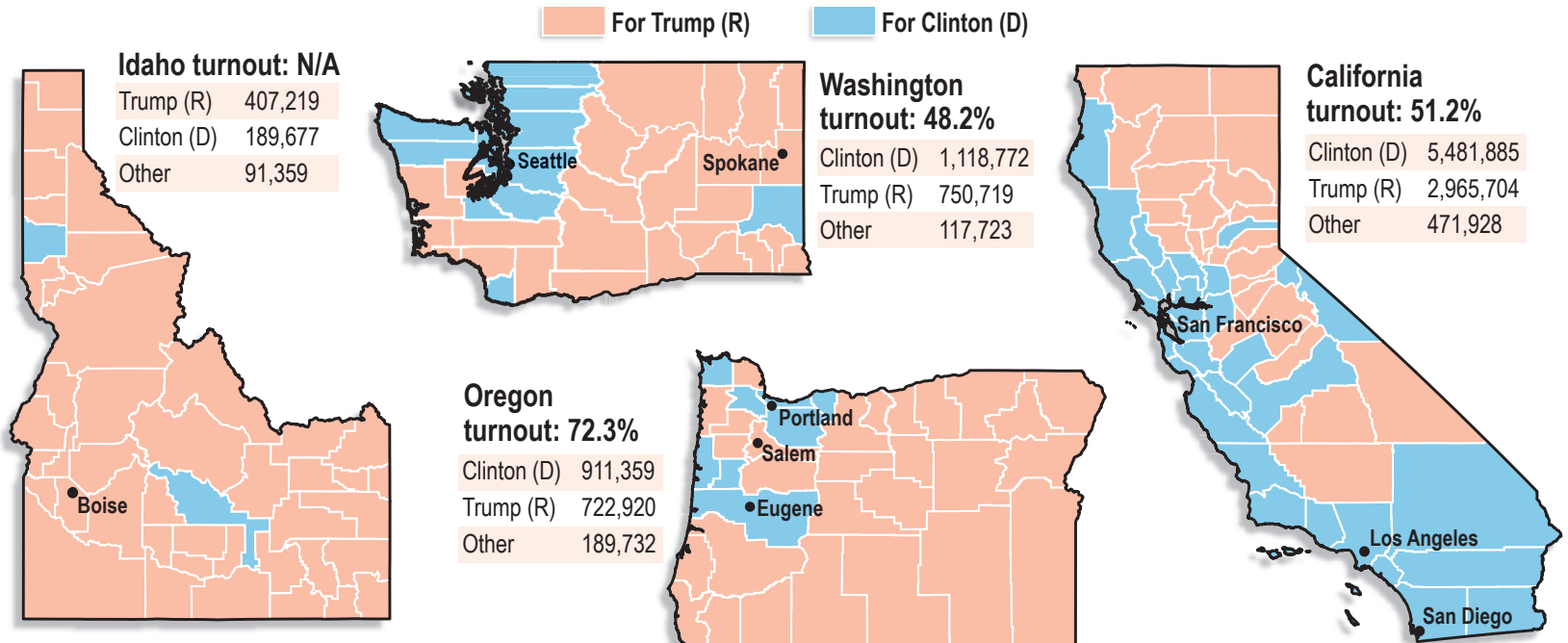
“We hope he’ll remove a lot of those guidance documents that would be harmful to farmers and ranchers,” Lyon said.

Many of Trump’s agricultural advisers are familiar faces among farm

Northwest, California presidential results by county

(Results as of Nov. 9)

While Hillary Clinton carried more populous counties in the four-state region represented, most rural counties voted for Donald Trump for president.



Sources: Washington, Oregon, Idaho and California secretaries of state; realclearpolitics.com

Alan Kenaga/Capital Press



John Locher/Associated Press

President-elect Donald Trump gives his acceptance speech during his election night in New York.

threat to many employees in the dairy industry, for example.

“Farmers have got to have a reliable workforce,” said Galen. “Not knowing what will happen to their workforce, that’s a deterrent to growers.”

Even so, Galen said he’s optimistic that business leaders can influence Trump’s thinking on immigrants and the economy.

“We just have to see where the rhetoric may differ from the reality,” he said.

Republican control of the White House and Congress is bringing some optimism to agricultural leaders who for years have been working on immigration reform to help labor-intensive agriculture.

“For an industry built by and reliant on foreign labor, the big question that looms is labor and immigration. Optimists are hopeful that Trump will behave like a pragmatic businessman. If so, our task is to educate, educate and fast,” said Craig Regelbrugge, national co-chair of Ag Coalition for Immigration Reform and senior vice president of AmericanHort.

“Pessimists,” he said, “don’t see how he walks back the populist tough talk that propelled him across the Rust Belt.”

Trump’s pledge to terminate or renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement may affect farm exports to Canada and Mexico, which are major buyers of U.S. crops.

The total value of U.S. agricultural exports has been steadily increasing, peaking in 2014 at \$152 billion while U.S. farm imports were \$109 billion

“There is a concern with trade,” said Lyon.

Nonetheless, Lyon is hopeful Trump understands the importance of trade to agriculture, and simply wants U.S. manufacturing to benefit from it as much as the farm industry.

University of California-Davis agricultural economist Daniel Sumner believes trade deals such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership have a better chance of being implemented by Trump despite his campaign rhetoric.

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