

A paragraph/list (200 words maximum) – Explain the steps used to create your map(s). How did you use tables of election data? What climate-relevant data did you find and how did you use those data? How did you integrate data on perception or opinions of climate change? Also make sure to explain the visual elements (e.g., why did you choose those colors?).

My layout analyzes county-level voting data from the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections, showing which counties voted Democrat vs. Republican and which candidate won. I joined this data to a county shapefile layer, visualizing the data by coloring each county red (Republican) or blue (Democrat). I chose the blue/red color scheme because, traditionally in American politics, those colors are associated with the two parties and would make my map more intuitive. To highlight counties where the winning party changed in 2020, I created a duplicate shapefile, selecting only counties that switched parties between 2016 and 2020, and outlined them with their 2016 vote color on the 2020 map.

The climate change data focused on public perception of threat, specifically, the percentage of respondents in a county "worried about climate change", as I felt this would be most likely to influence voting behavior. I joined this data to another county layer, representing climate worry in graduated greens (light=low concern, dark=high concern), using green due to its environmental connotations. Overlaying the switched counties and outlining them by their 2016 vote revealed important patterns to prove/disprove my hypothesis: three Florida counties (Duval, Seminole, Pinellas) switched to Democrat with 6-8% increases in climate worry, while Georgia's party switching counties, were mostly Democrat to Republican and had much smaller worry increases (1-6%). Ultimately, this indicated that worry about climate change did not have a significant impact on voting behavior.

Word Count: 210

A paragraph/list (200 words maximum) – Provide a brief analysis of your work. For climate change impacts you've identified, were there noticeable changes in voting trends? Were the changing opinions and perceptions of climate change reflected in voting trends? Were there locations or regions that showed no change in voting trends in spite of extreme weather events or other climate-related phenomena?

My layout, focusing on Florida and Georgia as key swing states in the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections, displayed that, despite concerns around climate change generally increasing, shifts in voting trends were likely not aligned with the change. In Florida, several counties with relatively high levels of climate change worry maintained 2016 results. Though the data does indicate that areas with very high worry were more likely to lean democratic, the overall sustained republican status of many counties may suggest that worry about climate change wasn't a critical factor in voting. In contrast, parts of Georgia saw a rise in climate change worry, but not necessarily in voting democrat. Many rural counties with higher climate worry didn't change their allegiance,

and even some counties that had voted democrat in 2016 and had a higher climate worry in 2020 changed to republican, indicating that other factors may have been more impactful. Notably, even counties in areas that experienced major hurricanes and flooding prior to the 2020 election, such as the Gulf Coast, showed no real change in voting trends at a county level. While climate change worry might influence voting in some contexts, it's clear that in key swing states it may not be the deciding factor.

Word Count: 200

Citations

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