COMMUNITY IN NATURE
CLEAN WATER FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Community Values Survey Summary Report for the Forty-nine Creek Watershed in Area E in the Regional District of Central Kootenay

WEST KOOTENAY EcoSociety

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The West Kootenay EcoSociety is honoured to have had the opportunity to have commissioned expert consultants to lead and inform this Nature-Directed Planning project.

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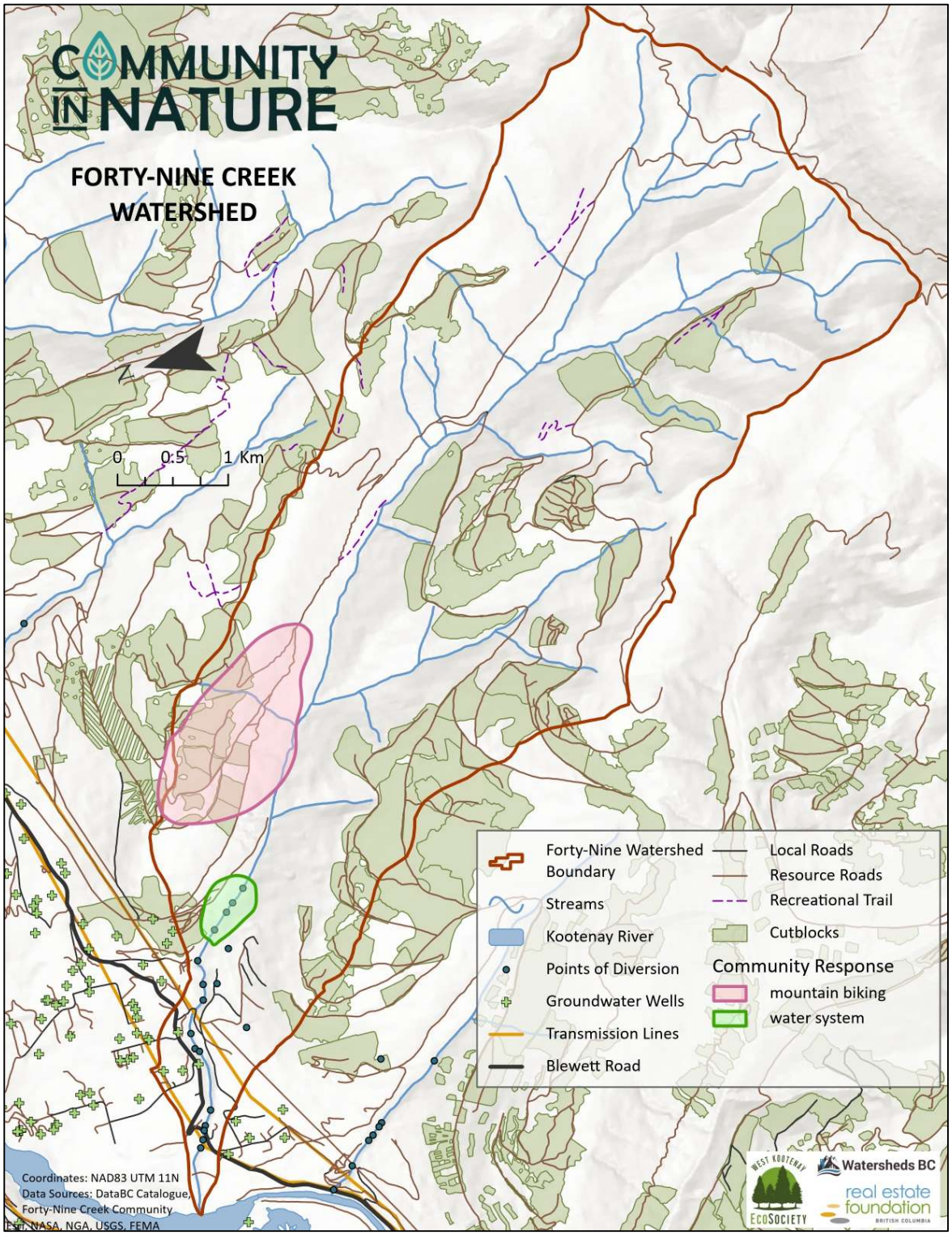
Community Values Map

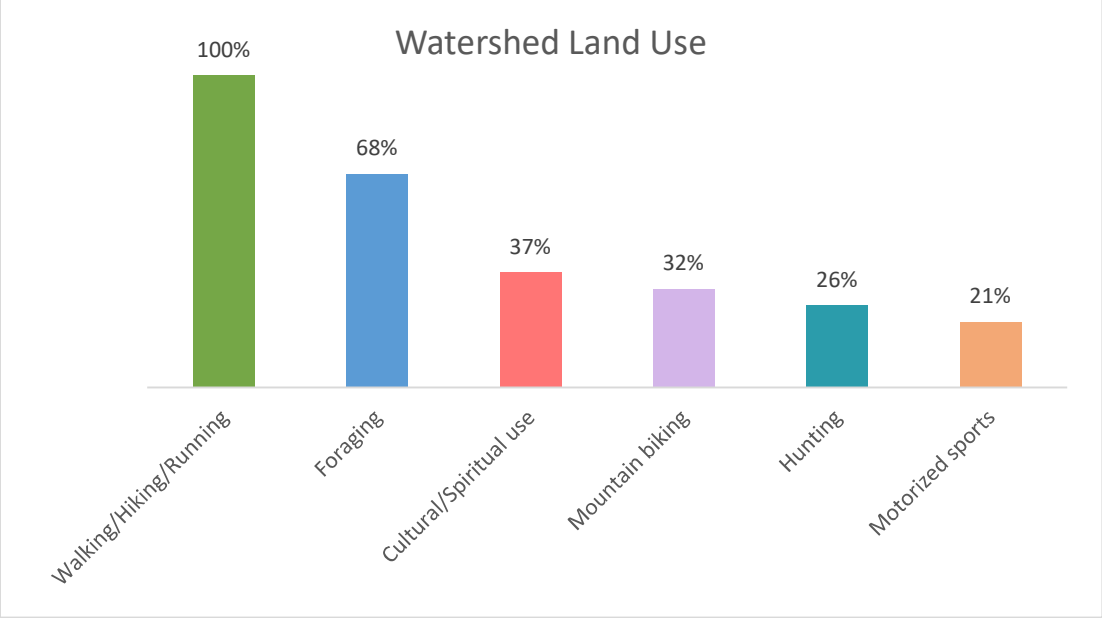
This map illustrates areas where community values exist within the watershed from responses from community members. Community responses included mountain biking and water system areas.



Overview of water and watershed uses

Eighteen of the nineteen respondents get their water from the stream surface or spring, the other did not include a response to this survey question.

Ways community members interact with their watershed (usership) varies greatly and shows most people do interact with their watershed in some way. The other various uses reported were protecting wild animals, skiing and snowshoeing, “daily walks with goats”, and “used to fish here as a child”



Q: *If you spend time in your watershed, what activities do you take part in? Check all that apply.*

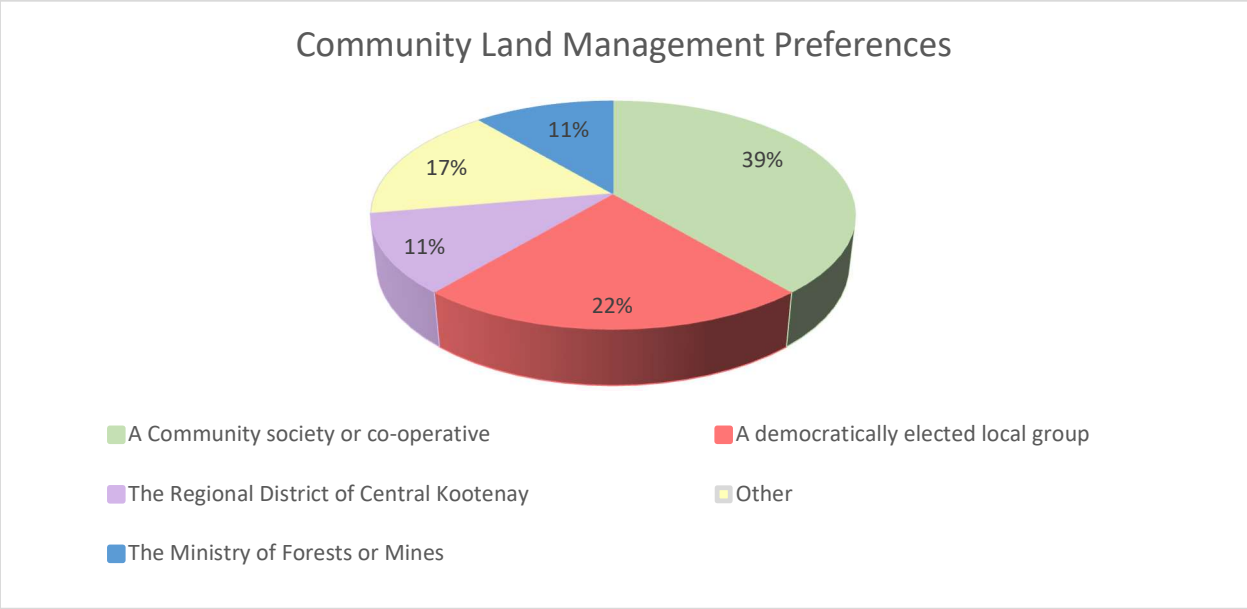
Land-use preference for land base providing resident drinking water

Land-use or land-management preferences overwhelmingly represented a desire for the subject watersheds to be either closed to any resource extraction or managed with nature-based planning, to protect water quality and present rural way of life. Some respondents prefer that their community’s lands be managed with current regulation and practices. One survey participant did not answer this question.

Q: *I prefer that the land base that provides my drinking water be…*	responses
Closed to any resource extraction development thereby protecting our water quality and present rural way of life.	7
Managed by the First Nations and community steering committee, using nature-based planning with the possibility of sensitive logging.	8
Open for development by current Ministry of Forests standards, which has traditionally included clear-cuts, partial cuts and slash burning with public consultation at industry discretion.	3

Decision making in consumptive watersheds

Sixteen of the nineteen respondents believe that decisions about possible resource use in consumptive watersheds should be made locally. Seven participants stated that the community should be responsible for these decisions, while three said that the Regional District of Central Kootenay should make those decisions. Two others preferred that a democratically elected local group should have decision-making responsibility, while the remaining two suggested a collaboration between locals, the RDCK, and First Nations. One respondent did not answer this question.



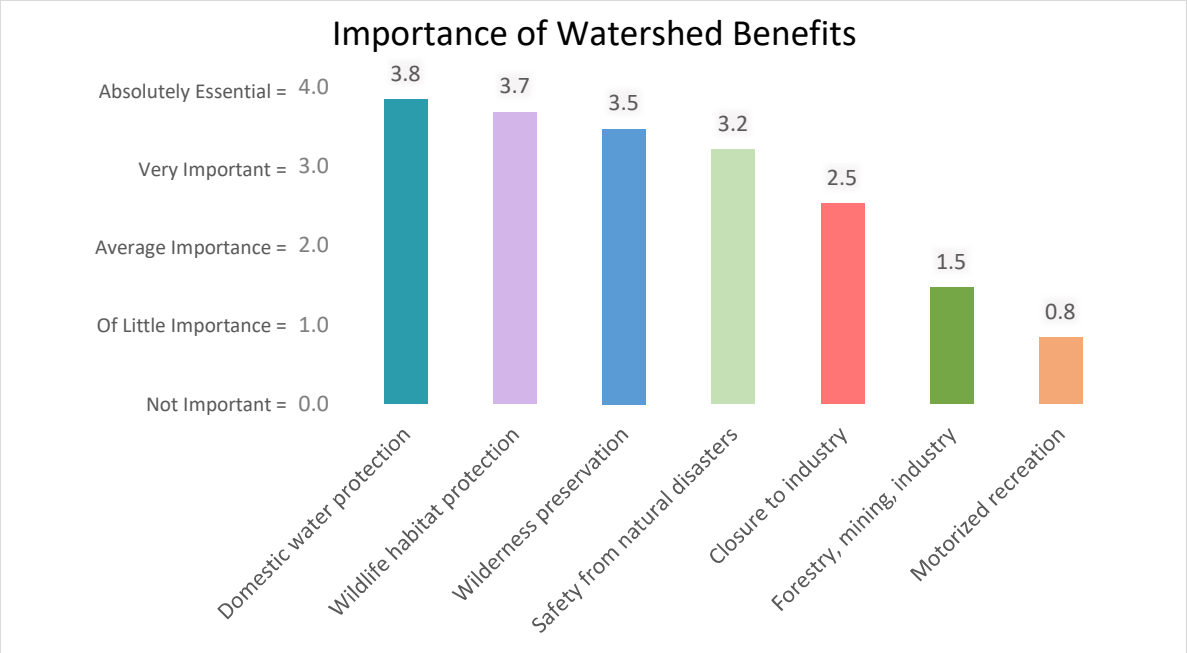
Q: *Do you think decisions about possible resource use in consumptive watersheds (watersheds that provide clean drinking water to communities) should be made by…*

Interested in Community Engagement

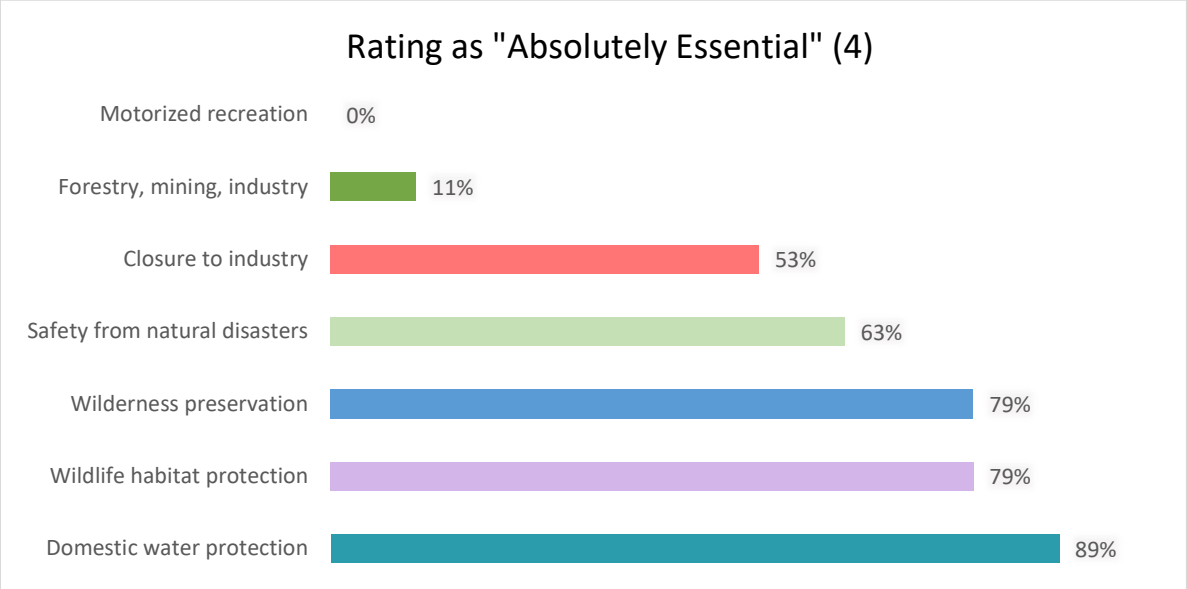
Interest in being involved in a community society or cooperative was relatively high for the 49 creek watershed – 6 of the 19 respondents were interested in forming that cooperative, and provided contact information.

Community watershed values

The following shows the top 5 responses and the lowest two both weighted and ranked.



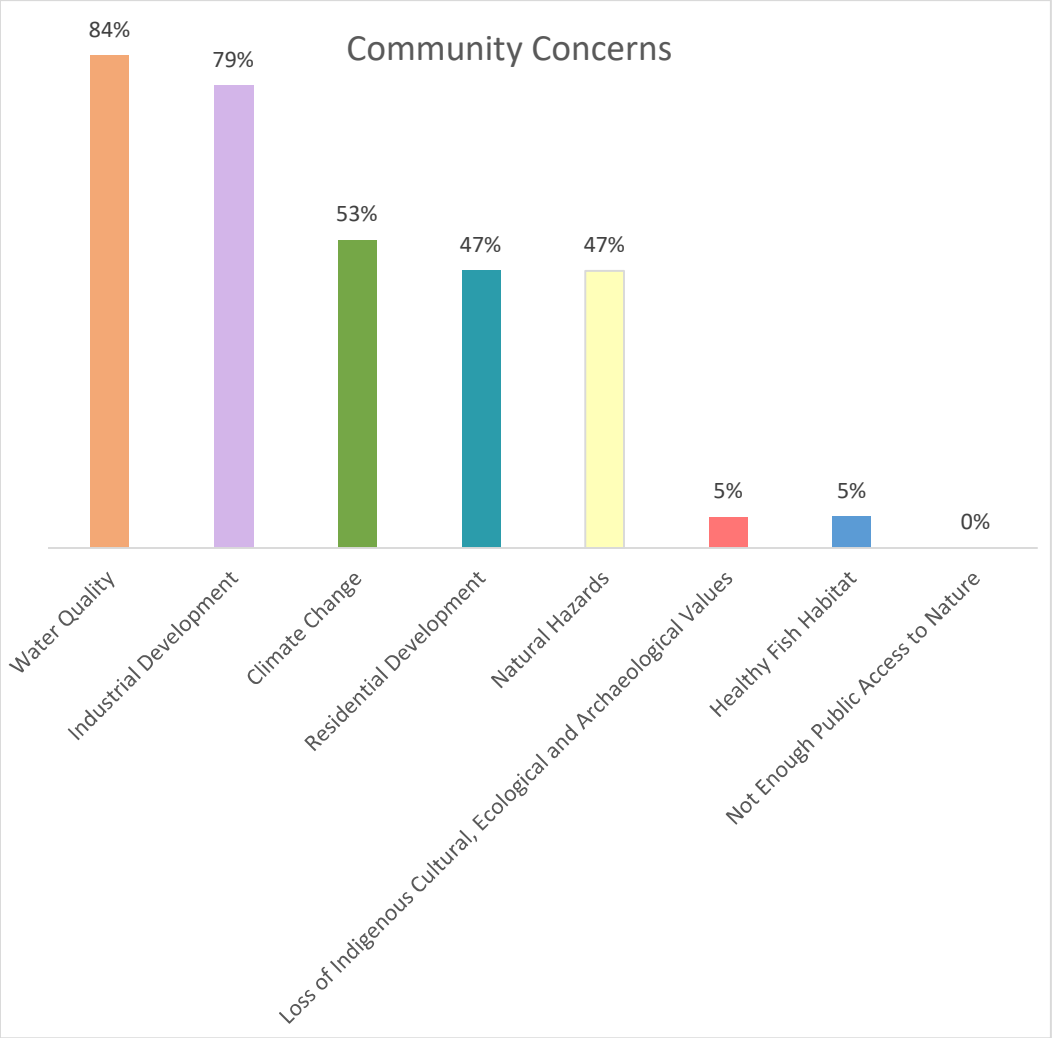
Q: *On a scale of 0 to 4 (0 being lowest, 4 being highest) give the importance of the following and list any others you think are absolutely important (4's). Weighted values averaged for all respondents; 4-point ranking system shown on y-axis.*



Q: On a scale of 0 to 4 (0 being lowest, 4 being highest) give the importance of the following and list any others you think are absolutely important (4's). Motorized recreation was ranked lowest; 76% of respondents ranked motorized recreation of little (1) or no importance (0).

Community watershed concerns

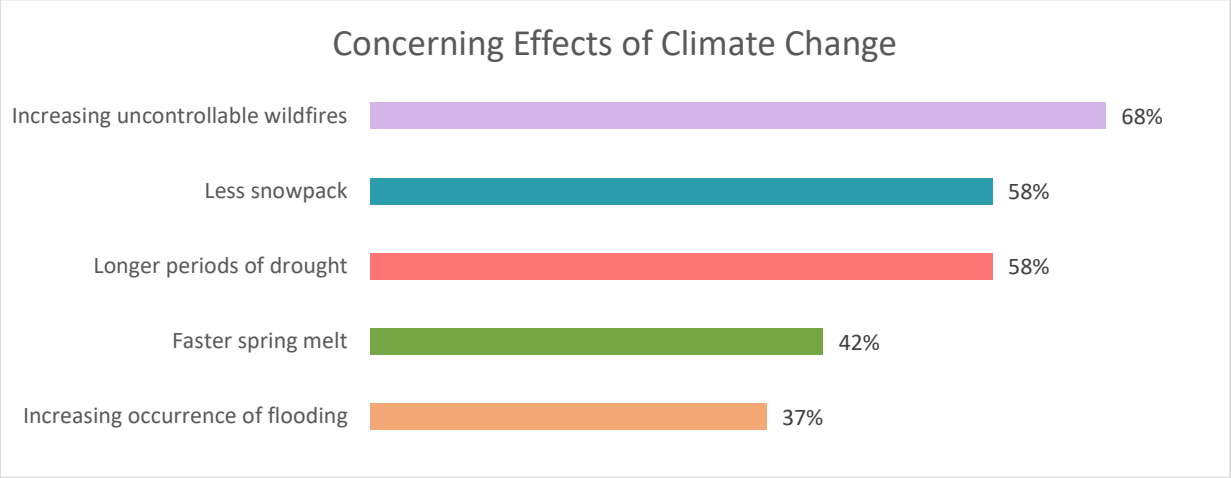
Water quality and industrial development are the highest rated responses. One of the nineteen respondents stated that they were not concerned about any of these topics. The two comments from respondents relating to this survey question were that recreational tenures on crown land were of concern, and that “Climate change is important however this is not the appropriate scale”.



Q: *What are the top 5 greatest concerns when it comes to the watershed where you live, and list any other top 5’s not included in the list.*

Concerns relating to climate change

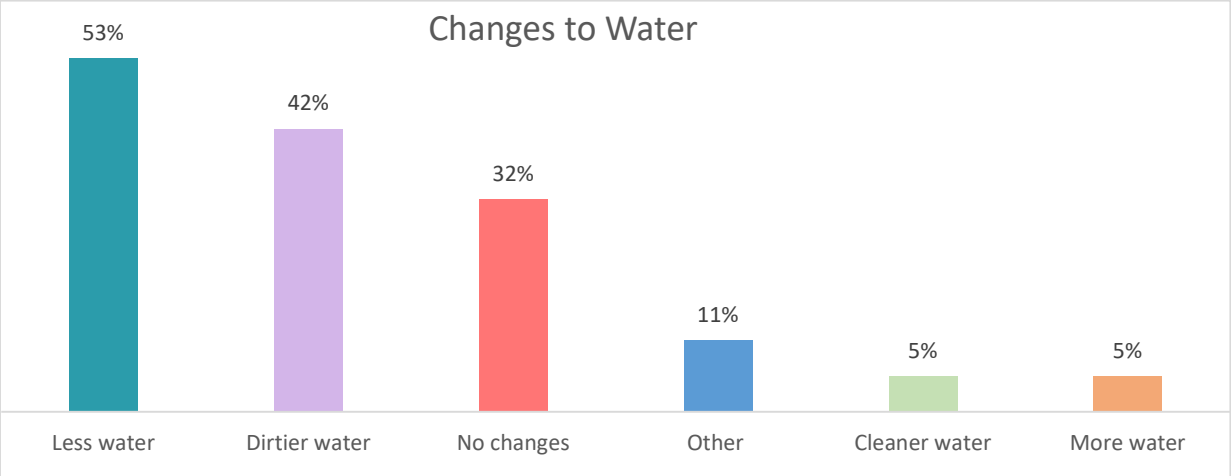
Responses show a clear concern for the effects of climate change. “Other” responses involved a concern around a lack of understanding and acknowledgement of climate change impacts related to industry uses of watersheds.



Q: *If you are concerned about the effects of climate change on your drinking water, which concerns you most?*

Changes to water supply

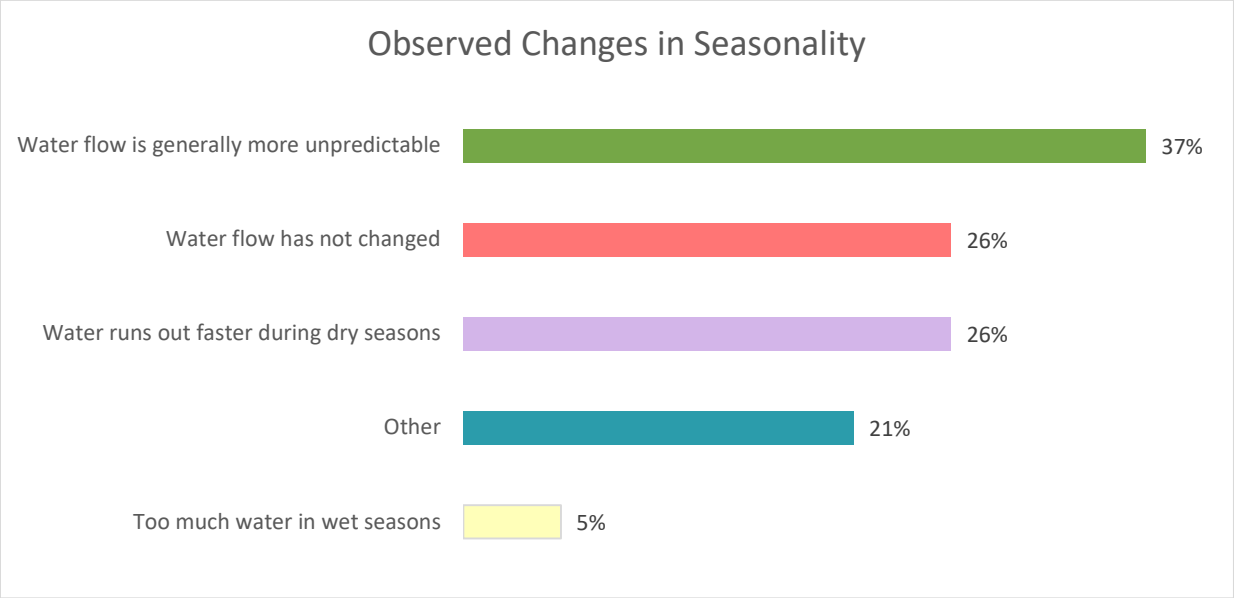
Most respondents have experienced less water in their water supply and many have experienced dirtier water. Very few have experienced more, and cleaner water. The two highest responses reflect the current general scientific understanding of how climate change and industrial activity can affect the ability of watersheds to function to manage water *quantity* and *quality*. The "Other" respondents were expressing concern about recreation users in the watershed, and concern for flashier (faster, more extreme) runoff from small rain events.



Q: If you have experienced any changes to your water supply, what are they?

Changes to water supply continued

The highest responses reflect the current general scientific understanding of how climate change and industrial activity can affect the ability of watersheds to function to manage water *quantity* and *timing of flow*. Many respondents have found that water flow has not changed over time. The "Other" responses were about how the creek changes course with high spring runoff, affecting water supply, inquiring about the impact of other users on water supply, and more sedimentation.



Q: *In addition to the previous question, are you also finding that…*