COMMUNITY IN NATURE
CLEAN WATER FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

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

WEST KOOTENAY EcoSociety

West Kootenay EcoSociety

PO BOX 1152, Nelson, BC, V1L 6H3 Canada| PO BOX 262, Trail, BC V1R 4L5
+1-250-921-5497
www.ecosociety.ca
info@ecosociety.ca
linkedin.com/company/west-kootenay-ecosociety
facebook.com/WestKootenayEcoSociety
twitter.com/WK_EcoSociety
instagram.com/westkootenayecosociety

© 2022, West Kootenay Community EcoSociety. All Rights Reserved.

This project was supported through: the Healthy Watersheds Initiative, which is delivered by the Real Estate Foundation of BC and Watersheds BC, with financial support from the Province of British Columbia as part of its $10-billion COVID-19 response; the United Nations Association in Canada; the Regional District of Central Kootenay Area E Community Development Grant; the Government of Canada's Canada Summer Jobs program; and, the Columbia Basin Trust's small environmental grants program.

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.

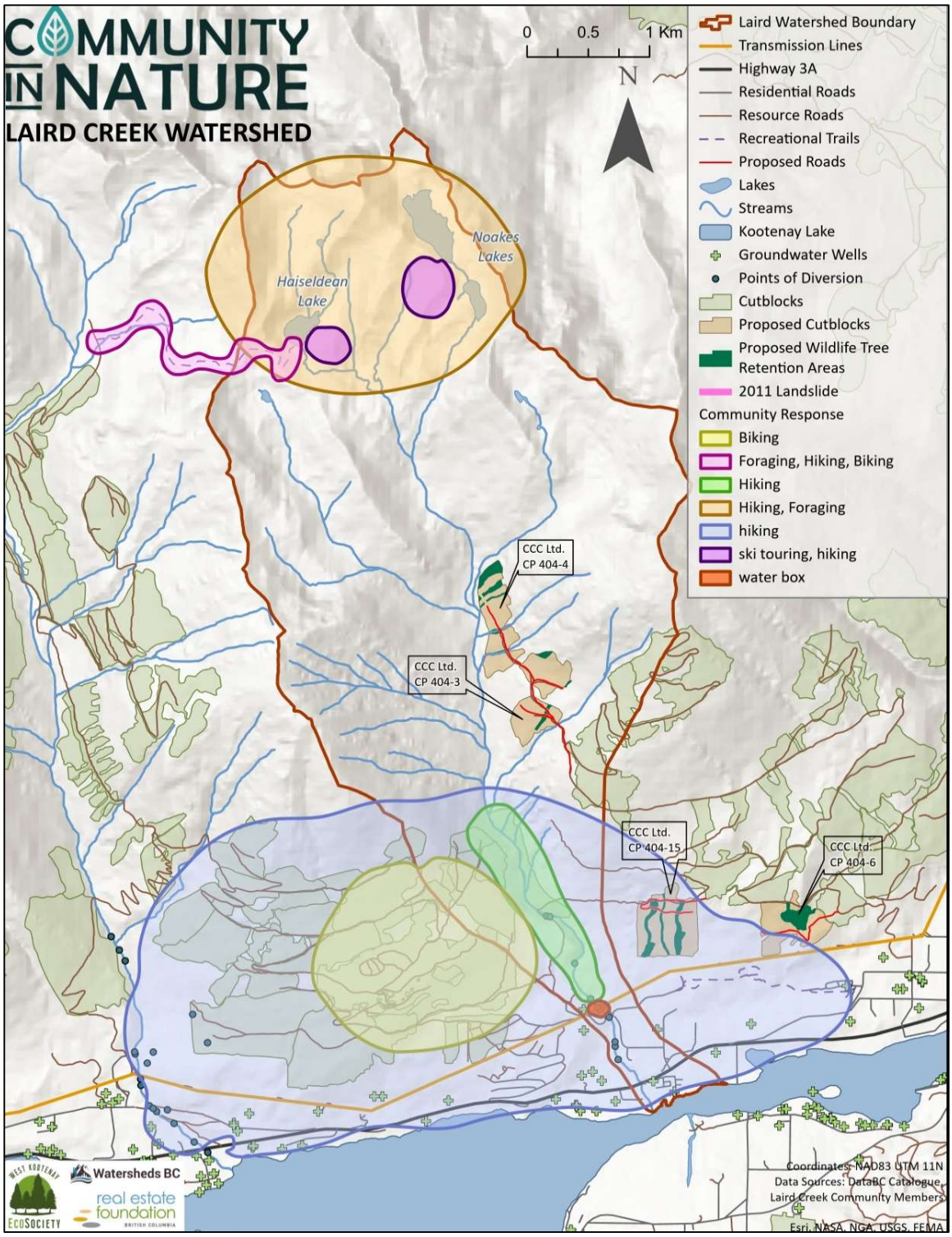
Permission is required to reproduce any part of this publication.
Permission will be freely granted to educational and non-profit organizations.

Contributors
Thank you to the following people for their contributions to developing this report:
Authors: Arlo Bryn-Thorn and Kendra Norwood
Editing: Kendra Norwood

This project was made possible by funding from:

Community Values Map

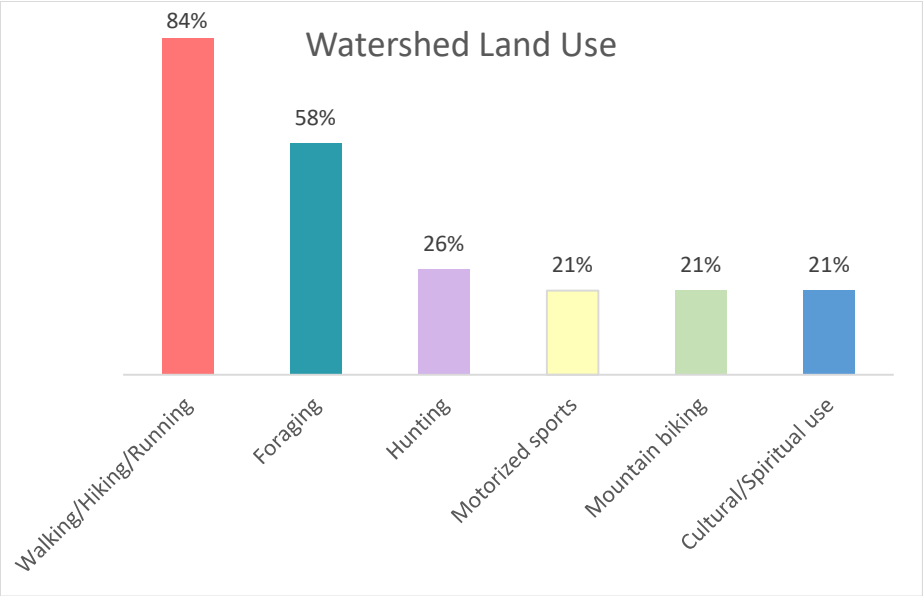
This map illustrates areas where community values exist within the watershed from responses from community members. Responses from community members show areas valued for recreational use, foraging, and water sources.



Overview of water and watershed uses

Of the 23 respondents, seven people get their water from a well, 11 from the stream, and four from a combination of those two sources; one did not answer this 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 looking for wildlife, enjoying the countryside, maintaining water supply system, and meditation.



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. The other four responses suggested community-involved management or total protection.

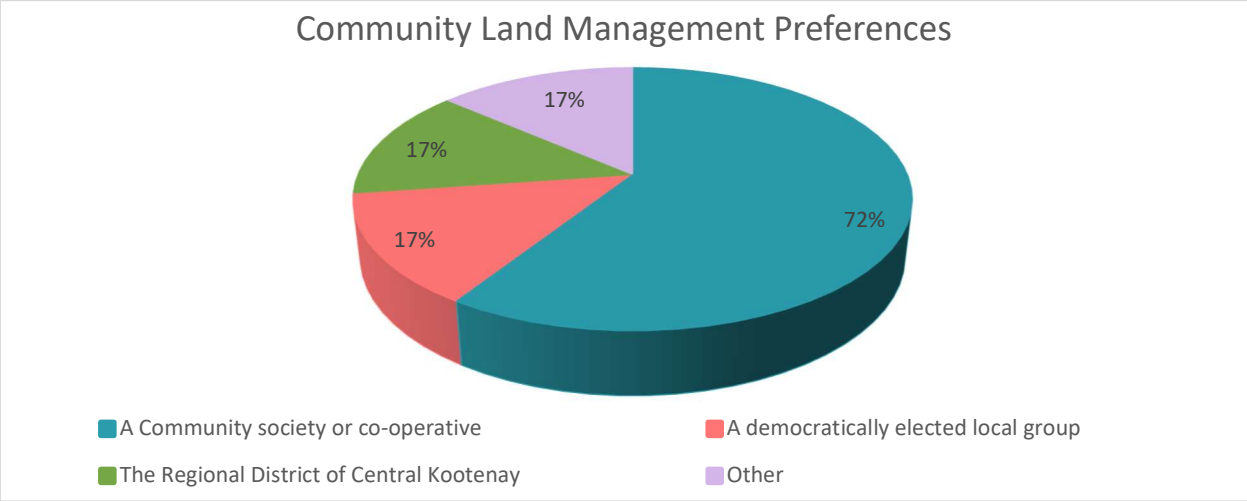
Q: *I prefer that the land base that provides my drinking water be…*	responses
Closed to any resource extraction development thereby protecting our water quality and present rural way of life.	16
Managed by the First Nations and community steering committee, using nature-based planning with the possibility of sensitive logging.	5
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.	0

Community involvement in watershed planning

All respondents believe that planning for human use of the watershed should include a meaningful role from the community living within the watershed. One respondent shared an impassioned disapproval of logging, stating: “and we have [had a meaningful role] in the 50 years we've lived here up until now with this disrespectful logging of CCC [Cooper Creek Cedar]”.

Decision making in consumptive watersheds

All respondents believe that decisions about possible resource use in consumptive watersheds should be made locally. Four 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.



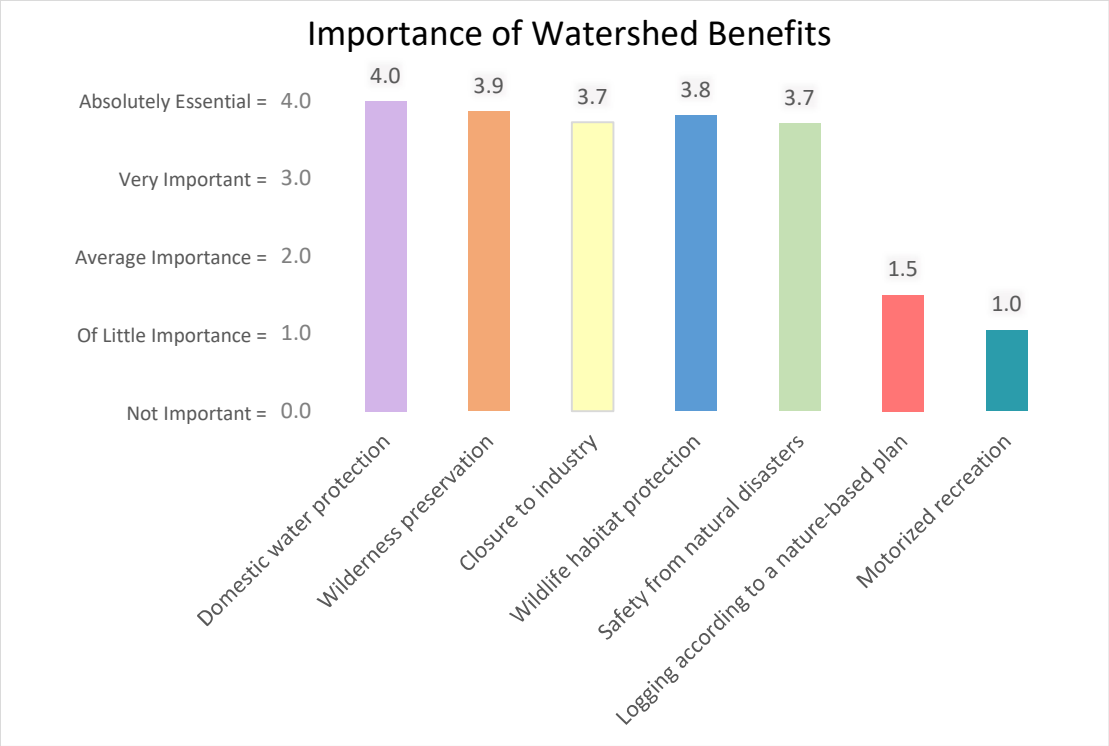
Q: *Do you think decisions about possible resource use in consumptive watersheds (watersheds that provide clean drinking water to communities) should be made by…*

Interested in Community Engagement

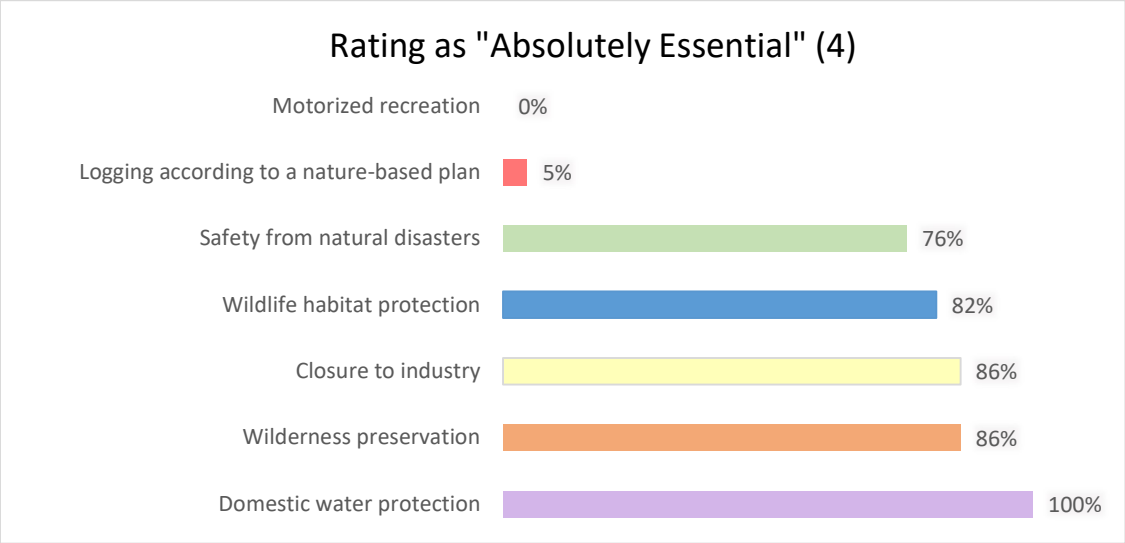
Interest in being involved in a community society or cooperative was low – 16 respondents were not interested. However, 4 people who identified as having interest provided contact information.

Community watershed values

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



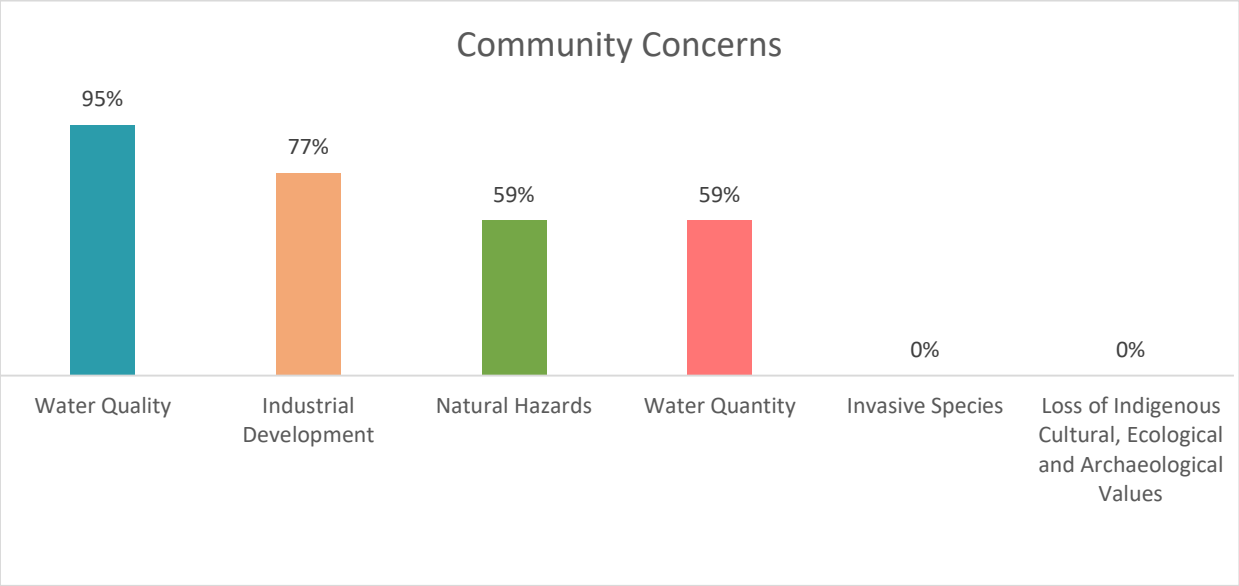
Q: *On a scale of 0 to 4 (0 being lowest, 4 being highest) give the importance of the following and list any others you think are absolutely important (4's). Weighted values averaged for all respondents; 4-point ranking system shown on y-axis.*



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

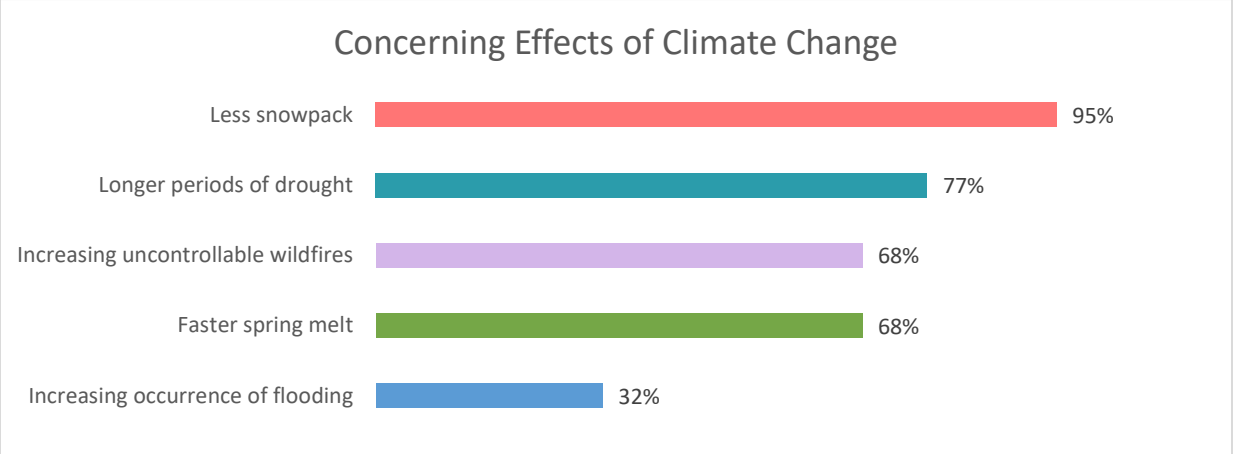
The following graph shows the top communal concerns about respondents' watersheds and the percentage of respondents selecting each category (could choose up to 5 categories). "I'm not concerned" and "Trespassing on Private Property" were two other responses not selected by any respondent; "Depletion of old growth species", and "Open access to the public in our watershed" were the two "Other" responses.



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

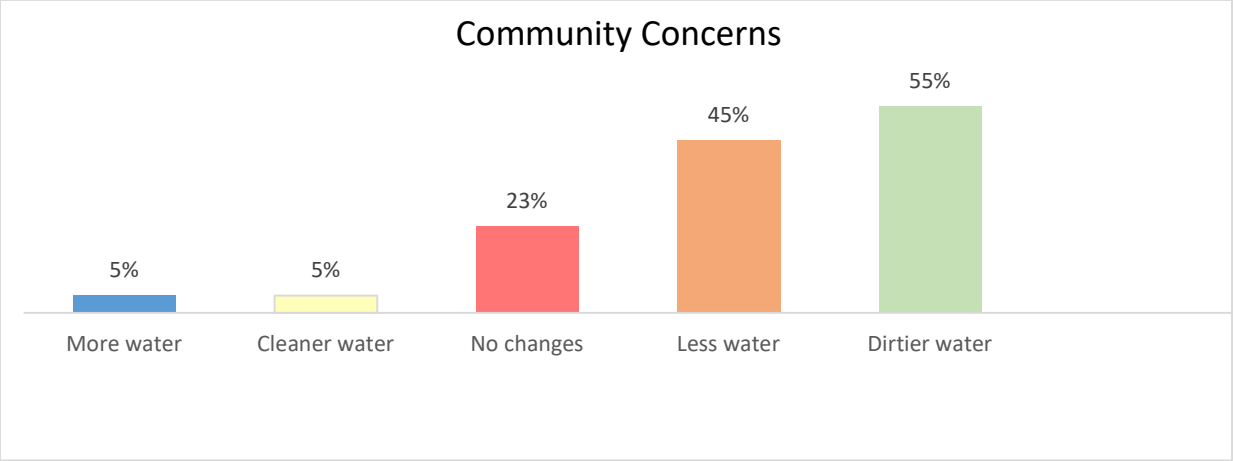
Responses show a clear concern for the effects of climate change.



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

Changes to water supply

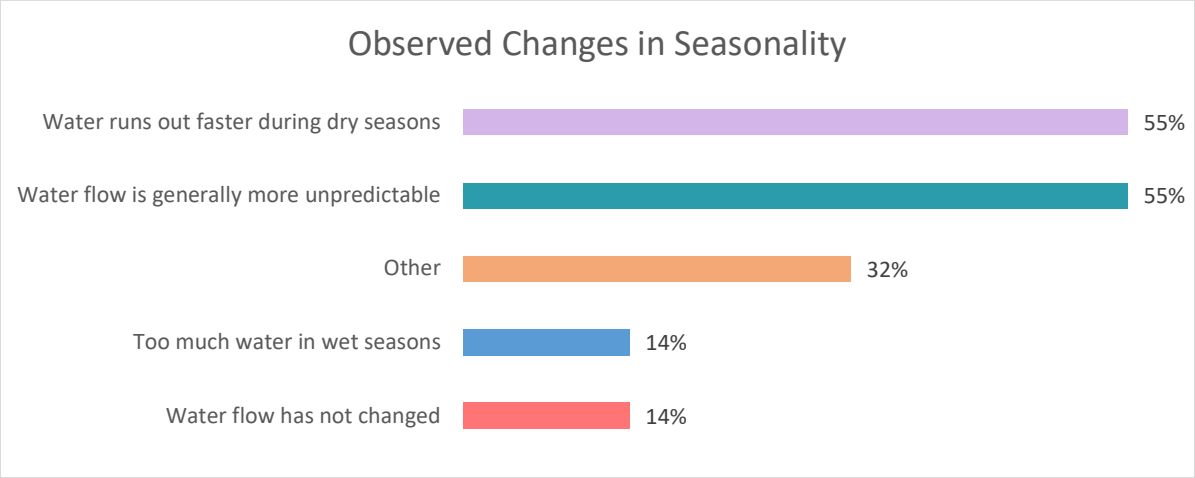
Most respondents have experienced less water in their water supply and many have experienced dirtier water. Few have experienced more, and cleaner water. The two highest responses reflect the current general scientific understanding of how climate change and industrial activity can affect the ability of watersheds to function to manage water *quantity* and *quality*. Only one respondent selected "Cleaner water", and "More water".



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

Changes to water supply continued

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 *timing of flow*. Many respondents perceived changes to the seasonality of water events to be associated with the 2011 land slide and ongoing logging, some experienced all of the changes at various times. Some respondents specified that there was more water in spring and less in summer than before, one respondent noted that snow melts earlier in the spring and leads to lower flows in the summer.



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