



WELCOME

Suggestions for Working Together

- With curiosity, openness and honesty in all conversations
- By recognizing water as sacred and central to life
- Through shared decision-making that values local and Indigenous knowledge equally
- By supporting each other to learn, adapt, and take care of the watershed for future generations

Principles for Collaboration

Respect – Honour cultural protocols, experience, water & land, and each other's voices.

Reciprocity – Share knowledge, resources, and benefits fairly.

Transparency – Be open about processes, decisions, and limitations.

Trust – Build relationships at the speed of trust, with patience and care.

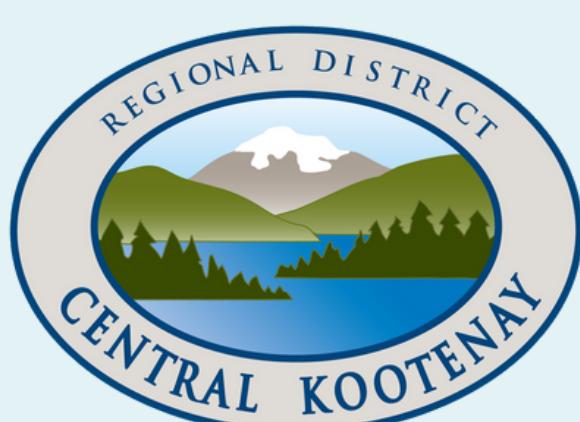
Roles in the Process

Residents & Community Members – water users, knowledge sharers, and co-creators of solutions.

yaqan nu?kiy – Rights holders, water users, knowledge keepers, and leaders in stewardship.

RDCK – Local government partner supporting planning, coordination, and resources.

Ministry of Water Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS) - Provincial partner that will provide legislative guidance



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INVITATION TO COLLABORATE

We are shaping a shared approach to water sustainability
in the Goat River Watershed.

How do you want to see us work together?

Add your ideas, reflections, and commitments to this conversation.



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VISION OF THE PROJECT

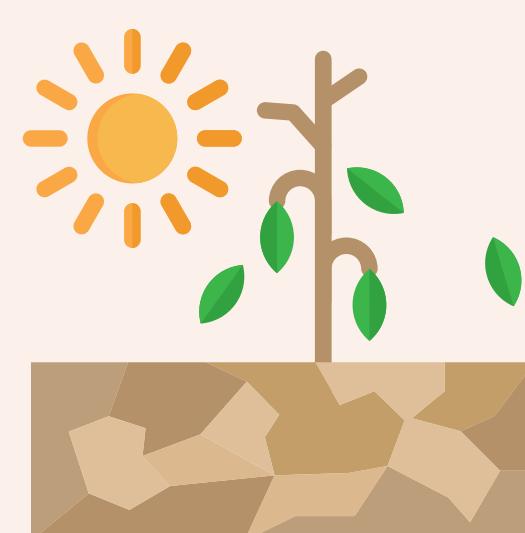
Water Sustainability Plan (WSP)

A Water Sustainability Plan is a legally enabled planning tool under BC's *Water Sustainability Act*. Its purpose is to collaboratively address or prevent water conflicts, risks to water quantity, and the need for restoration to damaged or stressed aquatic systems.

A WSP can recommend or lead to regulations that shape how water and land are managed within a defined watershed. It is developed jointly by the Province, First Nations, local governments, and community partners over a multi-year process (typically three to five years).

Declining Water Availability

Long-term climate trends show the Goat River Watershed,



- Hotter, drier summers and reduced snowpack leading to **lower summer flows**.
- **Rain-on-snow** events, wildfires, and land-use disturbance that accelerate runoff and erosion.
- Increasing competition for limited groundwater and surface water supplies.

These cumulative pressures mean that conventional water management approaches are no longer sufficient.

Watersheds require collective action



Water connects every community, economy, and ecosystem within a watershed. In the Goat River Watershed that means all beings in Canyon, Creston, Lister, Erickson, West Creston, Wynndel, yaqan nu?kiy. Water moves across property lines, jurisdictions, and sectors, making it a shared resource whose management requires cooperation rather than competition.

- Declining quantity means that decisions in one area affect everyone downstream
- Coordinated governance ensures that local, Indigenous, and provincial authorities work together rather than in silos
- Collaborative approaches create conditions for **shared decision-making** and align with Indigenous laws such as *?a·kxamis q̄ap qapsin*—“all things are connected”.



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UNDERSTANDING WATERSHED HYDROLOGY

What Is a Watershed?

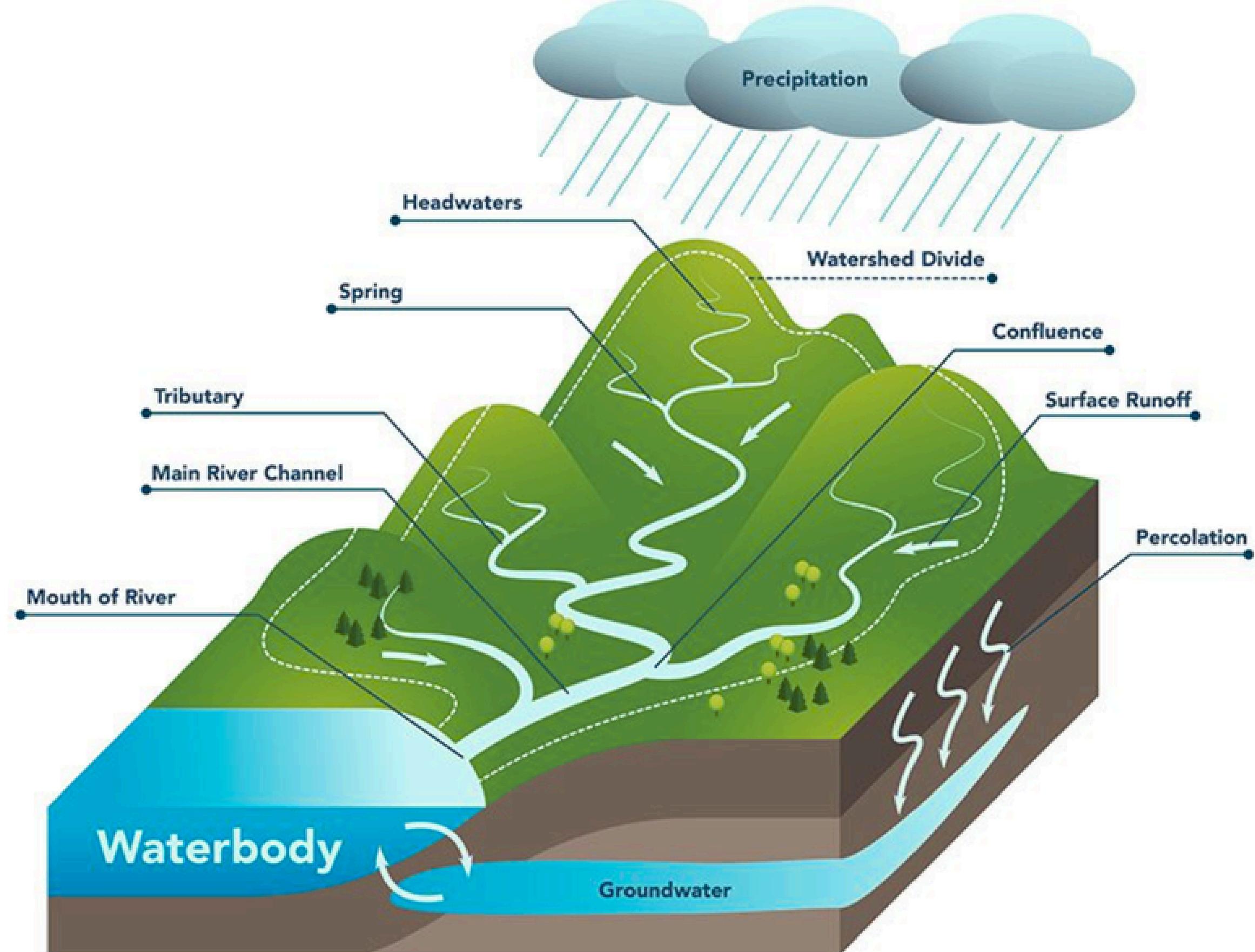
A watershed is an area of land where rain and snow drain to a common point such as a river, lake, or aquifer. Every drop that falls travels through soil, vegetation, and streams on its way downhill. Watersheds link everything in the landscape and are influenced by topography, vegetation, soils, and how people manage the land.

A Complex and Dynamic System

Water in a watershed is always in motion, whether it is stored in snowpack, soil, wetlands, and groundwater before being released to rivers and lakes. Some systems hold water longer; others release it quickly after a storm. The Goat River shows how these natural rhythms are changing. Warmer, drier summers and earlier snowmelt have led to lower late-season flows and greater variability year to year.

Why It Matters

- Ecosystems:** Low flows warm rivers and reduce oxygen, stressing fish like kokanee.
- Flooding:** Heavier spring runoff increases erosion and sediment movement.
- Communities:** Changing groundwater and surface water levels affect wells, irrigation, and water supply reliability.
- Planning:** Understanding these shifts helps us adapt how we manage land and water together.



What You Can Do

Keep an eye on your local creeks and wells and notice when they rise, drop, or change colour. Share your observations with neighbours. The more we learn, the better we can plan for a shared and resilient water future.



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GOAT RIVER WATERSHED 3D WEBMAP

How to Explore

Click on features to see more details about them. Layers can be turned on and off under the Layer List icon. You can also zoom and pan to explore the watershed in 3D, moving through the landscape much like you would in person.

Key Features & Layers

- Watersheds and aquifers
- Rivers, creeks, and tributaries
- Community landmarks
- Land use and ecological data



Supporting Decision-Making

By bringing together hydrologic, ecological, and community data, the map supports better understanding of water sources, risks, and connections. It is designed to inform watershed planning, resilience strategies, and decision-making that reflect both science and community priorities.



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RESILIENCY PROJECTS IN RDCK WATER SYSTEMS

Creston Valley Alternate Water Supply Feasibility Study

The study looked at using the Kootenay River to secure a long term irrigation supply for the Creston Valley. The intent was to separate agricultural irrigation from treated drinking water, helping conserve Arrow Creek for residential use and easing demand on the Goat River during low-flow periods.

The study examined:

- Future agricultural water needs under hotter, drier summers
- Environmental and supply risks to Arrow Creek and Goat River
- Infrastructure needs for intake, treatment, and distribution from Duck Lake to the U.S. border.

Findings showed that a Kootenay River intake is technically feasible but would require substantial investment, with estimated costs in the hundreds of millions. This is a roadmap for future planning, not a shovel ready project.

The Erickson Metering Project

This project will install meters that track both water use and water loss. Residents will be able to see water use data on the EyeOnWater website. Flat rate billing will remain in place, with no new charges for residents. Installation is happening in two phases: large farms and businesses in 2025, followed by homes and smaller farms in 2026.

Meters will:

- Detect leaks and reduce system loss
- Track water use for better planning
- Guide pipe replacements and infrastructure upgrades



Example of water meter with AMI installed in pit

What This Means for Residents and Farmers



These projects are intended to strengthen water security for the community, improve reliability during dry periods, and support more consistent irrigation while easing pressure on shared resources. Together, they represent an early step toward long term sustainability.



Learn more at rdck.ca/water



HOW TO GET INVOLVED?

When it comes to water sustainability, we are in it together. Residents of the Goat River Watershed can get involved in four different ways to help shape the Water Sustainability Plan. Review the options below, then write your name, contact information, and preferred level of participation on a slip and place it in the box.



CONNECTOR

As a Connector, you will be invited to host a conversation with family, friends, or neighbours about water. These kitchen-table style discussions are a chance to explore local water issues, hear perspectives, and share ideas for action. You'll receive a guide and be asked to report back your group's insights.



STORYTELLER

As a Storyteller, you can share your personal connection to water, whether through memories, observations of change, or your hopes for the future. Stories may appear in reports, on social media, or on the RDCK website. Submit in writing or through a short interview with RDCK's Community Resilience Coordinator.



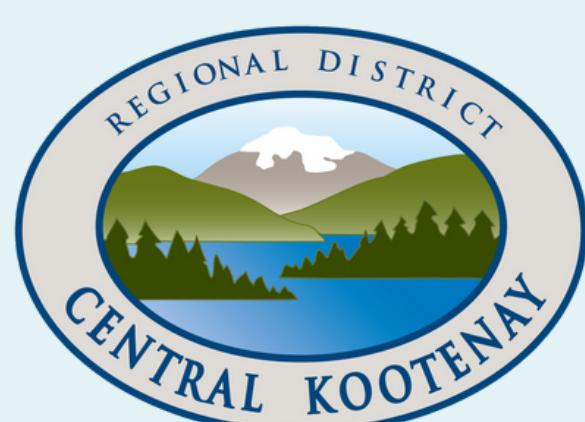
CONTRIBUTOR

As a Contributor, you can share your voice through surveys, forums, or conversations. Your input helps deepen understanding of water sustainability in the Goat River Watershed. Contributors are also encouraged to join our mailing list for updates, resources, and invitations to future opportunities.



LEARNER

As a Learner, you are eager to grow your understanding of the Goat River Watershed, watershed governance, and the challenges and opportunities for building a sustainable water future. Explore resources at the link below, subscribe for updates, and stay connected through our mailing list.



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Scan here or visit
engage.rdck.ca/goatwatershed