



KITCHEN TABLE CONVERSATION HOST GUIDE & WORKSHEETS

Goat River Watershed Sustainability Planning

OCTOBER 2025

Updated January 2026



INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Thank you for taking the time to host or join a Kitchen Table Conversation. These small, informal gatherings are an important way for people who live and work in the Goat River Watershed to share their knowledge and experiences about water.

The Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK), yaqan nu?kiy, and the Province of BC are working together with local residents, farmers, and community groups to learn more about the watershed's challenges, values, and opportunities. Through these conversations, we're starting to build a shared understanding of what sustainability means for the Goat River Watershed.

Kitchen Table Conversations work because they create space for people to speak freely, ask questions, and learn from each other. These small group discussions help build trust and a shared understanding and build connections that are essential for working together toward a healthy and resilient watershed.

Your discussion will help highlight what people care about most when it comes to water, including what's working well, what's not, and what matters for the future. Notes from these conversations will inform a "What We Heard" summary, which will be shared on engage.rdck.ca/projects/goatwatershed and included in a report to the RDCK Board in spring 2026.

The following pages include background on the RDCK, the watershed, and the Water Sustainability Plan process, along with tools to help guide your conversation and record your group's ideas. We're here to support you every step of the way, and we truly appreciate your time, effort, and care in helping shape this important community conversation.



ABOUT THE RDCK AND ITS ROLE

The Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) serves rural and municipal communities across the Central Kootenay region. It provides essential services such as water utilities, emergency preparedness, resource recovery, planning, and environmental initiatives.

For this project, the RDCK's role is to coordinate community engagement, watershed research, and long-term planning in collaboration with yaqan nu?kiy and the Province of BC. Together, this work will inform a locally grounded Water Sustainability Plan for the Goat River Watershed.

The Kitchen Table Conversations fall into Phase 2 of the process (see figure below). This phase focuses on sharing information and listening to what residents and communities have to say. The goal is to build a shared understanding of local water issues and gather insights that will help define the scope of future planning.

In later phases, engagement will continue with a focus on farm and food producers, along with ongoing conversations as relationships strengthen. The information collected through these stages will help shape the direction of the plan and guide where collaboration with the Province becomes most substantial—if and when the process moves forward.



WHAT IS A WATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN (WSP)?

A Water Sustainability Plan (WSP) is a collaborative planning process under BC's Water Sustainability Act. It's a tool that helps communities, local governments, First Nations, and the Province make shared decisions about how water is used, protected, and managed. Its purpose is to collaboratively address or prevent:

- Conflicts between water users, or between users and environmental flow needs.
- Risks to water quantity, aquatic ecosystems, and long-term watershed health.
- The need for restoration measures in 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).

Right now, we are exploring what a WSP could look like for the Goat River Watershed. Our focus is on collaboration between the community, the RDCK, and yaqan nu?kiy to co-define what sustainability means for this watershed.

Learn more at
engage.rdck.ca/projects/goatwatershed



ABOUT THE GOAT RIVER WATERSHED

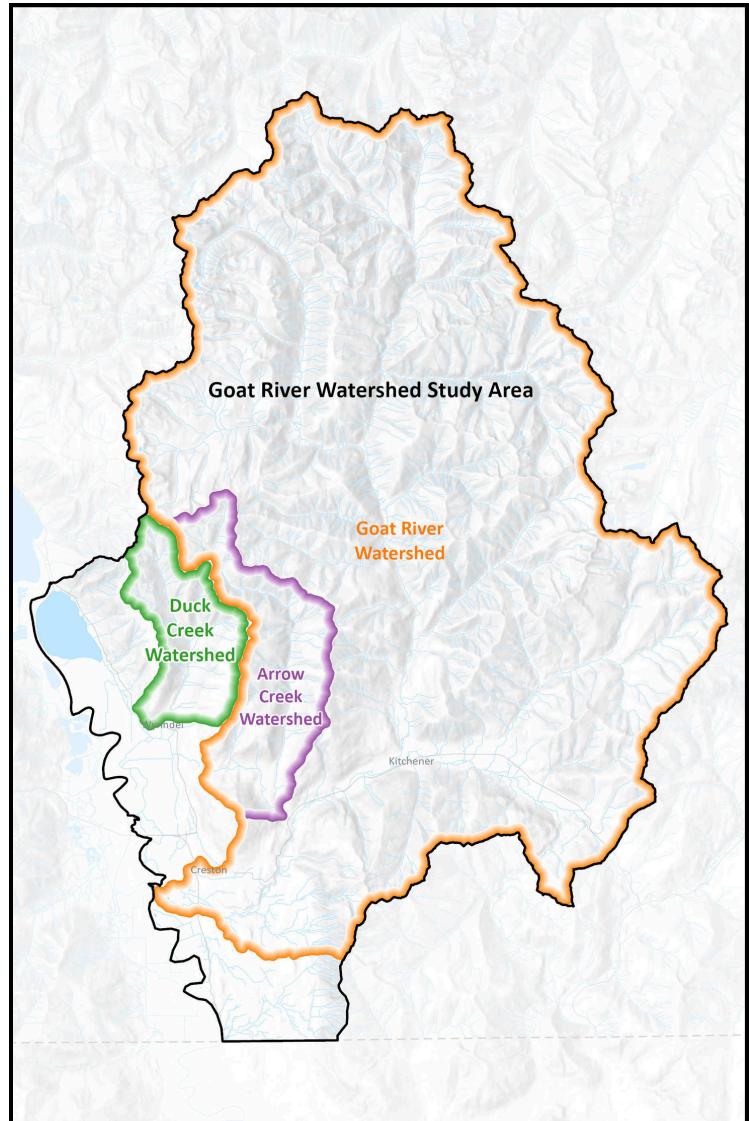
The Goat River Watershed is one of the most significant freshwater systems in the Creston Valley. It begins in the high mountains north of Creston (Kianuko Provincial Park) and flows south through forests and farmland before joining the Kootenay River. The watershed also includes Arrow Creek, Duck Creek, and the Canyon–Lister aquifers, which are key to the region's drinking water and irrigation supply.

The Goat River Watershed provides critical ecological and hydrological functions that directly influence community water supply, fish habitat, and agricultural productivity. The watershed supports surface and groundwater systems that are believed to be hydrologically connected to the Canyon (0489) and East Creston/Lister (0488) aquifers, both of which are provincially recognized as at-risk drinking water sources and agricultural supply areas.

Check out the Goat River Watershed 3D map to help inform your conversations



Scan or visit
[engage.rdck.ca
/projects/goatwatershed](http://engage.rdck.ca/projects/goatwatershed)



ABOUT KITCHEN TABLE CONVERSATIONS

Kitchen Table Conversations are small, informal gatherings where people come together to share their experiences, concerns, and ideas. These conversations will help guide the priorities of a Water Sustainability Plan by identifying what matters most to the people who live in the watershed.

HOW TO HOST A CONVERSATION

- 1. Invite** friends, family, neighbours, or coworkers (4–8 people).
Prepare your space with pens, sticky notes, and this workbook.
- 2. Facilitate** respectfully and make sure everyone has a chance to speak and feel heard.
- 3. Work through the questions below at your own pace.** Each round can take anywhere from 20 to 30 minutes. You can even host over multiple days if that feels right.
 - a. Round 1 “Starting the Conversation”:** Read the paragraph to frame the conversation and then move into the questions.
Feel free to make this your own.
 - b. Round 2 “Exploring Issues and Perspectives”**
 - c. Round 3 “Looking Ahead”**
- 4. Take notes.** Invite someone in your group to record key points or themes from each round. You can rotate this role so everyone participates. If you prefer, you can also record the session (audio or video) to support note-taking afterward.
- 5. Record** your group’s top 3–5 ideas for each question in the workbook.
 - a. (Optional)** Include any drawings, photos or visuals that capture your ideas.
- 6. Submit** your completed workbook by email or drop off at the RDCK Creston office 531b 16th Avenue South by **April 30, 2026**.



sustainability@rdck.bc.ca



**RDCK Creston Office at 531b
16th Avenue South**

HOW YOUR INPUT WILL BE USED

Your discussion will help identify shared values, challenges, and priorities for the Goat River Water Sustainability Plan. A “What We Heard” summary will be posted at <https://engage.rdck.ca/projects/goatwatershed> and shared with the RDCK board in a report in spring 2026. Your ideas and stories help shape a shared vision for a resilient, healthy Goat River Watershed.

GOAT RIVER WATERSHED KITCHEN TABLE DISCUSSION - GETTING STARTED

Host Opening: Thank you for coming together to talk about the water that sustains this valley, the water we drink, farm with, and swim in, and that supports the forests, fish, and wildlife around us. The Goat River Watershed is changing. The river's flows are getting lower in late summer, droughts are becoming longer and more frequent, and the timing of rain and snow is shifting. These changes affect everything, from our wells and crops to fish habitat and the health of the land itself.

This is a chance to share what you have seen, what matters most to you, and what you hope for the future. Together, we can start building a shared understanding of what a healthy, sustainable watershed could look like, one where water flows year-round, ecosystems thrive, and people and the land can support each other into the future. With that in mind, let's start by talking about how you connect with water where you live.

ROUND 1 – STARTING THE CONVERSATION

Questions	Description/Examples
How do you connect with water where you live?	Think about everyday ways water is part of your life—watering a garden, swimming in the Goat River, drawing from a well, or simply turning on the tap.
Have you noticed any changes in local water or the land around it?	People might talk about things like creeks running lower, water being warmer in summer, more algae, or earlier snowmelt. No right or wrong answers—just what you've seen or heard.
What makes the Goat River Watershed important to you or your community?	This could be clean drinking water, local farming, fish and wildlife, recreation spots, or simply the beauty of the river and its surroundings.



ROUND 2 – EXPLORING ISSUES AND PERSPECTIVES

Questions	Description/Examples
When it comes to water use and care, what seems to be working well, and what could be improved?	Think about everyday ways water is part of your life—watering a garden, swimming in the Goat River, drawing from a well, or simply turning on the tap.
How do activities in the valley, like farming, or development, connect to water?	Keep it open. People might mention how irrigation, housing growth, or recreation affect creeks, wells, or the river.
What makes it easier or harder for people to use and protect water responsibly?	Barriers could include cost, lack of information, or time. Supports might be things like local programs, community awareness, or shared tools.



ROUND 3 – LOOKING AHEAD

Questions	Description/Examples
How can residents, farmers, local government, and yaqan nu?kiy work together to care for water?	Invite ideas about teamwork—maybe better communication, shared monitoring, school projects, or planning ahead for droughts and floods.
What would a healthy Goat River Watershed look or feel like 25 years from now?	Encourage imagination—maybe flowing creeks, reliable wells, good water quality, healthy forests, and people working together to protect it.
What gives you hope about the future of water in this area?	A chance to end on a positive note—what inspires confidence, whether it's community involvement, youth engagement, or local action already underway.

Host Closing: Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts and experiences. Every story, memory, and idea adds to our understanding of how people connect with water in the Goat River Watershed. What you've shared today will help paint a clearer picture of what's important to this community and what a sustainable future could look like here.

KITCHEN TABLE WORKSHEETS

HOST AND PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Host name(s): _____

Community or organization (optional): _____

Number of participants: _____

Ages (optional):

- Under 18
- 18–34
- 35–54
- 55–64
- 65+

Contact for Submission

Email: _____

Phone number: _____



Discussion Notes

Round #: _____

Date: _____

Top 3–5 Ideas, Themes, or Key Points from the Discussion:

Additional Notes

Discussion Notes

Round #: _____

Date: _____

Top 3–5 Ideas, Themes, or Key Points from the Discussion:

Additional Notes

Discussion Notes

Round #: _____

Date: _____

Top 3–5 Ideas, Themes, or Key Points from the Discussion:

Additional Notes