

GOAT RIVER WATERSHED WATER SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING JULY 2 2026 UPDATE



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LOWER KOOTENAY BAND

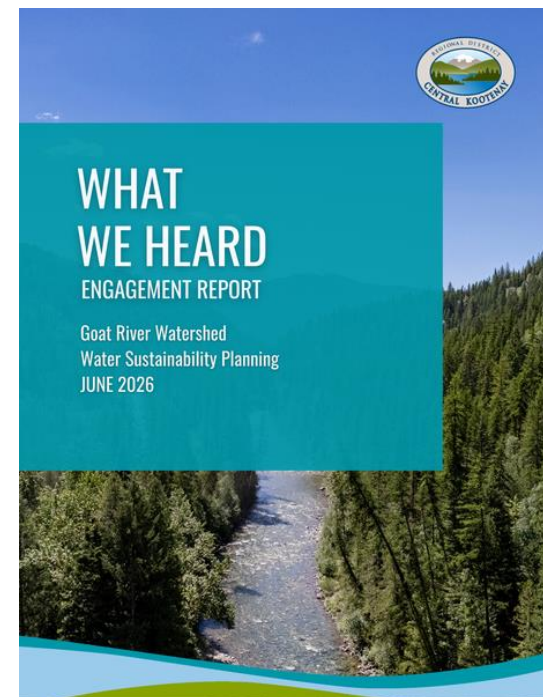
WHAT WE HEARD ENGAGEMENT REPORT

The What We Heard Engagement Report is now available.

This report summarizes input gathered October 2025 – April 2026. It is a record of what the community shared, organized into themes that can help guide the next phase of planning, technical work, and continued engagement. This report does not present decisions.

WHERE TO FIND IT

engage.rdck.ca/projects/goatwatershed



HOW INFORMATION WAS GATHERED

Water Values Survey

220 responses

Open Houses — 6 communities

Canyon · Erickson · Kitchener · Town of Creston · West Creston · Wynndel

137 participants

Producer Engagement Initiative

15 on-farm visits

Kitchen Table Conversations

1 submission



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WHAT WE HEARD MAJOR FINDINGS

SEVEN THEMES EMERGED FROM ENGAGEMENT

- 1 Changing Water Conditions**
Lower levels, drying creeks, shifting freshet timing
- 2 Water Availability & Seasonal Reliability**
Water available in spring; demand peaks July–August
- 3 Infrastructure, Storage & System Efficiency**
Pressure inconsistencies, leakage, metering, cost equity
- 4 Land Use, Forestry & Watershed Health**
Strong connection between logging, land clearing, and water
- 5 Governance, Fairness & Accountability**
Licensing delays, unclear roles, desire for direct dialogue
- 6 Communication, Trust & Shared Learning**
Plain-language updates; confidence that input is used
- 7 Local Adaptation, Practical Ideas & Vision**
Drip irrigation, on-farm storage, soil health, long-term planning

76%
reported changes in
water conditions

**Consistent across all streams:
water quantity in the
Goat River Watershed is declining.**



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RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Strengthen the evidence base while keeping lived experience visible

Technical work on groundwater and hydrology responds to what communities described

2

Address water availability through system improvements and demand-side action

Infrastructure assessment, storage, and water-efficient practices — neither alone is sufficient

3

Keep land use, forestry, and ecological health central to the conversation

Forestry, riparian health, wetland function, and soil management belong at the table

4

Clarify roles and establish more direct communication channels

Provincial vs. RDCK responsibilities were a source of genuine confusion for producers and residents

5

Plan for the long term across the full range of watershed priorities

Household water security, agricultural viability, ecosystem health, and fairness are interconnected

WHAT'S NEXT

- ➔ Phase 3 continues: focused conversations with residents, producers, irrigation districts, and industry
- ➔ Preliminary Assessment of Hydraulic Connectivity, a technical study on how water moves through the watershed.
- ➔ Collective Conversations Working Group and Creston Valley Directors Workshops



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UPCOMING IN PERSON EVENTS

WEDNESDAY - JULY 8

Kootenay Farmers Supply Drop-in Event

11 am – 1 pm - Kootenay Farmers Supply
754 35th Ave South, Creston

Co-hosted with Ministry of Agriculture and Food staff

- Share perspectives on water conservation stages in the watershed
- Learn about the project and What We Heard Report
- Ask questions of RDCK and Ministry of Agriculture and Food staff
- Pick up a copy of the report and survey

FRIDAY - JULY 24

On the Land Gathering and CDCC Drop-in

9:30 – 11:30 am - Riverside Wilderness Park, Goat River
1:00 – 3:00 pm - Drop-in at Creston and District Community Complex (CDCC)

Facilitated by RDCK staff

- Hear an update on the planning process
- Discuss what sustainability means in practice for the watershed
- Share perspectives on a sustainable water future
- Connect with the project team and community members



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WATER SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING SURVEY

The next survey, building on the first

The first Water Values Survey (220 responses) told us that water levels are declining, that the community cares deeply, and that residents want action.

This survey goes further asking what a sustainable watershed looks like, what trade-offs residents will consider, and how water decisions should be made.

DEADLINE: August 1, 2026

Open June 18 – August 1 · Anonymous · 10–12 minutes

Input contributes directly to the **Collective Conversations Working Group**, the tripartite table of RDCK staff, yaqan nuʔkiy, and the Province.

WHERE TO FIND IT

Online

engage.rdck.ca/projects/goatwatershed

Paper copies

RDCK office — 531B-16 Avenue S, Creston

At events

July 8 and July 24 — return completed copies to the RDCK office

THE SURVEY ASKS

- Your vision of a healthy, sustainable watershed
- Trade-offs you are willing to consider
- How you think decisions about water should be made



WORKING GROUP AND WORKSHOPS WITH DIRECTORS

The **Collective Conversations Working Group** brings together staff from the RDCK, yaqan nu?kiy, and the Province. The aim is to scope a water management solution

The group will meet five more times between July and October to build shared understanding of conditions, roles and responsibilities, and priorities. To stay closely engaged, the Creston Valley Service Committee (CVSC) directors and RDCK staff meet monthly alongside the Collective Conversations Working Group. Learn more at engage.rdck.ca/projects/goatwatershed

! RDCK staff are not decision-makers in this process. The RDCK Board holds that authority. The Working Group may bring recommendations to the Board.



WE ARE HERE

UPCOMING MEETINGS

WORKING GROUP

July 9 and July 10

July 30

August 20

September 17

October 8

CRESTON VALLEY DIRECTORS

July 22

August 13

September TBD

October 7



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HOW TO STAY INVOLVED

READ THE REPORT

Read the [report](#) to see what was shared through engagement carried out in 2025 and into early 2026

Pick up paper copies at RDCK Office in Creston or at in-person events in Creston

FILL OUT THE SURVEY

Share what a healthy, sustainable watershed looks like to you, what trade-offs you are willing to consider, and how you think decisions about water should be made.

It takes approximately 10 to 12 minutes to complete. All responses are anonymous.

JOIN THE MAILING LIST

Stay up to date on the Goat River Watershed Water Sustainability Planning Project.

Sections include:

- latest news
- Ways to get involved
- Feature stories
- Did you know?

SPEAK TO RDCK

Do you have questions about the project or process or want to share your perspective and watershed stories?

Contact your Area Directors or RDCK staff.

Contact information can be found at rdck.ca/board for Directors or at the link below for project staff

engage.rdck.ca/projects/goatwatershed



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JULY TIMELINE

WHAT IS HAPPENING THIS MONTH

	Week of Jul 6	Week of Jul 13	Week of Jul 20	Week of Jul 27
Working Group Meetings	Jul 9 and July 10 Meeting #2			Jul 30 Meeting #3
Elected Officials Engagement			Jul 22 — CVSC Directors Values & Issues	
Public Engagement	Survey open (closes Aug 1)			
	Jul 8 — Producer Event Kootenay Farmers Supply		Jul 24 — On the Land Gathering Riverside Wilderness Park and Drop in at CDCC	
Hydraulic Connectivity	Jul 3 — RFP submissions close	Jul 17 — Proposals reviewed		
C2C Coordination	Ongoing — yaqan nu?kiy & RDCK			
Board & Communication	Jul 2 — CVSC	Jul 16 — RDCK Board		