



Methow Watershed Council Water 2066

Final Report

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Dally Environmental
Washington Water Trust



Water 2066 Report

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Section 1: Introduction

Water 2066 - Project Understanding

Water 2066 is a project spearheaded by the Methow Watershed Council (MWC) to capture the Methow Valley community vision for the valley in the year 2066, and develop water management policies to realize that vision. Given the contentious history of water management in the Methow, MWC believes that viable water policy solutions must be collaborative and firmly rooted in a community-supported vision for the Valley that is informed by the diverse interests and shared values of the people who live here. As such, the first phase of Water 2066 has four goals:

- Identify specific shared community values and disagreements about the water supply vision for the Methow Valley over the next 50 years, using a set of water management questions;
- Identify pathways to reconciling disagreements within the community and between the Stakeholders;
- Identify significant legal, political, financial, cultural, and regulatory challenges to implementing each shared value;
- Determine the next steps needed to enact the identified vision.

This report covers the first phase of the Water 2066 process. The first phase was organized into four tasks:

- Task 1 – Project Scoping
- Task 2 – Community Outreach (Workshops and Surveys)
- Task 3 – Interested Party Outreach (previously referred to as Stakeholder Outreach)¹
- Task 4 – Final Report

In preparation for the community outreach, MWC worked with the facilitation team (Washington Water Trust (WWT) and Dally Environmental (DE)) to craft water management questions to solicit specific solutions and the community's long-term vision. The questions were carefully framed to avoid water management and land-use jargon, to avoid any perception of preference on the part of the team, and to foster broad understanding of the issues.

¹ The Task 1 Project Scoping Plan, Task 2 Community Outreach Plan, and Task 3 Interested Parties Plan are included in Appendix I.

This first phase employed two methods to engage the broad Methow Valley community and garner its opinions. First, MWC held three public workshops in the towns of Methow and Twisp where the community gathered to provide input on water and land use issues. MWC also disseminated surveys in hard copy and online formats on the same issues. Second, MWC, through its facilitators, interviewed tribal and local governments, and other interested entities on the same issues. Interviews were requested with the following interested parties:

- The Confederated Bands and Tribes of the Yakama Nation
- The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Nation
- The Farm Bureau
- The Town of Twisp
- The Town of Winthrop
- The Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Methow Valley Salmon Recovery Fund
- The Methow Valley Irrigation District and Wolf Creek Irrigation District, and Jeff Zwar (Senior Water Right Holder)
- Methow Valley Citizens Council
- Okanogan Wilderness League
- Methow Conservancy

This first phase report attempts to capture the community's vision(s) for the Methow Valley to better understand points of common interest and agreement, as well as differences. Only with that self-understanding can the community begin to discuss challenging water management issues and coalesce around collaborative solutions to the complex water issues facing the Methow Valley now, and in the future.

This two-part process of determining the community's vision as an anchor for future water management decisions and engaging appropriate, interested parties who can impact policy change to achieve that vision for the landscape provides a collaborative alternative to current water use disputes.

Drivers

Current water management statutes and rules have major impacts on water use and land use in the Methow Basin. There are many drivers for the Water 2066 efforts, including:

- Municipal water shortages/limitations
- Limits on growth due to concerns about misalignment between the Growth Management Act (GMA) and water policy
- Protecting and preserving agricultural lands and economy

- Instream flow shortfalls/salmonid and aquatic species impacts
- Drought planning and future water supply to address climate change impacts
- Concerns about threats from fire
- Lack of affordable housing
- Concerns about transfers of water out of the Valley

Section 2: Results from Community Workshops and Surveys

Overview

To achieve the MWC's goal of assessing peoples' opinions across the Methow Valley Community, the facilitation team assisted the MWC in structuring and conducting three community workshops in September and October of 2019. The community workshops featured six workstations organized around broad water and land-use management issues. Each station featured specific questions developed by the facilitation team and approved by the MWC and Water 2066 Initiating Committee. The workshop outreach efforts, water management questions and workshop station design are described in the Task 2 Community Outreach Plan (Appendix I).

The facilitation team also created a survey based upon the water management questions prepared for the community workshops. In September and October 2019, MWC distributed the survey electronically on the Survey Monkey platform and in hard copy for those members of the community who could not attend one of the three community workshops. A copy of the survey is included as Appendix II.

A significant number of community members were able to provide input into the Water 2066 process through either attending a public workshop or responding to the survey:

September 18, 2019: Twisp Community Center	– 53 Attendees
September 19, 2019: Twisp Community Center	– 49 Attendees
October 27, 2019: Methow Community Center	– 8 Attendees
Survey responses via Survey Monkey	– 44 Responses
Survey responses via mail	– <u>5 Responses</u>
	159 community members

A breakdown of areas of the Valley represented in the community input is shown below in Table 1. Figure 1 provides a map of the Methow Watershed.

Table 1: Community Outreach Statistics

9/18	9/19	10/27	Online or Mail Surveys	Total	Reach	-
3				3	Headwaters	1.9%
1	6		6	13	Chewuch	8.2%
7	10		9	26	Upper Methow	16.3%
11	7	1	15	33	Middle Methow	21.4%
8	11	6	13	40	Lower Methow	23.9%
11	5	1	4	20	Twisp River	13.2%
4	2		2	8	None noted	5.0%
8	8			16	Did not sign in--head count estimate	10.1%
53	49	8	49	159	Total	

Workshop and Survey Results

I. Vision for the Methow Basin (Workstation 1 and Survey Question 1)

In this community engagement phase of Water 2066, the facilitation team endeavored to capture the broadest range of opinions possible from the community. Therefore, in station one of the community workshops, and question one of the hard copy and online surveys, the community was asked: What is your vision for the Methow Valley 50 years from now? This “vision question” elicited full-spectrum, diverse, and sometimes contradictory responses.

During the three workshops, attendees recorded their responses on post-it notes or by hand on large vision boards. A separate vision board was provided for each workshop. In addition, 49 survey responses were submitted to the vision question. The facilitation team reviewed the responses from the workshops and surveys which revealed broad themes and unique points in the responses. The responses were grouped according to those themes and specific points, then tabulated in Table 2.

It is important to note that some respondents at the workshops and to the surveys raised multiple points or goals for the Methow Valley in 2066. In short, the chart below cannot be read as one goal or point per respondent. Conversely, some survey respondents skipped the “vision question,” but completed most if not all of the more specific survey questions. Also, there may have been workshop participants who chose to bypass the “vision” station. Finally, it should be noted that participants in the workshops sometimes responded to the opinions of others. Some people wrote “me too” or the equivalent next to opinions expressed on the vision board. People who responded by survey did not have the benefit of that interaction.

With those caveats, the majority vision for the future of the Methow Valley is multipronged, but largely interrelated. Two themes received the most votes. The most common theme is the hope that the Methow Valley will continue to balance agriculture, the environment, economic diversity and cultural diversity, within a thriving sense of community (24 votes). Several individuals succinctly summed up this sentiment: “Like the Methow is now, only better.” Equally strong sentiment was expressed for the hope that future residential growth occurs within or near existing towns (24 votes).

Close in support to those two themes is the community’s hope that future Methow Valley is characterized by sustainable agriculture that is both pesticide free and conserves water (20 votes). That aspiration underscores the community’s ecological concerns and support for local food production.

Another popular theme is that the Methow Valley in 2066 will maintain and preserve instream flows to support fish and wildlife (15 votes). Concern for the future ecological health of the Methow Valley is also expressed in many specific points—from support for healthy forests to beaver dams. Dovetailing with this concern for water and ecological health is concern that communities and families have enough water in 2066.

Another common theme, expressed in several specific opinions, is for the future affordability of the Methow Valley. Some people are concerned about the availability of affordable housing and family-wage jobs. Some fear that the Methow Valley may become the province of the wealthy or overly dependent on seasonal tourism jobs.

In sum, the “vision question” responses express deep appreciation for the current balance between the agricultural base and the forestlands of the Methow Valley, and concern that future residential growth will disrupt that balance unless concentrated in or around existing towns. There is widespread recognition that wise use of water is essential to the Methow Valley’s future.

Table 2: Methow “Vision” Responses (Workstation 1 and Survey Question 1)

Vision/Theme	9/18	9/19	10/27	Surveys	Totals
Local sustainable agriculture (pesticide free etc.) that minimizes water use	7	8	0	5	20
Future residential growth in or near towns (and water reallocated to enable in town growth)	14	3	2	5	24
Maintenance of instream flows and recovered and diverse fish and aquatic species	4	6	0	5	15
Voluntary embracing of sustainable lifestyle and economy	2	0	0	0	2
Shift from a capitalist economy	1	0	0	0	1
Healthy and abundant wildlife	3	0	0	0	3

Healthy forests	3	0	0	0	3
Fire-wise development and green buffers around homes to prevent fire damage	4	0	2	0	6
Affordable housing	0	0	1	2	3
Senior housing and co-housing with medical support	1	0	0	0	1
Thriving recreational opportunities and tourism (with water to support them)	2	0	0	0	2
Sustainable logging industry	2	0	0	0	2
Beaver dams	1	1	0	1	3
Shared community vegetable gardens	1	0	0	0	1
A community that does not fight over water	1	0	0	1	2
Adequate water for families	1	0	0	0	1
No more 5-acre parcels for residences (20 plus acres)	2	0	0	0	2
Science based, community decision-making	2	0	0	0	2
Commitment from the community to sustainable water use, energy use and land management	4	0	0	0	4
More stream gages	1	0	0	0	1
Local family-wage jobs	2	0	0	0	1
Putting more water into trust to protect against uncertainty	1	0	0	0	1
More use of recycled water	2	0	0	0	2
Greater support for the arts	2	0	0	0	2
Promote/maintain current balance of agriculture, healthy environment, economic diversity, cultural diversity and sense of community (concern that MV may only be affordable for the wealthy)— "Like Methow is now only better"	0	5	2	17	24
Get cattle out of streams and off fragile soils	0	2	0	0	2
Find solution for existing homes that do not have a legal water supply	0	1	0	0	1
Regreening of relinquished agricultural fields	0	1	0	1	2
Light industry/commercial development compatible with water availability	0	1	1	0	2
Metering (more efficient use of water incentivized)	0	0	0	1	1
Economic sustainability and jobs	0	0	0	2	2

II. Water Priorities (Workstation 2 and Survey Questions 2 & 3)

The general tone at both Twisp workshops was consistent at the Water Priorities station. Members of the public expressed great concern over the future water availability in the Methow Valley and were eager to share and discuss their opinions on how it should be prioritized.

At the September 18th workshop conversations, station participation showed strong support for instream flows for fish and vibrant towns. It was clear that the citizens who elected to participate had a basic understanding of the importance of the Methow Basin for salmonids. It was also apparent that there was a strong sense of place for the towns in the Methow. Citizens were concerned about the long-term viability of the towns and their ability to survive economically and recruit new residents. Agriculture also received fairly strong support at the station, and conversations revealed that some of this support was aimed at preventing future residential development on the working landscape. Some consideration and conversation revolved around the importance of some commercial and industrial use in the future. Water availability for future rural residential development was also a frequent topic and received some support at the station.

The September 19th workshop was fairly similar to the first. Instream flows for fish and vibrant towns remained the highest priorities at the work stations. Water for agriculture was also a high priority. Most interestingly, there was no recorded support for the future rural residential category. Conversations revealed concern over other resource needs to accommodate rural residential development. Many of these conversations were focused on the additional wildfire protection needed for more rural development.

The Lower Valley workshop held in October yielded slightly different priorities. Agriculture ranked highest, and instream flow for fish and vibrant towns were next in order of priority, although only five people voted.

Responses to the survey also indicated strong priority for water for towns, instream flows for fish and agriculture, in that order.

Appendix III provides all scores for Station 2 by workshop date and for the water priority question in the surveys. A cumulative tally of all responses is presented in Table 3 below. When considering all of the community input, the top three priorities are: Instream Flows for fish (weighted score of 223), and Vibrant Towns and Agriculture (both with weighted scores of 208).

Table 3: Station 2 – Priority Water Use

(Totals from Workstation 2 and Survey Questions 2 and 3)

	First Priority	Second Priority	Third Priority	Total votes	Weighted Score²
Agriculture	24	56	24	104	208
Commercial use	3	2	6	11	19
Future residential use	7	7	14	28	49
Industrial use	1	3	3	7	12
Instream flow for fish	50	22	29	101	223
Instream flow for recreation	0	6	9	15	21
Vibrant towns	37	31	35	103	208

III. Water Needs (Workstation 3 and Survey Questions 4 – 6)

Community members did not articulate many unmet water needs at the workshops. People felt that they personally had enough water, but worried that other uses (primarily fish and agriculture) wouldn't have enough water into the future. Many people at this station also expressed concern for the future "I have enough water now, but that might change with climate change/increasing water use." Results from the Water Needs questions posed both at the three workshops and in questions 4 through 6 on the survey are presented in Tables 4 through 6, respectively. Table 6 provides narrative responses to the question "What are your unmet needs regarding water availability? It should be noted that for this question we received very few responses that were personal and expressing the unmet needs of the respondent. Most responses were continuations of responses to the prior question (question 5 in the survey).

² Weighted scores on priorities: Each vote for first priority was assigned three points, each vote for second priority was assigned two points, and each vote for third priority was assigned one point.

Table 4: Water Concerns (Workstation 3 and Survey Question 4)

Are you concerned about lack of water for your vision of the community?

	9/18	9/19	10/27	Surveys	Total
Yes	26	22	5	33	86
No	4 ¹	0		11	15
Other	Slightly concerned enough water for some growth	Only about rule reservations that prioritize domestic over flows	Yes and no. Yes if the community works together; no if it does not	Not worried if no further growth occurs.	
No answer	1	2		3	

One respondent thought numbers were exaggerated to limit growth. Others think we have a management/allocation problem. Another thinks the 2 cfs reserves are too much.

Table 5: Water Concerns (Workstation 3 and Survey Question 5)

What are the current and future issues you are concerned about?

	9/18	9/19	10/27	Surveys	Total
Climate change	19	13	3	11	46
Over-development	5	7		11	23
Waste of water (over use by ag; bad (thirsty) crop choices; open irrigation ditches; general waste	6	3		9	18
The inflexibility of the Methow rule (reservations)	3	1		1	5
Impediments to Storage opportunities	2	3		2	7
Fish being prioritized over people (and the economic sustainability) e.g. basin closures	1	0		4	5
Enough water for towns (including group domestic)	5	5	1	9	20
Enough water for agriculture	4	6		3	13
Enough water for small business	1	0		0	1
Healthy biodiverse streams	5	5		9	19
Exempt wells (overuse and lack of accountability)	3	4		3	10
Demand exceeding supply/population growth	8	3		5	16
Low instream flows	5	6		12	23
Lack of recharge from shutting off irrigation ditches	1	1		2	4
Transfer of water out of the Valley	5	2		10	17
Price of water is too low	1	0		0	1

Lack of water quality	1	0		0	1
Lack of data on water use	3	4	1	1	9
Water projects being built that harm water rights	1	0		0	1
Domestic wells drying	1	1		3	5
Water for fire protection		2		5	7
Impediments to reallocating water		1			1
Flooding due to fire damage				1	1
Overallocation of water rights				1	1
Loss of ag water rights to water banking for growth				1	1
Regulations that favor group B systems				1	1
Lack of water for recreation			1		1
Lax enforcement of Methow rule			1		1

Table 6: Unmet Water Needs (Workstation 3 and Survey Question 6)

What are your unmet needs regarding water availability?

9/18 Personal Unmet Needs:
<p>Respondent is concerned that his or her property value will be harmed by the lack of water availability</p> <p>The respondent cannot irrigate his/her garden in April and October: no water available from MVID.</p> <p>Respondent worries that his or her domestic and irrigation well will be cut off by a senior during shortages.</p>
9/19 Personal Unmet Needs:
<p>Having enough water for fire prevention and garden watering from a domestic well.</p> <p>Respondent's small farming use cannot be satisfied with a domestic well.</p> <p>Lack of assistance with maintenance of respondent's water right and for open space of small parcels (3-10 acres)</p> <p>The "drying out" of respondent's well or impairment from new exempt wells.</p>
10/27 Personal Unmet Needs:
<p>Will there be enough water for my grandchildren to drill a well?</p> <p>Could use more water (if available) for agricultural purposes.</p>
Surveys Personal Unmet Needs

The expense of maintaining a green buffer for fire protection around home.
Three Respondents are concerned about having enough water for domestic use and garden from exempt well now and in the future.
Can't sell real property because of basin closures
No mandate or even request that other ditch users conserve water during drought.

IV. Water Use and Transfers (Workstation 4 and Survey Questions 13 through 15)

Workstation 4 asked a cluster of questions about the transfer of water. The questions were designed to elicit opinions about transfers from agricultural uses to different purposes within the Methow Valley, such as augmenting instream flows or supplying water for growth in towns, as well as transfers out of the Valley.

The first question focused on people's views of whether agriculture rights should ever be switched to other uses. This question reflects the concern that agricultural lands should not be "dried out" for any reason—a concern that was voiced by a solid minority of the participants. (21 votes or 18%). Another 29 individuals wanted more information before expressing an opinion. Even among those that expressed support for the transfer of agricultural right (64 votes or 56%), some individuals qualified their support with restrictions such as only for instream flows or only if the water stayed "in the Valley."

The second question was designed to probe the negative responses to the question of whether agriculture rights should ever be switched to other uses. However, many respondents apparently read the question differently at both the workshops and in the survey responses because many individuals who supported transfers in answer to the first question also answered the second. Nevertheless, a little less than half of those who answered "no" to whether agriculture rights should ever be switched to other uses, responded similarly to the second question: reflecting an openness to agricultural practices that conserved more water as long as lands were kept in production. Twenty-two votes needed more information before expressing an opinion.

Question 9 asks whether transfers should be allowed out of the Methow Valley. The answer was a resounding "no." That strong answer reflects the many comments of attendees at the community workshops who expressed dismay about the proposed Lungren water right sale to Crown Columbia LLC.

Tables 7 through 9 (below) present the responses to three questions posed to the community regarding water use and transfers in the Methow Valley.

Table 7: Water Use and Transfers (Workstation 4 and Survey Question 13)

Would you support changing an agricultural right to other uses, such as for towns, community water systems or instream flow for fish? ^{1,3}

	9/18	9/19	10/27 (3rd Workshop)	Surveys	Totals
Yes	24 ²	10	1	29 ³	64
No	5	2	6	8	21
Need more information	14	7	0	12	29

Specific comments:

¹9/18: 4 votes yes said only for instream flows; one vote yes said only for towns.

9/19 one yes vote said only for instream flows.

² 9/18: One response said: We need to retain adequate water for ag; but do we need 4 ac/ft/A? Home ag water could be redirected to instream flow. Evaluated ag needs and make informed decisions.

³ Three responses said "yes" only if the water remained in the valley; another said "yes" if only for local food production; and another said "yes depending upon the use."

Table 8: Water Use and Transfers (Workstation 4 and Survey Question 14)

If not, would you support such a transfer if the land stayed in agricultural use (for example by using crops that required less water and the remaining water could be transferred)?

	9/18 ⁵	9/19	10/27 (3 rd Workshop)	Surveys	Totals
Yes	18 ¹	4	7	29 ²	58
No	3	1 ³	1	7	12
Need more information	6	4	0	12 ⁴	22

9/18: Yes to the second question with this qualification: "if the land had future opportunity to regain water if agricultural use/requirements changed and the water right is not transferred out of the watershed."

² One respondent's "yes" is qualified by "not for development if the 2 cfs reservation rule is retained."

³ 9/19: I don't support transferring, but I do support leasing water rights."

⁴ Three respondents who wanted more information noted that any transfer should enhance local sustainability; a fourth wondered what ag would survive given climate change.

⁵ 9/18. 3 yes votes endorsed "ag incentives for conservation".

Table 9: Water Use and Transfers (Workstation 4 and Survey Question 15)

Should we allow the permanent transfer of water rights out of the Methow Basin?

	9/18	9/19	10/27 (3 rd Workshop)	Surveys	Totals
Yes	0	0	0	0	0
No	45	19	11	49	124
Need more information	0	0	0	2	2

V. Land Use Concerns (Workstation 5 and Survey Questions 7 – 12)

The Land Use Workstation and Survey Questions touch on a number of issues influenced by water availability including residential density, economic development, residential and commercial growth, group domestic use and domestic water use for small business activities. A summary of responses to each of these questions is addressed below, by question and topic area.

Residential and Commercial Growth – Question 7

Recognizing that a certain level of future residential and commercial development is inevitable, a. Where and how would you ideally like to see it occur, and b. Do you want to see more residential development in towns versus outside of towns?

Overview

The majority of replies from valley residents supported locating additional residential and commercial growth in existing towns with controlled water use. Replies to see more growth in towns as opposed to out-of-town were almost unanimous. A handful of replies supported commercial growth in existing towns and a balance of residential growth opportunities between town and out-of-town (rural vs. municipal growth). There was an overall aversity to sprawl. Exceptions included several respondents who did not oppose residential growth outside of towns because 'that's where people want to live' and two respondents who opposed any growth whatsoever. A number of replies suggested growth should be in a specific part of the valley (e.g., towns of Winthrop and Twisp, "lower valley", "middle valley", "upper valley." Some of these replies suggest a "not in my backyard" sentiment wherein valley residents don't want to see growth in the portion of the valley in which they live.

Although most replies were supportive of thoughtful growth in towns, there is still a general theme that all water supporting this growth needs to be used with controlled water use, lower use, metered use or robust conservation.

Replies to this question, both in the three community workshops and via survey responses were thoughtful and telling of the Methow community's sentiments on residential and commercial growth. The responses are significant and thus, general themes and repeated comments are listed in Appendix IV.

Tables 10 and 11 quantify the responses to Question 7 regarding residential and commercial growth.

Table 10: Land Use (Workstation 5 and Survey Question 7a)

Recognizing that a certain level of future residential and commercial development is inevitable, a. Where and how would you ideally like to see it occur?

General Replies¹	9/18	9/19	10/27	Surveys	Totals
Mostly within existing towns or adjacent to existing towns, in town centers, in a carefully planned way, clustered development (In incorporated towns of Winthrop, Pateros and Twisp and to a lesser degree in unincorporated towns of Mazama, Carlton, and Methow). Maintain large rural parcels for ag and open space, not on prime agricultural land.	19	12	5	32	68
Need a balance of residential between in town and outside of town/ balanced through zoning between county and towns.	3			2	5
Between Mazama and Twisp/ Concentrated in and around the towns of Winthrop and Twisp	1	2		2	5
Concentrated in Lower Methow	1	1		1	3
Middle Valley/Middle Reach		1	1		2
Valley Floor				1	1
Upper Valley - clustered near existing towns	1		2	1	4
Mid and Lower Valley				1	1
Commercial in town, residential out of town (that's what people want)	1			1	2
Commercial in town except ag and home-based business. Balance of residential in and outside of town. Avoid dense housing developments outside of town.	2				2
Lower, Middle, Upper Methow Reach - where water is available	1				1
Commercial development in towns, limit residential to 1/2 to acre parcels near towns, outside of towns, 20 acre parcels.		1			1
Under current zoning regulations -without illogical water policy WAC 173-548				1	1
No growth/stop growth/limit growth	1	1		2	4

Need to consider carrying capacity -endless growth not an option / Comp Plan is critical for measured control over future growth/where watershed capacity supports it, don't know but water conservation needs to be top priority	2	2			4
TOTAL Responses	32	20	8	44	104
1- See general themes in Appendix IV for more detailed responses					

Table 11: Land Use (Workstation 5 and Survey Question 7b)

Recognizing that a certain level of future residential and commercial development is inevitable, b. Do you want to see more residential development in towns versus outside of towns?

General Replies	9/18	9/19	10/27	Surveys	Totals
Yes, more in towns	28	21	8	39	96
No, more outside of towns	1			1	2
Indifferent but want lots available to live in towns	1				1
both in town and out of town				7	7
No more growth, need to understand carrying capacity	1			1	2
TOTAL Responses	31	21	8	48	108

Group Domestic Use - Question 8

Currently most of the water available in the valley for future growth (e.g., water from the 2 cfs reservation) can be used only for a residence located outside of towns with one well per parcel. How do you feel about allowing houses on adjacent lots to share a well and/or clustering residential development around small community water systems?

Overview

Many respondents at the community workshops were supportive of the idea of shared domestic use or clustering residential development around small community water systems (group domestic use) **assuming** it would result in water savings and limits and a more sustainable use of existing supply. Respondents who disagreed with shared domestic water use either wanted more water made available for towns (municipal use) or they wanted to limit full buildout. Two respondents wanted “NO MORE GROWTH,

NO MORE CONSUMPTION." Those who supported the concept of shared domestic well use stated many caveats. Similar or related caveats are grouped below:

- Only where water is available. Only for areas where inflows are met. Ok where water is plentiful and won't deplete downstream usage. First need to understand the potential cumulative effects of current consumption.
- Must be limited and metered to avoid overuse (many replies). Incorporate technology for water conservation and monitor. Clearly lay out the rules. Ensure requirements are being met in perpetuity. Must be done in a systematic way (not the way the county is currently randomly approving).
- Only near towns.
- Only for planned developments.
- Support clustered, sharing – if close to towns.
- OK to cluster development (and water use) if it results in more open space and decreased water use. NOT OK if it results in increased density or sprawl
- Not in favor of so many that we have "little towns" all over the valley (e.g., if it results in sprawl)
- Yes, only if it can be done in ways that don't increase development or population.
- Allow it, don't require it.
- A rule change will be necessary to allow uninterrupted group domestic use and I support this to allow group domestic water use under limited circumstances such as planned developments with metering.
- Community waier systems that are monitored are a better idea – keep them in (or close to) existing towns – keep the urban density high and reduce rural sprawl.
- OK if it does not allow for more development than the current rule.

Table 12 Summarizes the response to Question 8 about group domestic use.

Table 12: Land Use (Workstation 5 and Survey Question 8)

How do you feel about allowing houses on adjacent lots to share a well and/or clustering residential development around small community water systems?

General Replies	9/18	9/19	10/27	Surveys	Totals
Support shared domestic use or clustering residential development around small community water systems assuming it results in water savings and limits, it's done in a planned way, rules are followed, it results in more sustainable use of existing supplies, ok if instream flows are met, not ok if results in increased density or if it impacts downstream usage. Consider metering (1)	21	16	3	34	74
No - no sharing, rather see more water available to towns and/or limit full buildout in rural areas/ Not in favor of so many that it becomes "little towns" all over valley.	3		3	9	15
Don't know, need more information, mixed feelings, depends on whether we want a rule change	2	5	1	2	10
Only for planned developments				1	1
No - no more growth, no more consumption, or only among existing residents and homes	1			1	2
Yes, only in or near towns	2		1	1	4
TOTAL Responses	29	21	8	48	106
¹ Many caveats (see above)					

Economic Opportunity - Question 10

Would you like to see more economic opportunities/economic development in towns in the Methow Valley?

Overview

Community response to this question was generally in favor of increasing economic opportunities in the towns in the valley. Responses at the workshops were a resounding “yes” or “of course”, or “this is very important” or “some” with few exceptions. (51 positive replies – including all eight lower Methow Valley workshop surveys). Nine survey respondents disagreed with the concept of greater economic opportunities in Methow towns, either because they did not want any more growth in the Methow, or because they wanted to use existing business opportunities. Table 13 provides a tally of the community response to this question. General themes are as follows:

Pro-economic opportunity comments:

- People here need to be able to live and work in the valley. Next generation needs more sustainable jobs. Need family wage jobs so the next generation can stay here and thrive. Commerce is necessary.
- As long as that development is compatible with rural landscape and does not encourage sprawl. In towns only.
- Yes, but consider impacts to water quantity and quality – only if balanced water strategy supports it. Not uses that require large amounts of water. No large-scale commercial. No heavy water users.
- Use existing buildings and resources, only enough to support local people for a living. No large industrial development, nothing toxic.
- Only within current town limits
- Small scale/local – yes; Big ag, big stores – no.
- If economically viable. Somewhat but there are limits to what can work here.
- I really hope that by then, we've put sustainability at the center of every aspect of community/economic development

Dissenting Views:

- No, use existing business opportunities (i.e., Twisp Pub for sale)
- Not really – but if necessary, prefer to see growth in the towns
- No growth, no consumption

Other:

- Assess carrying capacity of this mountain valley first, promote water conservation as part of this.

Table 13: Land Use (Workstation 5 and Survey Question 10)

Would you like to see more economic opportunities/economic development in the towns in the Methow Valley?

General Replies	9/18	9/19	10/27	Survey	Totals
Yes, this is very important, yes with water conservation, yes within limits, yes if sustainable, only within current town limit, some, small scale, in towns	27	16	8	36	87
No/ No, use existing business opportunities/ Not really but if necessary, prefer to see it in towns	2	2		6	10

Some, not industrial use	1				1
Assess carrying capacity of the valley first, promote water conservation as a part of this.		1			1
No - no more growth, no more consumption	1	1		3	5
TOTAL Responses	31	20	8	45	104

Economic Opportunities -Question 11

What type of broader economic development opportunities would you like to see in the valley by 2066 that could support local jobs?

This question elicited a great number of economic development suggestions from the community. Suggestions from the three workshops and the survey are listed below.

1. More light manufacturing, non-polluting, light scalable industry supportive of local values and environment, local operations. Protective of the environment. In towns!
2. Technology jobs that don't require water beyond domestic.
3. Leverage recreation economy. Tourism/service industry/eco-tourism/ outdoor recreation/nature appreciation
4. Less emphasis on tourism (1 reply). Tourism is getting out of balance (1 reply)
5. Local urgent care/healthcare.
6. High speed internet connection to support working remotely (multiple replies)
7. Future jobs we can't even imagine.
8. Climate related technologies, green energy development, renewable energy projects, alternative energy development.
9. Shared office spaces.
10. More jobs for people to move/change/manage irrigation systems.
11. Local small scale agriculture. Sustainable ag. Support local farming and ranching. Local ag – buy food grown in the Methow. Agricultural tourism. Market for local produce. Farm to table ventures. (multiple replies)
12. Keep open space for agriculture – make it feasible to keep ag., organic farms. Biochar, composting, local small agricultural operations – small farms and market gardens, farm products
13. Maintain/support/nurture existing farms, ranches, tourism, smokejumper base.
14. Limited sustainable logging
15. A sawmill/biomass utilization facility that assists in making forest restoration economically feasible

16. NO MINING³
17. Expand vibrant artist community
18. Introduce a college or community college
19. No heavy or industrial water usage
20. Match custom, culture and resources: restore wood products industry associated with forest management, arts and performing arts, develop recreational opportunities accessible from towns or with transportation. Canning or packaging of local products.
21. Introduce transportation system to upper valley
22. Senior housing, assisted living. Services to support senior citizens – home remodeling, fix-it services, medical and fitness facilities
23. Recreation, timber, self-sustaining ag, energy, construction, arts, food
24. NONE unless they relate to climate mitigation (1 reply), NONE – save the fish (1 reply)
25. Figure out how much water is being consumed by existing permit exempt wells first, before we proceed with economic growth
26. Light commercial such as coffee roasters, brewpubs, appliance repair
27. Small manufacturing (light industrial) operations like Smiling Woods Yurts and the hand bag group in Twispworks.
28. Forest work and mill work. Businesses that make us a regional art center. Farming. Less cattle ranching (very bad contributor to climate change).
29. More year round recreational opportunities
30. More soft industrial/business opportunities outside of the towns.
31. Hub for online businesses. Wildfire-mitigation resources and services. Environmental research. Elder care and health care.
32. Biological research facility. Grant-funded habitat restoration. Solar panel installation.
33. Small scale industrial and tech
34. Methow made and grown products and services that have a light touch on the environment and that have a market outside of the valley

Domestic Water Use for Small Business - Question 12

Currently you cannot use water from exempt wells in rural areas for wedding venues, seasonal rentals, nightly rentals, small shops, light industry or to process goods from small farms. Do you support having water set aside for small scale business use in rural areas, including use of domestic well water to be used on small farms to process and sell farm goods?

³ The comment was written in all capitals.

Answers to this question were quite diverse, with no clear majority. Many supported use of domestic water for small scale home businesses, small farm goods production with proper oversight, and others supported the small farm use, but felt other business should be concentrated in towns. Many were open to the concept of allowing domestic water to be used for small enterprises with strict enforcement, limitations and metering. Some opposition to nightly rentals and wedding venues in rural areas outside of towns. Others supported all of the uses as a way to charge the local economy. Answers were similar among all three workshops. There was more opposition to use of exempt well water for these uses among survey respondents. Thirteen people were “not sure” or “needed more information” to respond. Table 14 presents the breakdown of replies by workshop and survey.

Table 14: Land Use (Workstation 5 and Survey Question 12)

Using exempt well water for small business

General Replies (1)	9/18	9/19	10/27	Surveys	Totals
Yes, with limitations and metering – such that conservation is sufficient. Criteria must be in place. Regulated to be low impact. Small-scale business only/offset water use	10	9	4	17	40
Yes, on small farms = 1/2 to 2 acres, not larger	2				2
NO PE wells for business uses outside of towns (Support allowing water use for businesses only in towns (not from PE wells)) AND yes on use of DW water on small farms to process and sell farm goods. Priority uses that are accessory to ag and if they stay below established limits for farm processing. If sold locally.	10	4	1	2	17
No				17	17
Water only for small farms and local businesses that support basic local-living needs (welding, heat, electrical)				1	1
Everything except no wedding venues		1			1
Do not support small scale business in rural areas, ok in unincorporated towns.	1	1			2
Yes, but not for nightly rentals	1	3			4

Yes, for small farm processing, no for nightly rentals, wedding venues, or light industry		1	1		2
No on businesses, maybe for ag depending on how much water they use	1	1			2
Not sure/need more info	3	2	1	7	13
Small business in limited capacity only, no on small farms, no on use of ag water	1				1
TOTAL Responses	29	22	7	44	102

VI. Water Storage (Workstation 6 and Survey Questions 16 and 17)

At the community workshops in Twisp and Methow, participants were asked, via a wall poster, if they thought that the community should explore storage options—and were asked to express the strength of their responses—from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Workshop participants frequently bypassed the poster; almost every participant assumed that the community should explore storage options. Many participants stated that the community had no choice but to explore storage options due to declining snowpack, drought, and forest fires.

Question 16 in the survey asked the identical question. The workshop and survey responses to the question of whether the Methow Valley community should explore storage options are recorded below in Table 16.

To dig deeper into the storage question, the community workshops used a second wall poster to probe the community's interest in specific storage options. The poster listed seven storage options and asked participants to identify which options should be explored and the strength of their opinions from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Workshop participants demonstrated strong interest in the various storage options, congregated around the storage options poster, while enthusiastically discussing the options among themselves and with the facilitator. Participants expressed general familiarity with many of the storage options listed. The primary takeaway is that workshop participants strongly support exploring storage options in the Methow Valley.

Similarly, question 17 of the survey asked respondents to opine on their interest in seven potential storage options. The workshop and survey responses to the question of which storage options the Methow Valley community should explore storage options appear below in Table 16. Results parsed by workshop date and survey can be found in Appendix V.

The responses received from the workshops and surveys show that, participants generally favored natural storage systems, such as beavers, over structured storage systems, such as human built dams. As noted in Table 16, a few participants suggested additional storage options—other than those proffered at the workshop-- such as cisterns. Those suggestions underscore the participants' high level of interest in storage and their personal interest and expertise in the topic. Finally, a few of the negative responses may reflect the participant's concern that a particular option, such as floodplain restoration, would not be physically feasible in the Methow basin.

Table 15: Water Storage (Workstation 6 and Survey Question 16)

Should our community explore storage options?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion	Need more information
9/18	21	2	2	0	0	3
9/19	12	7	0	0	0	0
10/27	7	0	0	0	0	0
Surveys	22	19	0	0	0	8
Totals	62	28	2	0	0	11

Table 16: Water Storage (Workstation 6 and Survey Question 17)

Support for different storage opportunities in the Methow

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion	Need more info
Beaver dams	72	16	1	0	4	4
Beaver dam analogs	33	19	8	2	11	12
Dams	11	8	10	47	4	14
Floodplain restoration	64	16	0	2	6	7
Forest management	64	23	1	1	4	8
Groundwater recharge from surface water	57	21	5	7	3	27
Off-channel reservoirs (no direct impact)	28	19	8	3	5	28
Rainfall storage & other individual actions	7	0	0	0	0	1

Section 3: Results of Interested Parties Meetings

Overview

As part of the collaborative approach to the Water 2066 process involving outreach to the community to determine their vision(s) as an anchor for future water management decisions, the MWC then identified interested parties to be interviewed by the facilitation team. At the request of the MWC, the facilitation team interviewed representatives of the Colville Tribes⁴, the towns of Twisp and Winthrop, the agricultural community, local environmental organizations, and organizations which are deeply invested in the Methow Valley. Interviewees were asked the same questions that were posed at the MWC workshops and in the community survey as outlined in the Task 3 Interested Parties Outreach Plan (Appendix I). The face-to-face interviews also afforded those interviewed the opportunity to articulate their concerns about the future of the Methow Valley and suggest their recommendations for addressing those concerns.

Representatives of the following entities were interviewed:

- The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Nation
- The Farm Bureau
- The Town of Twisp
- The Town of Winthrop
- The Department of Fish and Wildlife⁵
- Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation
- The Methow Valley Irrigation District and Wolf Creek Irrigation District, and Jeff Zwar (Senior Water Right Holder)
- Methow Valley Citizens Council
- Okanogan Wilderness League
- Methow Conservancy

Because the interviewees' opinions were elicited during discussions, rather than in response to specific questions, as in the electronic surveys, their opinions are summarized below by general topic. The full responses of the representatives to the interview questions appear in Appendix VI.

⁴ The facilitation team interviewed the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Nation and sent a written synopsis of the interview to them for approval. The Colvilles' opinions will be included when that approval occurs. The facilitation team also requested an interview with representatives of the Yakama Nation, and will include that information once the interview occurs. For those reasons, subheadings are reserved below for the responses of the Colvilles and the Yakamas.

⁵ WDFW only provided responses to a handful of the questions asked of the interviewees. Hence, not all of the topics listed below state WDFW responses.

Current and Future Water Needs for the Valley

The interviewees were asked to name their top priorities for future water use assuming a limited supply of water in the Methow Valley. The range of choices given to the interviewees were as follows: agriculture, vibrant towns, instream flows for fish, instream flows for recreation, commercial, industrial and future residential use.

I. Tribes

The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation of the Colville Reservation have deferred their comments on the Methow 2066 report to a subsequent update after council reviews have been completed.

Yakama Nation representatives have asked for clarification on the nature of any relationship between the Water 2066 process and the adopted Methow Watershed Plan before they can offer comments. Once the intersection of these efforts become more defined, MWC hopes to revisit conversations with the Yakama Nation.

II. Towns

The towns concur that vibrant towns are their top priority for where limited future water supply should be directed. The second preferred use is commercial and industrial use, the third is instream flow for recreation.

The towns are wrestling with the misalignment between land use regulations and water law. Winthrop is built out. Twisp has invested millions of dollars to purchase water, to improve water transmission systems and to conserve water to accommodate increased population growth within city limits. When Twisp procured more water after the moratorium was lifted, it experienced growth within town as to both new residences and new businesses. That new growth improved the affordability of housing and the new businesses provided jobs. Given the unprecedented population increase in Washington State, and in the Methow Valley, Twisp is struggling to project how much growth it can accommodate within its present water supplies.

III. Agricultural interests

The Farm Bureau, the Methow Valley and Wolf Creek Irrigation Districts, and a senior water right holder agreed that water for agriculture is their top priority in weighing the competing demands on the Methow Valley's limited supply of water. A second priority for most of the agricultural representatives was enough water for vibrant towns; enough water for industrial and commercial use ranked third.

The representatives of agricultural interests noted that they had enough water now—but looking forward—expressed concern about whether that would hold true with drought and climate change. Indeed, getting through drought is a current concern for agriculture. The Farm Bureau representative believes the watershed has the inherent

capacity to meet future needs but that water management practices and water regulation could create shortfalls.

IV. Conservation interests

Methow Conservancy (MC) and Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation (MSRF). The conservation interests are not fully aligned in their priorities for future water use. The MC's top priorities for future water use are: 1) instream flows for fish; 2) agriculture; and 3) vibrant towns. The MSRF views are all the potential future uses are equally important except for instream flow for recreation and industrial use. MSRF also rates industrial use least important.

V. Environmental groups

The Okanogan Wilderness League (OWL) and Methow Valley Citizens Council (MVCC) share the same top priority for future water use in the Methow Valley: instream flows for fish and wildlife. OWL's second priority is instream flows for recreation and its third is water for agriculture. MVCC's second priority is water for locally based agriculture and small farms, and its third is responsible development (both residential and commercial) in towns.

Water for Fish and Wildlife

I. Tribes

The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation of the Colville Reservation have deferred their comments on the Methow 2066 report to a subsequent update after council reviews have been completed.

Yakama Nation representatives have asked for clarification on the nature of any relationship between the Water 2066 process and the adopted Methow Watershed Plan before they can offer comments. Once the intersection of these efforts become more defined, MWC hopes to revisit conversations with the Yakama Nation.

II. Towns

Focusing development in the towns will keep water instream for fish and wildlife. Both towns seek to reduce their consumptive use of fresh water by exploring the use of recycled water (effluent contributions), adopting measures to reduce consumption in towns, and improving efficiencies.

III. Agricultural interest

Water for fish was not among the top three water use priorities for most of the agricultural representatives. The Farm Bureau representative pointed out that most of the water to meet Endangered Species Act requirements for endangered salmon in the Methow had come from agriculture. He also suggested that the Methow Valley could

bolster instream flows further based upon research from Colorado which indicated that thinning the forest canopy, and ancillary evapotranspiration, increases streamflow.

IV. Conservation interests

The MC would put water for fish first in balancing future water allocation and to sustain fisheries. The MC is concerned that climate change will reduce water available for fish and for agriculture. The MSRF expressed its concern that fish compete with agriculture for critical late season flows—and that if Washington water law incentivized conservation rather than waste (alluding to “use it or lose it”) that conflict could be lessened, and allow for better recovery of salmonids.

V. Environmental groups

OWL and MVCC strongly urged that the threatened and endangered species in the Methow Valley not only be sustained but recovered. MVCC specifically noted the future pressure that climate change will put on fish and wildlife, and the need for updated scientific information.

Future Residential Growth

I. Tribes

The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation of the Colville Reservation have deferred their comments on the Methow 2066 report to a subsequent update after council reviews have been completed.

Yakama Nation representatives have asked for clarification on the nature of any relationship between the Water 2066 process and the adopted Methow Watershed Plan before they can offer comments. Once the intersection of these efforts become more defined, MWC hopes to revisit conversations with the Yakama Nation.

II. Towns

Both Winthrop and Twisp are concerned that the towns will have sufficient water to accommodate future growth. Winthrop needs to double its current storage and production for its anticipated build-out as projected for 2028. Similarly, Twisp knows it will need more water and currently has land designated for residential, commercial, and industrial uses that cannot be developed without securing water. Twisp expressed the concern that if the town itself has insufficient water to accommodate future growth, pressure could mount to un-incorporate in order to allow future growth to access the remaining reserves for single domestic use permit exempt wells.

III. Agricultural interests

The agricultural representatives either expressed no opinion on where future residential growth should occur in the Methow Valley or stated that people should be free to choose where they wanted but encouraged towns to make in-town living attractive.

IV. Conservation interests

The conservation interests concur that future residential growth should occur in towns. Commercial and non-agriculture business should also be concentrated in towns. The MSRF additionally wants the current policy of only allowing domestic permit exempt wells for new single-family residences expanded to include community water systems (with multiple homes) and rural residential.

V. Environmental groups

OWL pointed out that development is not necessarily inevitable but if it occurs, it should be in towns. MVCC, similarly, wants future development to be concentrated in towns. MVCC also noted that some commercial and some residential development in unincorporated areas may be warranted if supplied by adequate, legally-available water. MVCC expressed concern that while infilling of subdivision is generally sensible to preserve open space, poor planning at existing subdivisions makes some of them exposed to wildfires. Infilling in those cases could exacerbate the fire risk.

VI. WDFW

The representative for WDFW wants future residential development to be concentrated in towns.

Future Economic Growth

I. Tribes

The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation of the Colville Reservation have deferred their comments on the Methow 2066 report to a subsequent update after council reviews have been completed.

Yakama Nation representatives have asked for clarification on the nature of any relationship between the Water 2066 process and the adopted Methow Watershed Plan before they can offer comments. Once the intersection of these efforts become more defined, MWC hopes to revisit conversations with the Yakama Nation.

II. Towns

Both Winthrop and Twisp support future economic growth tempered to preserve the character of the Methow Valley and its tourism industry, including existing commercial uses and restaurants. Both towns want more affordable housing to meet current and future needs, and small-scale, light industry to diversify the economy.

III. Agricultural interests

The agriculture spokespeople support multi-factored future economic growth: agriculture, forest products, restoring some ranching, mining, and creating a more artisan community.

IV. Conservation interests

Both conservation interests would like to see greater economic diversity consistent with the character of the Methow Valley—in other words no Walmart. The MC suggested exploring value-added timber products, broadening markets for local agriculturalists, and light manufacturing; diversifying the local economy beyond tourism.

V. Environmental groups

OWL believes that the Methow Valley has currently enough economic opportunities. Notwithstanding, any future economic opportunities should be in fish recovery jobs. MVCC supports a diverse economy and living within natural constraints. It supports new opportunities—depending upon what they are. MVCC would like to see future economic development in regenerative agriculture, (managed grazing, tree intercropping, perennial crops), large scale composting, and green energy infrastructure (pyrolysis, distributed solar, and bio-char).

VI. WDFW

WDFW supports commercial development occurring as far downstream as possible. Any sprawl that occurs should not be in the floodplains. A robust mitigation package with net ecological benefit is necessary to offset the water impacts from future economic development.

Changing the Methow Rule (and other laws) to Allow Group Domestic Use and Allow Small Businesses to Use Domestic Water.

I. Tribes

The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation of the Colville Reservation have deferred their comments on the Methow 2066 report to a subsequent update after council reviews have been completed.

Yakama Nation representatives have asked for clarification on the nature of any relationship between the Water 2066 process and the adopted Methow Watershed Plan before they can offer comments. Once the intersection of these efforts become more defined, MWC hopes to revisit conversations with the Yakama Nation.

II. Towns

The towns did not express an opinion as to whether the reservations in the Methow Rule should be changed, but additionally expressed concern about the likely risks of

opening up the rule. If a rule revision occurred, the towns would not support using that change to cluster residential development around small community water systems in the county. The towns want development to occur consistent with current zoning to preserve the overall rural character of the Methow Valley. In addition, the towns want an accounting of the reserves, as well as all other water uses, including the County itself. In tandem with an overall accounting, both towns call for wide-scale metering—including domestic use. Both towns have made significant investments in water conservation measures.

III. Agricultural interests

The representatives unanimously support changing the Methow rule and other regulations and laws to allow clustered development connected to permit exempt wells for domestic use. They also support changes in the law to allow the use of exempt wells for light industrial and commercial uses.

IV. Conservation interests

The MSRF cautions that opening up the Methow rule will trigger decades of litigation. The conservation interests noted the issue of enough water for housing is more a comprehensive planning and zoning issue as opposed to a problem with the Methow rule. The MC wants to see more affordable housing; the MSRF is concerned about nightly rentals (e.g., Airbnbs).

V. Environmental groups.

OWL and MVCC both support an accounting of water availability in the reservations (and generally). OWL wants to see a general adjudication to confirm what water is legally available and to take “relinquished water off the books.” OWL does not support small businesses using domestic water until a general adjudication answers the question of what water is available.

MVCC expressed skepticism that a rule change was realistic. But if the political interests aligned, MVCC would support a group domestic priority for exempt wells ONLY under specific planned development scenarios that accounted for “thoughtful growth” including wildfire danger, wildlife protection, and proximity to infrastructure and towns.

Rather than focusing on use of domestic water by small businesses, MVCC believes the larger concern is how small businesses with interruptible water supplies can meet Department of Health standards. MVCC cautions that having enough water for base flows for fish and wildlife should take precedence over commercial uses.

VI. WDFW

The WDFW representative noted the Methow rule's reservations are for exempt well uses, not for small-scale businesses. Other solutions are required for business needs, including repurposing existing water rights.

Repurposing Irrigation Rights to Meet Other Water Needs

I. Tribes

The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation of the Colville Reservation have deferred their comments on the Methow 2066 report to a subsequent update after council reviews have been completed.

Yakama Nation representatives have asked for clarification on the nature of any relationship between the Water 2066 process and the adopted Methow Watershed Plan before they can offer comments. Once the intersection of these efforts become more defined, MWC hopes to revisit conversations with the Yakama Nation.

II. Towns

The towns support changing agricultural rights to meet other needs.

III. Agricultural interests

The majority of agricultural representatives opposed repurposing irrigation rights; they “hate to see the browning of agriculture.” A minority view is since the continued attrition of agricultural uses is inevitable, the water should be repurposed to meet continuing domestic and potential light industrial needs.

IV. Conservation interests

Divergent views were expressed. The MC wants to maintain current agricultural land in production, and only then utilize conserved water from irrigation efficiencies and changes to less thirsty crops to augment flows for fish. The MSRF, conversely, supports changing agricultural water rights to other purposes generally but notes that the “devil is in the details”—especially in providing water for salmonids during critical periods.

V. Environmental groups

MVCC supports changing agricultural rights to other uses in limited circumstances. MVCC is “suspicious” of converting seasonal agricultural rights to year-round use, but strongly supports agricultural efficiencies that reduces consumptive use and returns water instream. OWL did not express an opinion.

Out of Basin Transfers

I. Tribes

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Yakama Nation representatives have asked for clarification on the nature of any relationship between the Water 2066 process and the adopted Methow Watershed Plan before they can offer comments. Once the intersection of these efforts become more defined, MWC hopes to revisit conversations with the Yakama Nation.

II. Towns

The towns oppose out of basin transfers.

III. Agricultural interests

Agricultural representatives unanimously and strongly oppose out of basin transfers. One representative suggested employing source switches for out of the basin needs to return to the Methow Valley water that was previously transferred out.

IV. Conservation interests

Both organizations oppose the transfer of water rights out of the basin. The MC cautioned that before a transfer is allowed, a study should be required to ensure that the transfer would benefit instream flow. The MSRF noted that any law stopping transfers could present a potential unjust takings problem under the Constitution. Compensation for both the personal property owner and the community would be required.

V. Environmental groups

OWL supports the transfer of water rights out of basin until the law is changed. MVCC strongly opposes out-of-basin transfers.

VI. WDFW

The WDFW representative stated that the water right holder determines to whom the water can be transferred.

Expanding the Storage of Water

The interviewees were asked if they supported expanding water storage generally, and then specifically presented a list of potential projects. The listed projects included the following: floodplain restoration, beaver dams, constructed beaver dam analogs, off-channel reservoirs, dams, ground water recharge from surface water, and forest management.

I. Tribes

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Yakama Nation representatives have asked for clarification on the nature of any relationship between the Water 2066 process and the adopted Methow Watershed Plan before they can offer comments. Once the intersection of these efforts become more defined, MWC hopes to revisit conversations with the Yakama Nation.

II. Towns

The towns strongly support expanding water storage. Both towns strongly disagree with building new dams, but otherwise agree with the other storage options suggested, such as groundwater recharge and forest management, or want more information before expressing an opinion.

III. Agricultural interests

Uniformly, the agriculture spokespeople strongly support increasing storage opportunities. They strongly support or support almost all the specific storage options presented. However, some of the representatives strongly oppose dams and oppose (or have concerns about) beaver dams.

IV. Conservation interests

Both conservation organizations support creating new storage. Both strongly oppose new dams. The MSRF expressed doubt as to whether beaver dams or beaver dam analogs could provide mitigation for new water uses. Otherwise both conservation organizations expressed support or the need for more information as to the other suggested storage options.

V. Environmental groups.

Both OWL and MVCC support exploring storage options although OWL points out that a lot of options have already been explored.

OWL strongly disagrees with new dams; MVCC opposes new dams on high country lakes and the idea of capturing high spring flows for late summer use. Both organizations strongly support floodplain restoration, with MVCC conditioning its support on adequate protection from development in Coastal Zone Management areas.

The other potential storage solutions that MVCC supports exploring are cisterns and rainwater collection. MVCC is cautious about reservoirs, and wants more information on all the potential impacts of proposed storage "solutions."

OWL expressed support for beaver dams but was neutral on beaver dam analogs. OWL needs more information on both groundwater recharge and forest management. It noted that the high degree of hydraulic continuity in the Methow Valley may preclude groundwater recharge options.

Interested Party Recommendations

I. Tribes

The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation of the Colville Reservation have deferred their comments on the Methow 2066 report to a subsequent update after council reviews have been completed.

Yakama Nation representatives have asked for clarification on the nature of any relationship between the Water 2066 process and the adopted Methow Watershed Plan before they can offer comments. Once the intersection of these efforts become more defined, MWC hopes to revisit conversations with the Yakama Nation.

II. Towns

If the Methow Rule is revised, water should be allocated for domestic (in-town) use rather than for single family development outside of towns. Metering should be required.

III. Agricultural interests

If the purpose of use for a water right is changed from agriculture to another out-of-stream use, it should be divided and distributed in thirds. For example, 1/3 for agriculture, 1/3 for fish, 1/3 for the other out-of-stream use. Streamflow can be improved with innovative forest management techniques. Future water needs could be addressed if we developed a mechanism to recapture relinquished water and apply it to those needs.

IV. Conservation interests

Both conservation interests decry the lack of science necessary to support the policy decisions made about water allocation, with a baseline of protecting sufficient flows for salmonids.

The MSRF and the MC want more monitoring of actual water use from exempt wells and community systems. The community needs to understand and agree upon how much water current residences use and need.

The MSRF and the MC also support creation of a water bank to be allocated to new consumptive uses, with a portion dedicated to instream flows.

The MC recommends that the Methow Valley seek a legislative framework (presumably similar to the Yakima Integrated Plan process) to bring the community together as part of opening up the Methow Rule. It also notes the tribal governments must be “at the table.” Finally, the MC recommends that the Methow Valley (or the MWC?) adopt a legislative education strategy to educate newly elected officials in the 12th District on water issues.

V. Environmental groups.

OWL cautioned against seeking changes in the Methow Rule before the community encouraged water transfers and sales, and required more efficiencies in towns.

OWL believes Twisp can have all the water it needs from the MVID but has to pay for it.

OWL believes a general adjudication is necessary that addresses both ground and surface water.

MVCC expressed support for measures to discourage water waste: metering of new buildings and efficiency incentives.

MVCC supports exploration of whether a water bank is feasible in the Methow Valley.

VI. WDFW

The representative from WDFW noted that the science behind the Methow Instream Flow rule should possibly be reexamined. He also suggested that:

- Twisp should purchase 1 cfs from Early Winters and that the purchase money be used to help construct a robust mitigation package.
- The towns restrict lawn size and/or require xeriscaping.
- The towns should also communicate to citizens when low flows are occurring to encourage conservation.
- The Methow Valley should examine the water policy measures Kittitas County and the City of White Salmon have employed.

Section 4: Observations and Recommendations for Next Steps

Observations

The community outreach in Phase One of the Water 2066 process confirmed that the people of the Methow Valley, as they look forward to 2066, have a single vision: they want the valley to remain the same... “only better.” The “better” that people envision is a community without contentious water issues and that is sustainable and resilient to forest fire and other threats from climate change. The vast majority of the Methow Valley community embraces the current balance between vibrant towns, thriving local-based agriculture, instream flows for fish and wildlife, and healthy forests. They want to

preserve that balance. Most people recognize that growth is inevitable and, consequently, want future residential growth concentrated near or around towns to preserve the Valley's agricultural base and open space. There is an undercurrent of concern that without a more diverse economic base that supports year-round, family-wage jobs, long-time residents and future generations could be priced out. Even though this project asked questions focused on water management and its overlap with land use, several people raised the shortage of affordable housing as a problem.

The community outreach effort also revealed that almost everyone in the Methow Valley is opposed to out-of-basin transfers. Most people support transfers within the basin to solve water problems, although that overall support is tempered by concerns about "drying out" agricultural lands and increased fire risk if land is not irrigated. Additionally, nearly everyone is supportive of exploring options for new storage, with a broad range of opinions as to what non-dam storage options might work or are worthy of investigation. A minority support exploring structural dams.

On the many other issues that phase one explored, perhaps not surprisingly, there is no strong consensus and a wealth of opinions. Nor is there consensus on whether there are problems and what those problems are. Some of the issues, both general and specific, that rose to the surface during the outreach include the following:

- Lack of certainty about how much water is available now and into the future
- Lack of water for all purposes in the future due to drought and climate change
- Lack of water for Winthrop and especially Twisp to accommodate future growth and to provide a viable economic base in the Valley
- Frustration that the current Methow Rule precludes using permit exempt wells for shared or group domestic use in clustered development outside of towns
- Concern that changing the Methow Rule reservations will deplete instream flows for fish and wildlife
- Limitations on the operations of certain small businesses in the county due to lack of access to uninterrupted water and zoning limitations
- Insufficient instream flows for fish and wildlife now and in the future
- Lack of protection from forest fires
- Shortage of water for irrigation during droughts
- Lack of affordable housing (in part because of water limits on new growth and zoning restrictions)

Recommendations for Next Steps

The thoughtful participation of the community and the interested parties in this first phase of Methow 2066 underscores their collective deep appreciation for the Methow Valley. The people of the Methow Valley are committed to preserving its unique character, and want to see it be "like it is now, only better" in 2066. There is shared concern about increased vulnerability to drought and forest fire due to climate change

in the next decades. There is a collective understanding that the Methow Valley must ensure that in 2066, sufficient water is available to support agriculture, vibrant towns, and the environment, including instream flows—but differences exist as to relative priorities. Based upon the community input, what follows are recommendations for potential next steps.

1. **Core Recommendation:** Initiate Phase 2 of Water 2066 to bring the Methow Valley community and interested parties who participated in Phase 1 together to discuss shared concerns and values, potential projects, and other solutions to current and future water shortfalls.
 - a. Potential Benefits
 - i. Developing consensus around a path forward for balancing competing, valid demands for water
 - ii. Identifying specific solutions/projects for funding that will restore/protect competing, valid interests
 - iii. Greater likelihood of attracting state and federal funding based upon consensus-driven process
 - b. Potential Impediments
 - i. Interested parties may be leery of committing significant time and effort to a process that they may perceive as not advancing or protecting their interests.
 - ii. Key interested parties could back out during the process which could undermine the acceptability and validity of outcome.
 - iii. Consensus processes require significant commitment of time and resources from the participants
 - iv. Agreement cannot be reached
 - v. Lack of funding for the process and proposed solutions
 - c. Steps to Implementation
 - i. The MWC must identify the interested parties who must or should come together to engage in a Phase 2 process (“necessary interested parties”).
 - ii. Based upon the three core water priorities that emerged from Phase 1 (vibrant towns, thriving local-based agriculture, and instream flows for fish and the environment), the MWC must assure the necessary interested parties that their most-critical interest will be protected in the ultimate solution that comes out of Phase 2. Without that assurance up front, necessary interested parties may not be willing to participate. Individual meetings with necessary interested parties and the MWC should be considered.

- iii. The MWC should clearly convey to necessary interested parties and the Methow Valley community what its purpose or goal is in convening a process to facilitate a frank understanding among all the interested parties.
 - iv. The MWC should engage a neutral, well-respected facilitator for Phase 2. It may be necessary, as in arbitrations, to propose several potential facilitators for the consideration of the necessary interested parties.
 - v. MWC should consider approaching each necessary interested parties to elicit both their specific and larger concerns for the future of water in the Methow, and any proposed solutions that they would like considered during discussions.
 - vi. From this groundwork, MWC (or its facilitator/contractor) should consider drawing up a proposed scope for Phase 2 to build community and interested party support, and to attract funding.
 - vii. MWC, with interested parties as allies, should conduct outreach in the larger Methow Valley community to build support for a Phase 2 process.
2. Recommendation to study implications of revising the Methow Instream Flow Rule (WAC 173-548) – Water Policy Analysis
- a. Potential Benefits
 - i. Making uninterrupted water available for current and future needs for purposes other than permit-exempt single domestic use and stockwatering.
 - ii. Addressing concerns about future growth limitations of towns and group A water systems.
 - iii. Bringing Growth Management Act and land use policies into closer alignment with water quantity laws (e.g., WAC 173-548, RCW 90.44.050, RCW 90.94).
 - iv. Increasing flexibility to use water resources to respond to current and future issues.
 - b. Impediments
 - i. The Department of Ecology cannot be legally compelled to adopt a rule. The agency must decide that changing the Methow Rule is a top priority for its rule-making efforts.
 - ii. Some portion of the reserves have already been utilized.
 - iii. Some interests will only support a rule change if water for water mitigation occurs in the impacted subbasins.

- iv. Environmental or tribal interests may oppose a rule change if there is a threat to instream flows or if a general adjudication does not proceed the rule change.
 - v. Opening up the rule for modification could result in unintended consequences.
- 3. Recommendation to study options for improving water transfers to address water shortfalls (including creation of a water bank)
 - a. Benefits
 - i. A well-designed and operated water bank, depending upon location, could address some future water needs.
 - ii. Temporary transfers of irrigation rights (e.g., drought forbearance agreements) can augment instream flows during critical periods for endangered salmonids.
 - b. Impediments
 - i. Water banks must be hydrated (water must be available for purchase).
 - ii. Water banks have design and operating costs that will raise the price of water acquisition.
 - iii. Slow processing of water rights transfers.
- 4. Recommendation to study storage options (other than traditional dams) to improve water availability⁶
 - a. Benefits
 - i. Non-dam storage projects can improve instream flows.
 - ii. Non-dam storage projects can restore fish and wildlife habitat.
 - b. Impediments
 - i. The water and habitat benefits of non-dam storage projects are difficult to quantify.
 - ii. Non-dam storage projects require funding and may require the acquisition of land.
- 5. Recommendation to study impediments to widespread adoption of conservation measures
 - a. Benefits
 - i. Conservation measures, such as irrigation efficiencies or crop switches, can improve water availability.
 - ii. Metering can improve cognizance of water use and curb waste.

⁶ Because the vast majority of the Methow Valley Community opposes building traditional dams, this recommendation is limited to other “softer” options such as floodplain restoration set forth in Section 2, Part VI.

b. Impediments

- i. Irrigation efficiency measures can de-water agricultural lands (and increase concern for fire vulnerability).
- ii. Irrigation efficiencies may not receive long-term funding
- iii. Metering raises privacy concerns.
- iv. Lack of funding.

Appendices

Appendix I – Task 1 Scoping Plan, Task 2 Community Outreach Plan, and Task 3 Interested Parties Plan

Appendix II – Community Survey

Appendix III – Station 2 – Water Priority Scoring Parsed by Workshop or Survey

Appendix IV – Station 5 Land Use- Responses to Question 7 on Residential Development

Appendix V – Station 6 - Community Responses on Storage Parsed by Workshop and Survey

Appendix VI – Results from Interested Party Meetings