COON CREEK
WATERSHED DISTRICT

Municipal Insight Survey

Understanding municipal audiences to facilitate a unified approach to water management

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Survey Objective:

This survey will guide CCWD in determining the best methods for engaging with the District's municipal partners. The survey will identify their needs, values and priorities, what their perceptions are regarding water management (quality/quantity) and the TMDL.

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District Goal:

» Improve our engagement and public information strategy by crafting our efforts in a way that speaks to the values and interests of the individuals who share the responsibility of achieving the TMDL

» Communicate with these audiences in a language in which they understand and in terms that that are of interest to them.

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Target Audiences

**City Councils/
Decision Makers**

**City
Staff**

**Registered
Voters**

Methods & Implementation

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Project Phases

1:1 Interviews　　　　**Survey**　　　　　　　　　**1:1 Interviews**　　**Survey**

**Phase One
City Councils & Staff**

**Phase Two
General Public**

Methods & Implementation

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Factors that Support/Justify Water Management Funding and Programs

Municipal Decision Makers

Supporting Water Mgmt Funding/Actions	Discouraging Water Mgmt Funding/Actions
- Public Health/Safety	- Lack of trust in state/fed regulators
- Preventing Loss	- Lack of perceived benefits
- Mitigating Risk	- Belief that water mgmt. is a problem for others
- Getting Regular Updates	> Problem for future staff/council to address
	> Problem for other cities, not them
	> Problem not within their control

Research Findings

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Factors that Support/Justify Water Management Funding and Programs

Registered Voters

Supporting Water Mgmt Funding/Actions	Discouraging Water Mgmt Funding/Actions
- Public Health/Safety	- Lack of trust in state/fed regulators
- Preventing Pollution	- Confusion regarding <u>what is being paid for</u>
- Flood Mitigation	- Confusion regarding <u>how much is being paid</u>
- Working across communities	- Confusion regarding <u>who is being paid</u>

Research Findings

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"I buy lottery tickets to support you."
-Interview Participant

Research Findings

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How do we know if our water investments are working?

Registered Voters

When asked "how do we know if our water management efforts are working?", most participants pointed to <u>clean water for drinking</u> and recreation.

"The proof is in what's coming out of the tap."

-Interview Participant

Research Findings

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Meaningful differences: Age & Income

Registered Voters

» Individuals ages 18-39 are more willing to support tax increases for reasons of public health and safety.

» Individuals over the age of 60 are more likely than younger residents to accept any potential claims describing the activities of CCWD.

» Older individuals with higher incomes were the most likely to be familiar with CCWD

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Meaningful similarities between audiences

Municipal Decision Makers VS. **Registered Voters**

» Public health and water quality are the most important factors

» Distrust of state/fed government, but trust in their own city staff and CCWD

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Meaningful differences between audiences

Municipal Decision Makers VS. **Registered Voters**

» <u>Long-term Planning</u>: Highly valued by most municipal audiences; not well supported by registered voters as a justification for tax increases

» <u>Infrastructure Protection</u>: Municipal Decision Makers are much more aware of infrastructure issues and value infrastructure protection more than the public audience

» <u>Cross-Community Efforts</u>: Registered Voters valued cross-community efforts more than the municipal audience, which focused more on working within their own community

Research Findings

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Actionable Recommendations

Municipal Decision Makers

- City specific reports & progress updates

- Explainer resources for staff

- More public outreach events, particularly in partnerships with Cities

- Engage decision-makers at events when possible

Registered Voters

- Use messaging that ties programs/projects back to public health & safety

- Frame water management issues as 'community challenges' instead of 'government challenges'

- Make tangible the costs of not acting by using visually-compelling graphics

- Continue to use city newsletters as a vehicle for communicating with the public

Research Findings

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Next Steps:

» **Share Results**

  o Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

  o Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)

  o New: Communicators Work Group

» **Implement Recommendations**

  o CCWD Partner Newsletter

  o Explainer Resources

  o Update messaging

» **Further Research**

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