

# Colorado Cattlemen's Ag Water NetWORK

Goal: Keeping Ag Water Connected with Ag Land

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# 2019 Project: Outreach and Training on Watershed & Stream Management Planning for the Ag Community

## 2019 Project elements:

1. **Survey** of ag producers ([www.agwaternetnetwork.org](http://www.agwaternetnetwork.org))
2. **Outreach** to the agricultural community
3. **Training** ag-oriented individuals interested in engaging / leading local efforts on watershed and stream management planning.







**Question?**

**What's Big enough to fill the**

**Pepsi Center**

**Coors Field**

**&**

**Red Rocks Amphitheater**

**Combined?**

**ANSWER:**

**Colorado's Population Growth Last Year!**

	<b>Capacity</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>Pepsi Center:</b>	<b>19,099</b>	<b>Population</b>
<b>Coors Field:</b>	<b>50,398</b>	<b><u>Increase:</u></b>
<b>Red Rocks:</b>	<b><u>9,525</u></b>	<b>80,000</b>
	<b>79,022</b>	



# THE DENVER POST

December 24, 2018

With 80,000 new residents, Colorado is the seventh-fastest growing state in the U.S.

- +700,000 people since 2010
  - \*Source: Denver Post / U.S. Census Bureau
- Current: ~ 5.7 M
- Current 2050 Projection: ~ 8.1 M



Credit: Keen Denver Urban Assault Ride

# **Rising Demand versus Finite Supply**

**Non-consumptive:** Recreation, Environmental – aquatic

**Consumptive:** Municipal, Industrial, Agricultural (stock-watering, irrigation)

## **Little known fact:**

**“More than 99.9% of the water used by an irrigated crop or turf is drawn through the roots and transpires through the leaves. Only a small amount (0.1%) of the water taken up by plants is actually used to produce plant tissue.”**

Source: CSU Extension [https://coagmet.colostate.edu/extended\\_etr\\_about.php](https://coagmet.colostate.edu/extended_etr_about.php)

## **Planning is key to minimizing crisis and conflict**



# Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) The Colorado River Watershed supplies:

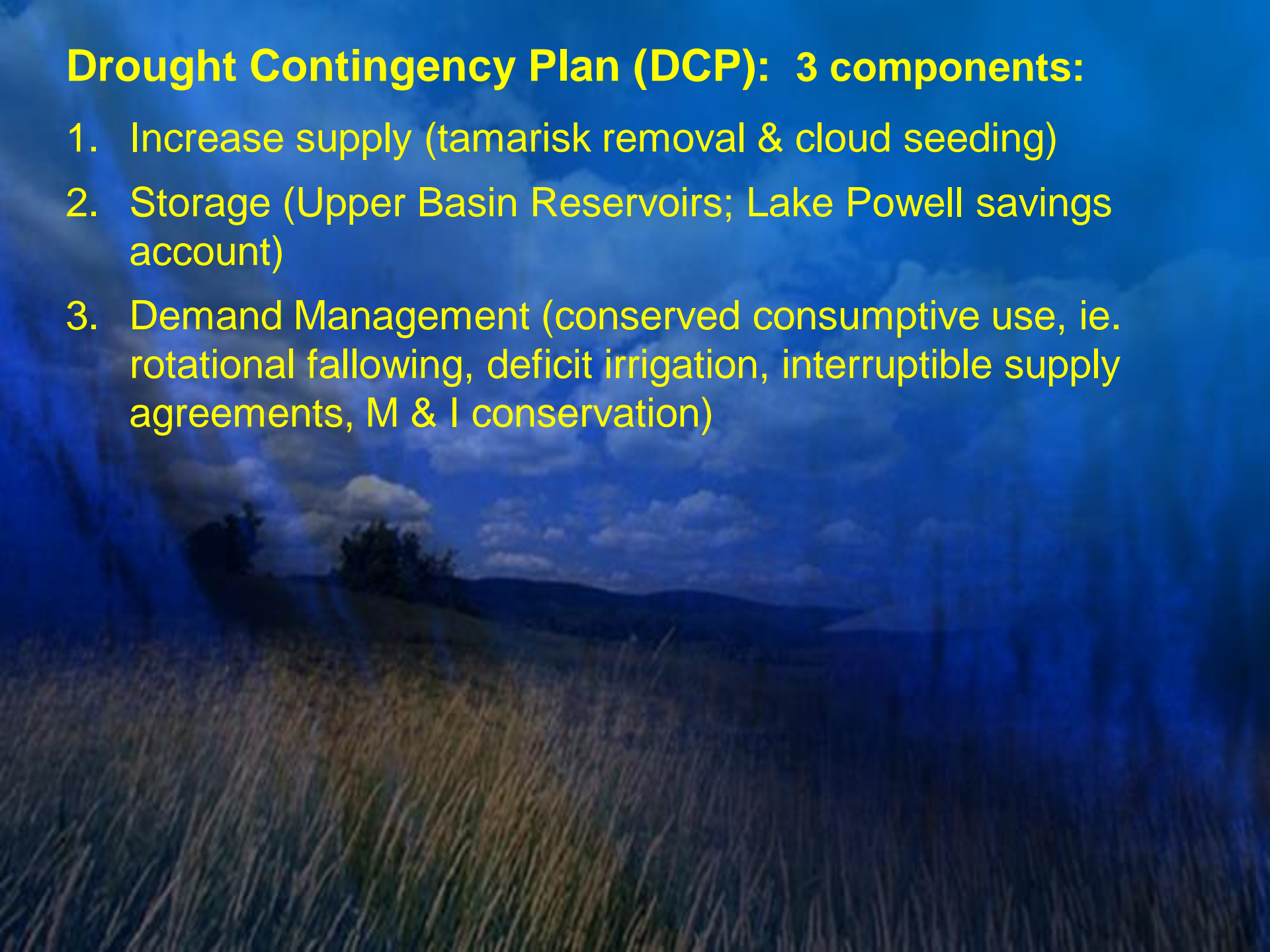


- 7 states + Mexico
- 40 million people\*
- ~ 5.5 million irrigated acres\*
- Aquatic life & wildlife\*
- Recreation / hunting

\*some in other basins relying on the Colorado watershed

## **Drought Contingency Plan (DCP): 3 components:**

1. Increase supply (tamarisk removal & cloud seeding)
2. Storage (Upper Basin Reservoirs; Lake Powell savings account)
3. Demand Management (conserved consumptive use, ie. rotational fallowing, deficit irrigation, interruptible supply agreements, M & I conservation)



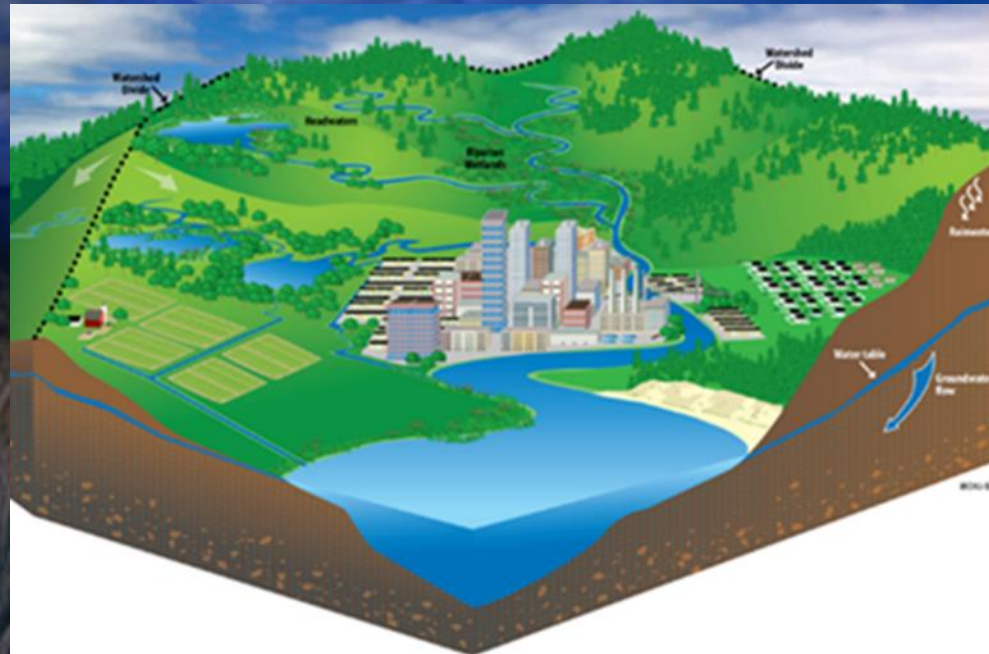


## CO Water Plan goal for watershed / stream plans:

“Develop Watershed Master Plans that address the needs of a diverse set of local stakeholders.”

## Water Plan Measurable Objectives by 2030:

- 80% of the locally prioritized rivers have **Stream Management plans**.
- 80% of critical watersheds have **Watershed Management Plans**.



# Watershed and Stream Management Planning Basics:

At their essence, watershed and stream management plans are created to:

- a) Evaluate and prioritize local water-related problems
- b) Secure and administer project funding
- c) Design and implement improvements that help protect and improve existing uses, including agricultural, and support healthy rivers and streams

Plans are:

- Non-regulatory
- Locally driven
- Consensus-based (developed by water stakeholders)



# Does Agriculture Need to be Involved in watershed and stream management planning?

**Farms comprise approximately  
48% of the land area in Colorado\***

\*Colorado Ag statistics 2017 Farm Operations; 31.8 M  
ac. [www.nass.usda.gov/](http://www.nass.usda.gov/)

**Agriculture controls most of the  
water in Colorado**

# **Watershed / Stream Management Planning: Need All water stakeholders at the Table!**



**Producer involvement is crucial to creating balanced plans  
and protecting agriculture's interests (water rights, land, etc.)**



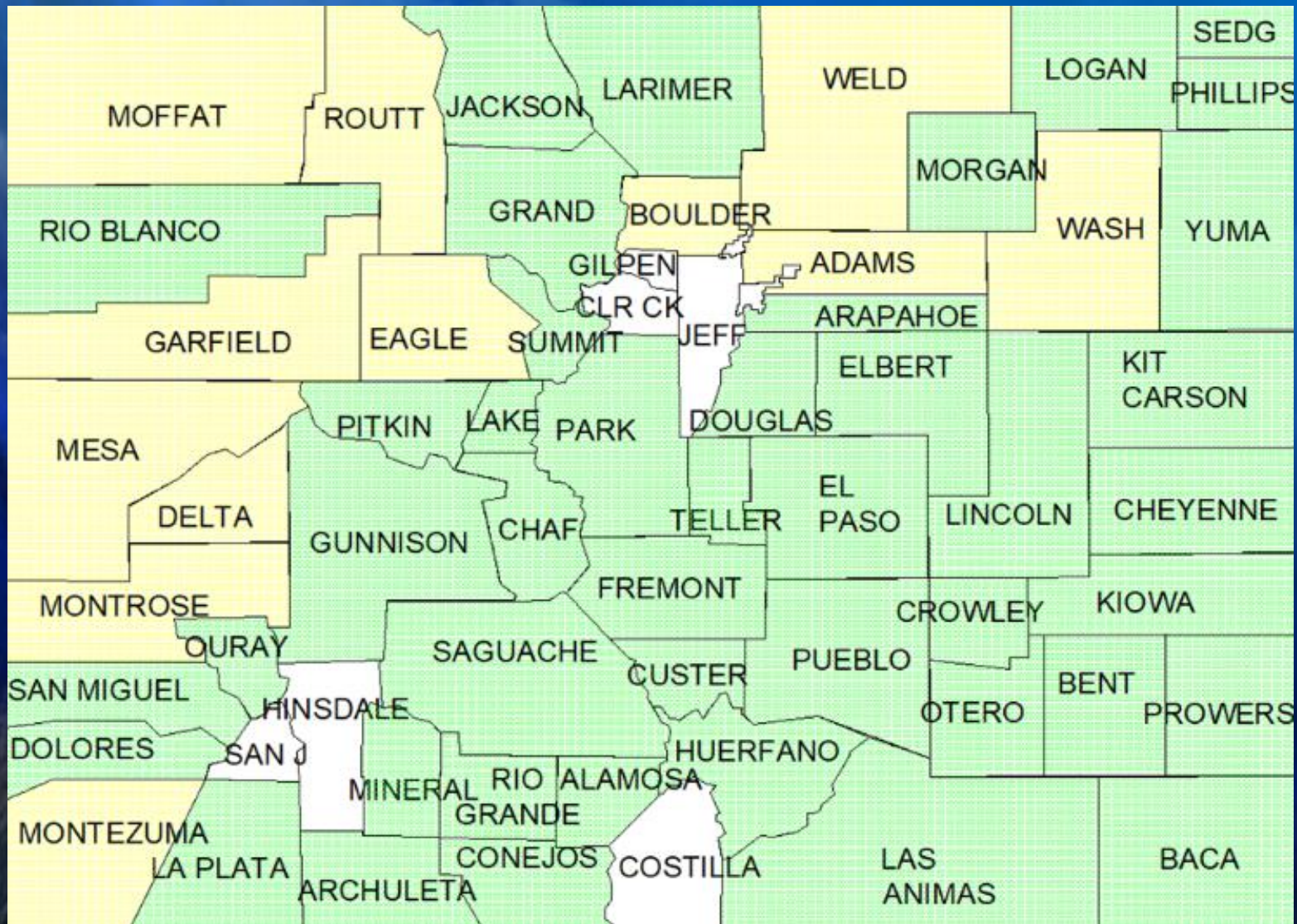
# 2019 Survey of Ag Producers on Watershed and Stream Management Planning

## Survey Facts:

- Survey period: January 16 – April 30, 2019
- 330 total responses received; 288 responses used
- Responses received from producers in 56 counties (88%)
- 84% irrigated, 16% dryland operations
- Eight (8) drawings for a \$100 or \$50 Cabela's gift card during survey period.



# 2019 Ag Producer Survey Results

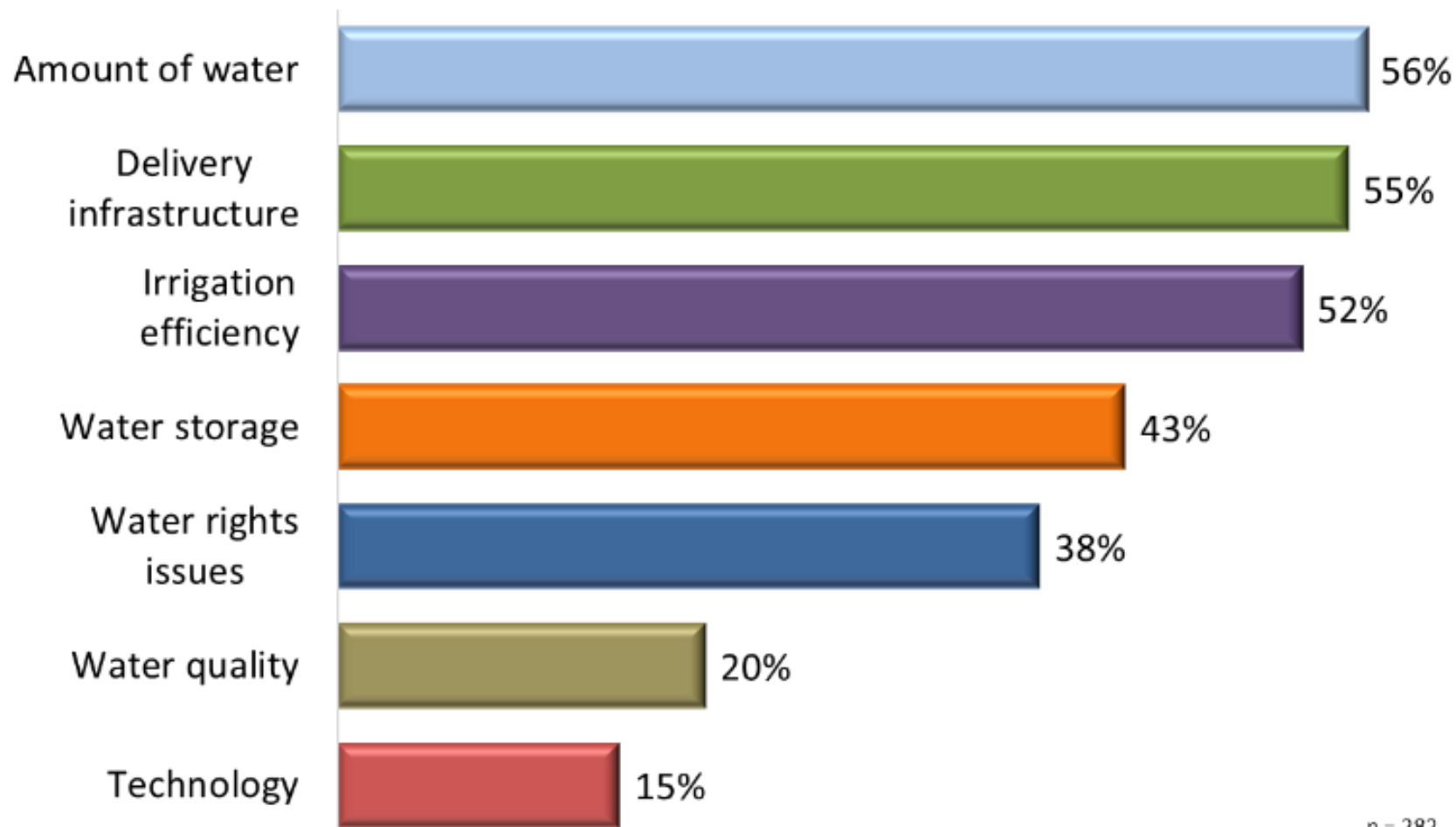


Green =  $\geq 1$  response

Yellow = Top 12 response counties

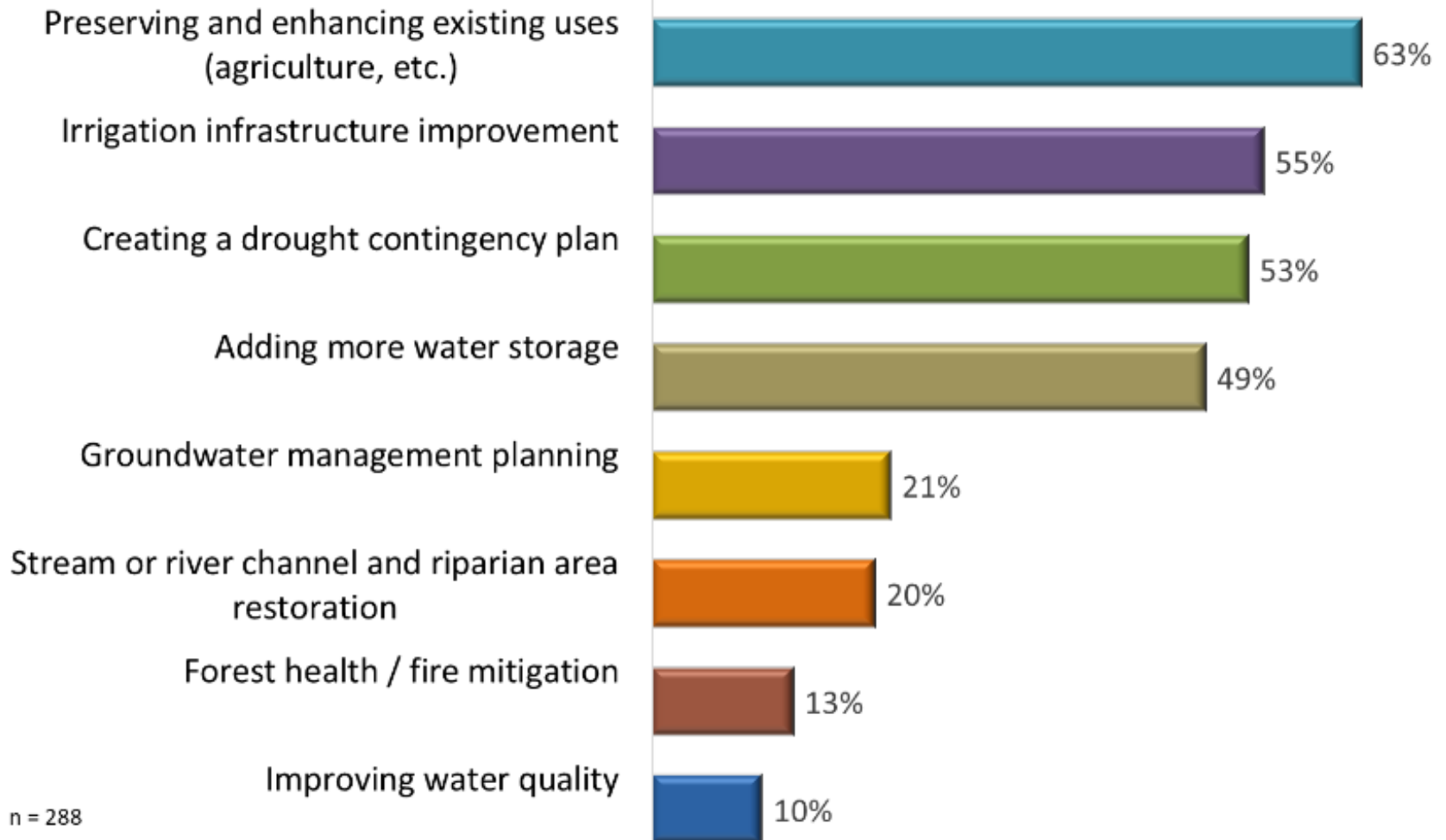


# For your operation, what water-related challenge(s) would you most like to improve upon?



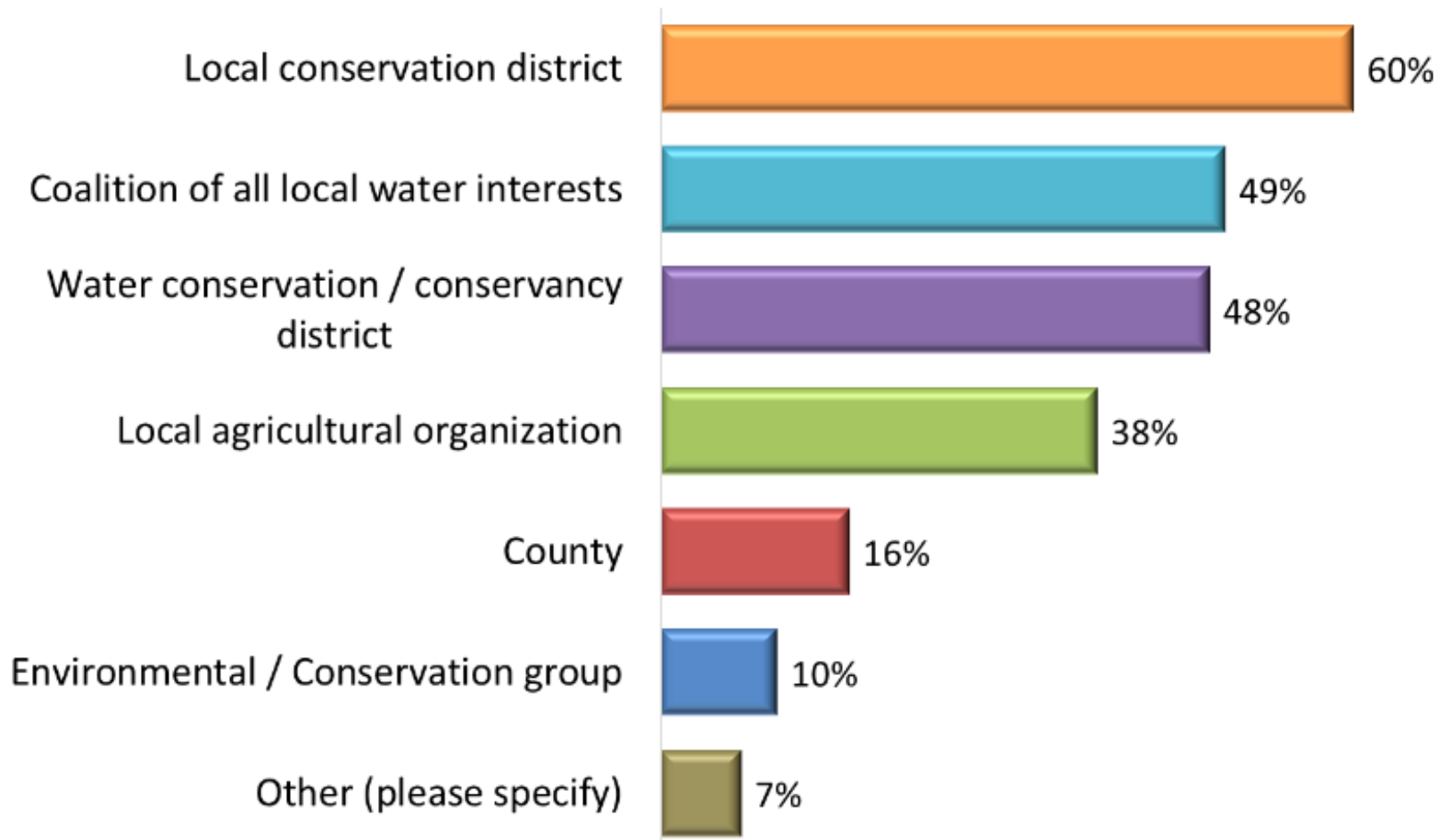
n = 282

# What should the Priorities of a local watershed management plan be?



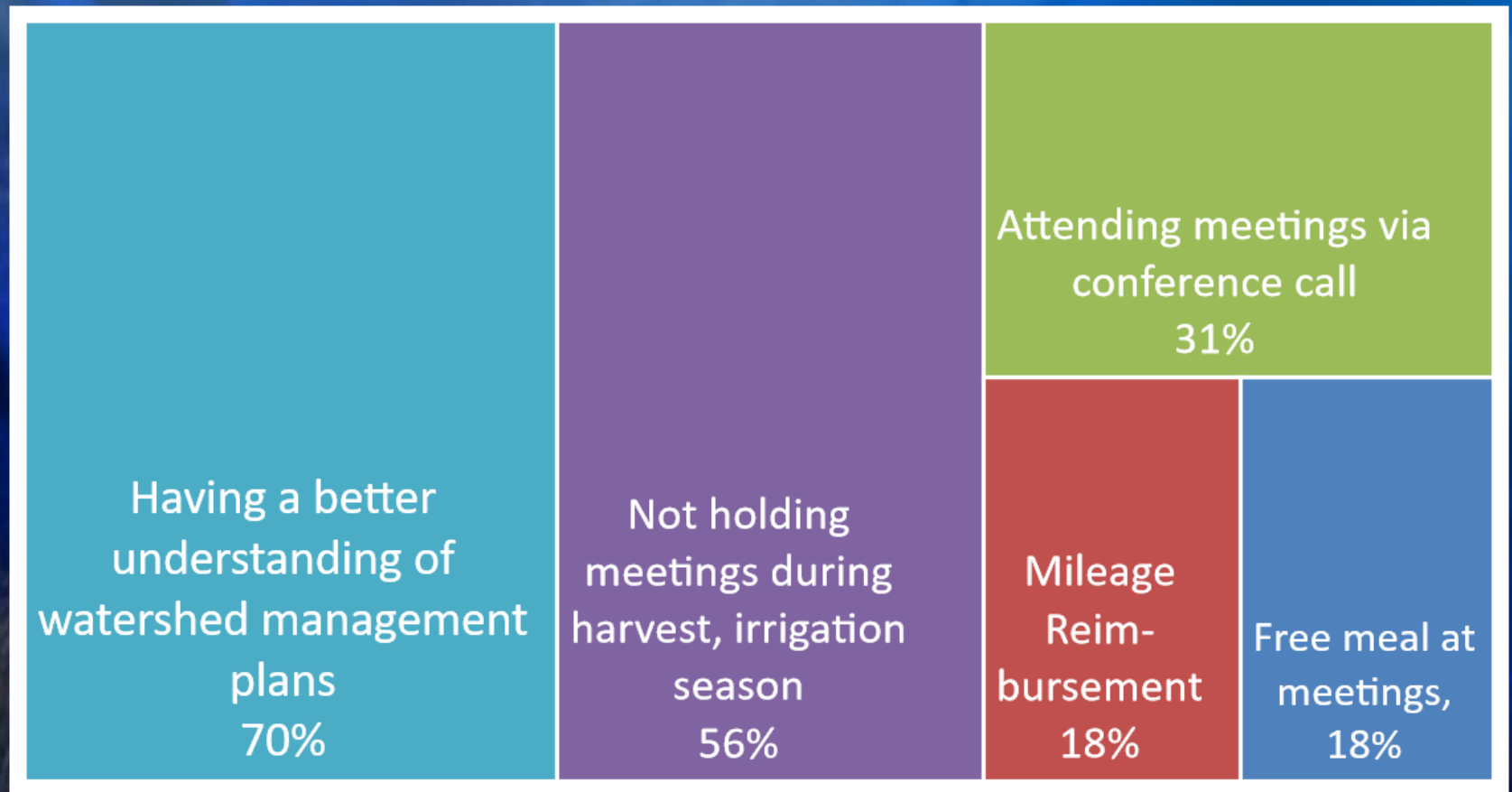


# Who should lead watershed planning efforts in your area?



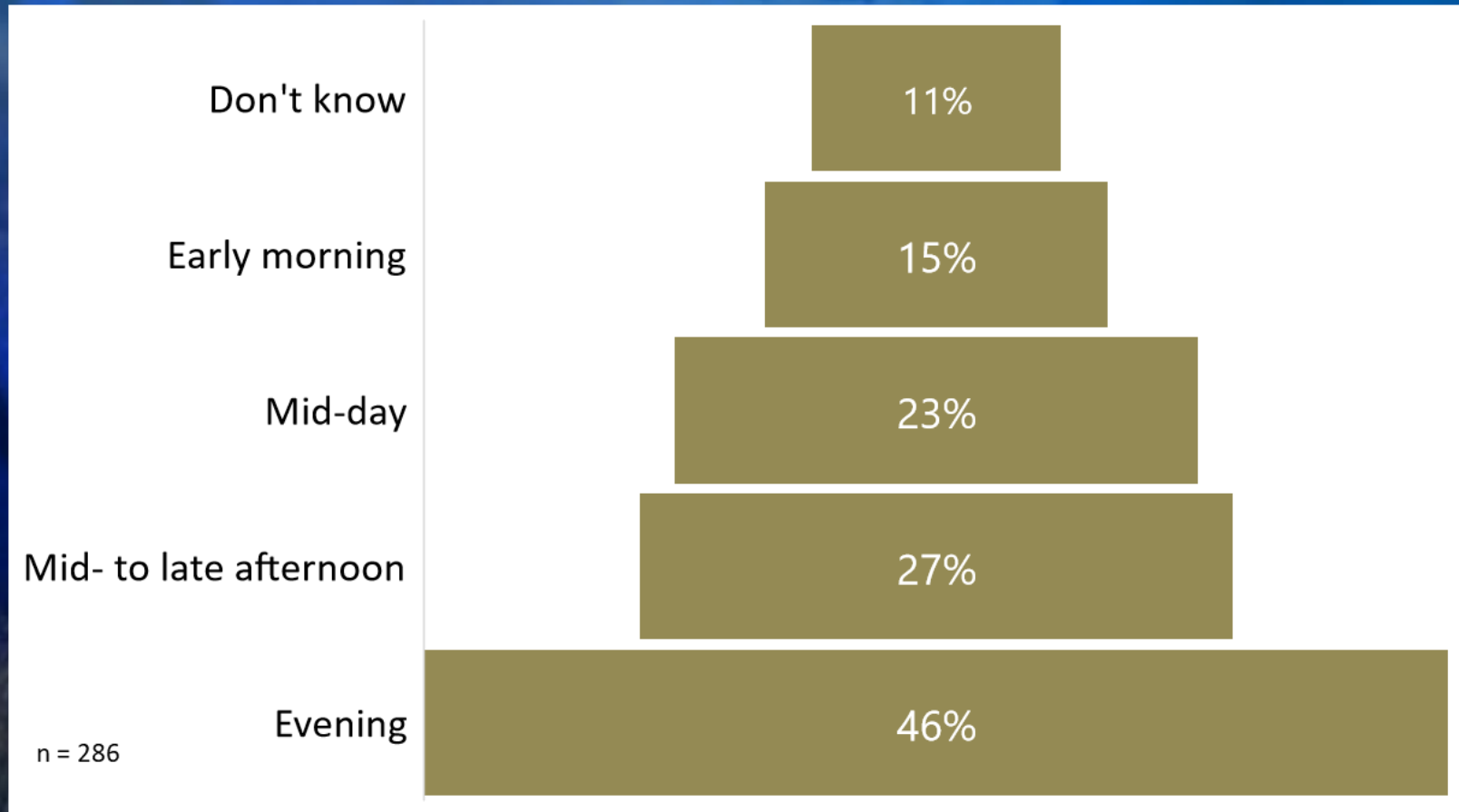
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If you were to participate in watershed management planning meetings, which of the following would be helpful to you?



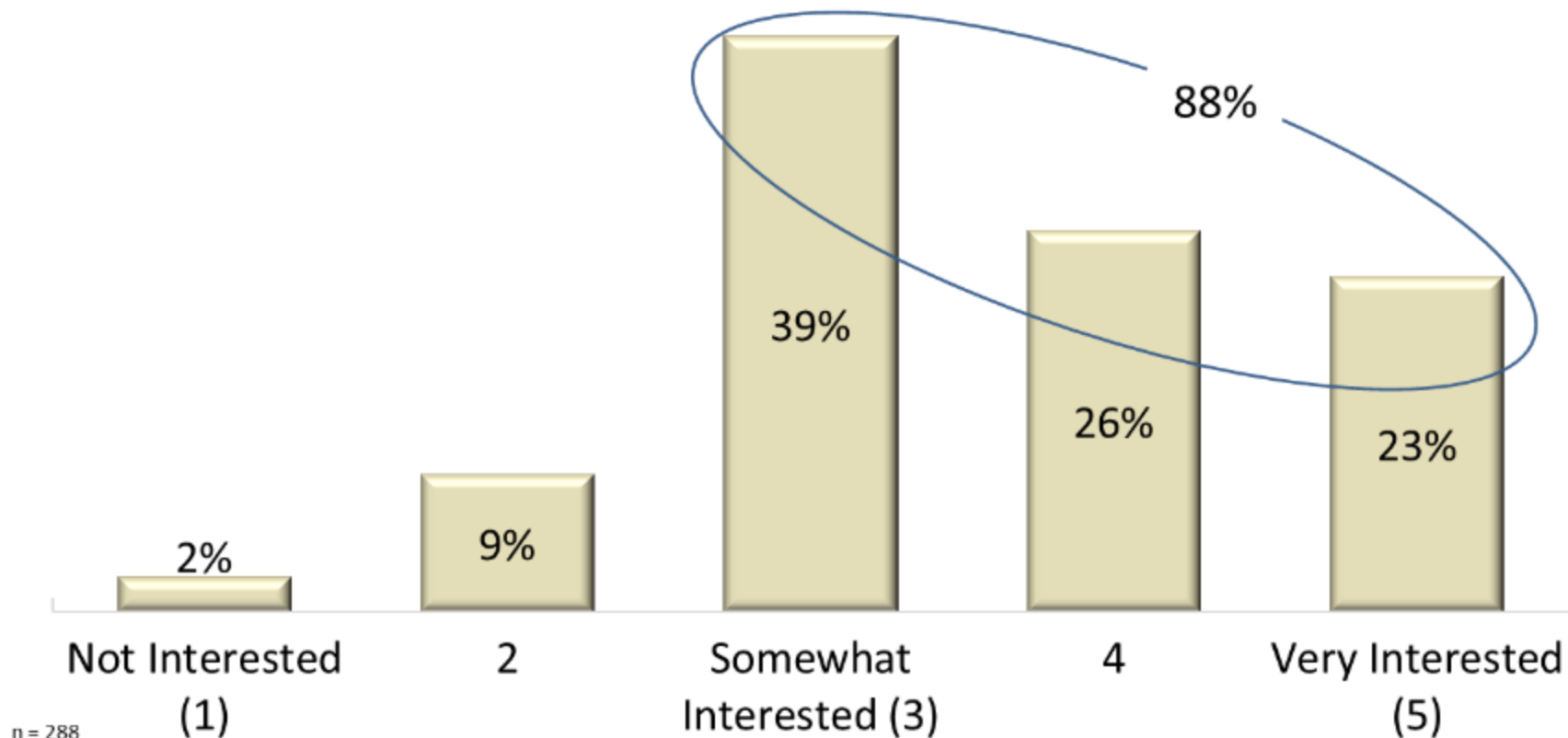


# If you were to attend a watershed planning meeting, what time of day would work best for you to meet?



# Last Question!..

## Producer Interest in Participating in a Local Watershed Management Planning Initiative





# Summary of Producers Comments & Questions:

- More information is needed on watershed and stream management plans.
- Make it EASY to find out what is going on.
- Meetings: Short with well-defined objectives and timelines, and positive atmosphere.
- Avoid meeting during hunting, calving, irrigation and harvest seasons.
- Get rid of acronyms and jargon.

## Agricultural Water Rights:

- Address security of ag water rights and agricultural viability protection.
- Work on leasing ag water for other uses. ie. Alternative Transfer Mechanisms (ATMs).

## Implementation:

- Reach watershed / stream project implementation phase sooner.
- Funding needed for ag water projects – infrastructure, storage, efficiency.

# Potential Projects that Benefit Ag and Other Stakeholders – Funding for:

- Assessment of irrigation infrastructure and funding for irrigation upgrades
- Storage studies (above & below ground)
- Groundwater recharge area planning
- River flow analysis; what is needed to better support uses (irrigation, stock-watering, muni, fish, recreation)
- Channel improvement / bank stabilization
- Creating dialogue with other water stakeholders which creates allies outside the ag community.



credit: Bill McKee





The Ag Water NetWORK will be continuing outreach and training efforts in 2020.

If you represent a:

- Conservation / conservancy district
- Irrigation company
- Basin Roundtable
- Watershed / stream management planning initiative

and would like to pursue outreach and training for your local agricultural community, please contact Phil Brink at CCA's Ag Water NetWORK at (720) 887-9944 or [phil@brinkinc.biz](mailto:phil@brinkinc.biz).

Survey report and summary: [www.agwaternet.org](http://www.agwaternet.org)



Questions? Phil Brink (720) 887-9944 or [phil@brinkinc.biz](mailto:phil@brinkinc.biz)