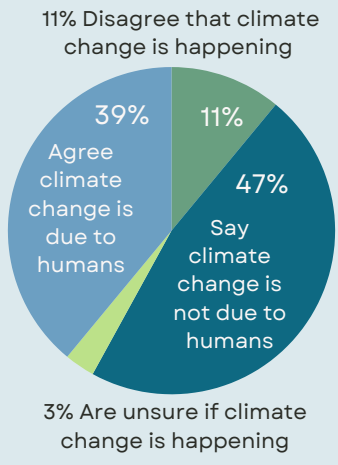


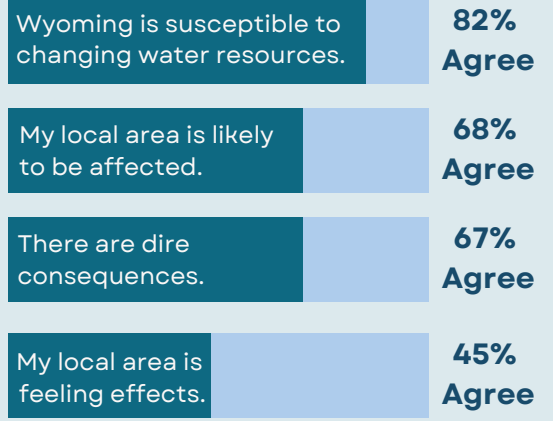
# Taking the Temperature of Wyoming Public Opinion on Adapting to Climate & Water Change

## Wyoming is at risk to changes in climate and water

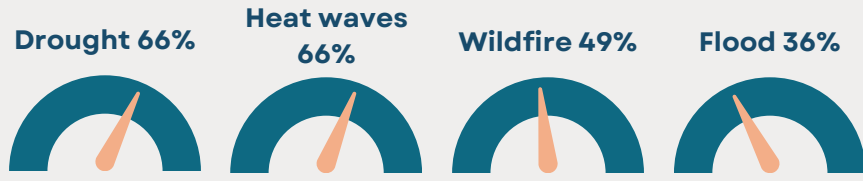
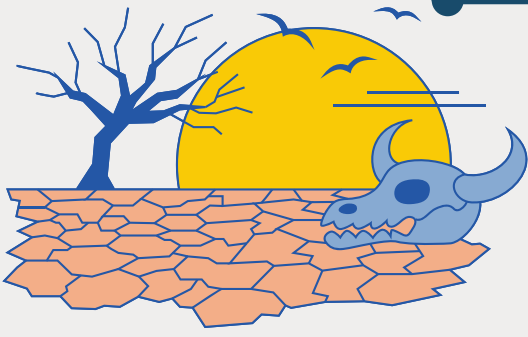


Wyoming residents overwhelmingly believe that climate change is happening, but they were split on the causes of climate change.

They also believe their communities are at risk to changing water resources and the consequences are dire. Yet, less than half see the effects on their local area as a “now problem.”



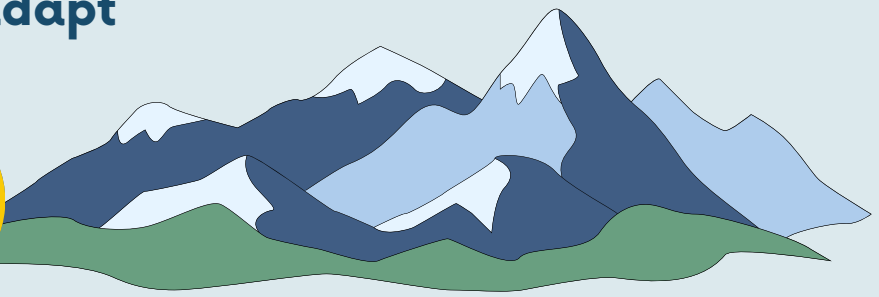
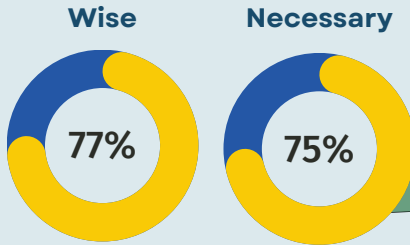
## Experience with natural hazards is high



A majority of Wyoming residents have experienced drought and heat waves hotter than 90 degrees in the past 10 years. 22% of residents have experienced all four natural hazards.

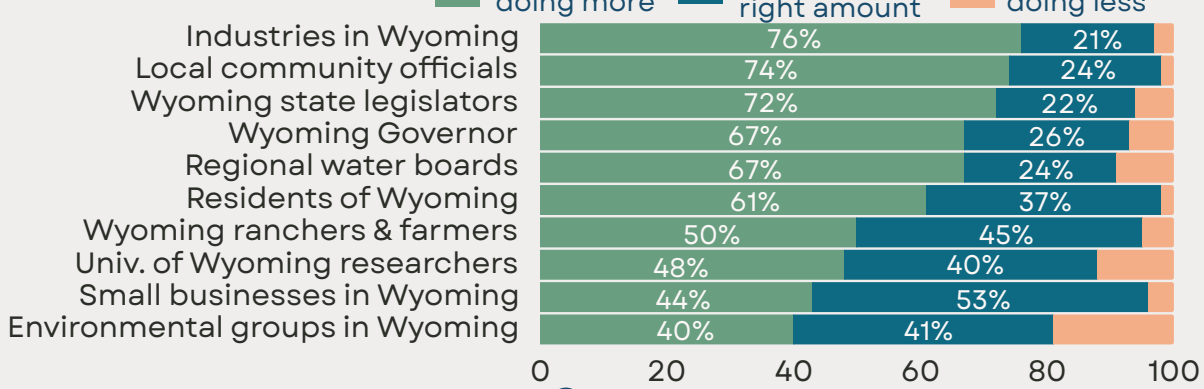
## It's wise and necessary to adapt

I think adapting to changes in water resources in Wyoming is ...



## We should do more to adapt

Wyoming residents want nearly all governmental and non-governmental groups to do more to address changing water resources in the state.



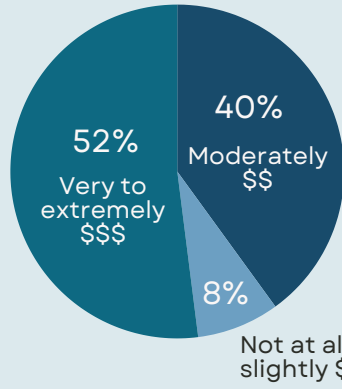
## Policies are worth it, even if they are perceived as costly

Respondents support a diverse set of policy options and believe costs would be expensive but worth the investment.

Nine of the 15 policies had support from greater than 50% of respondents.



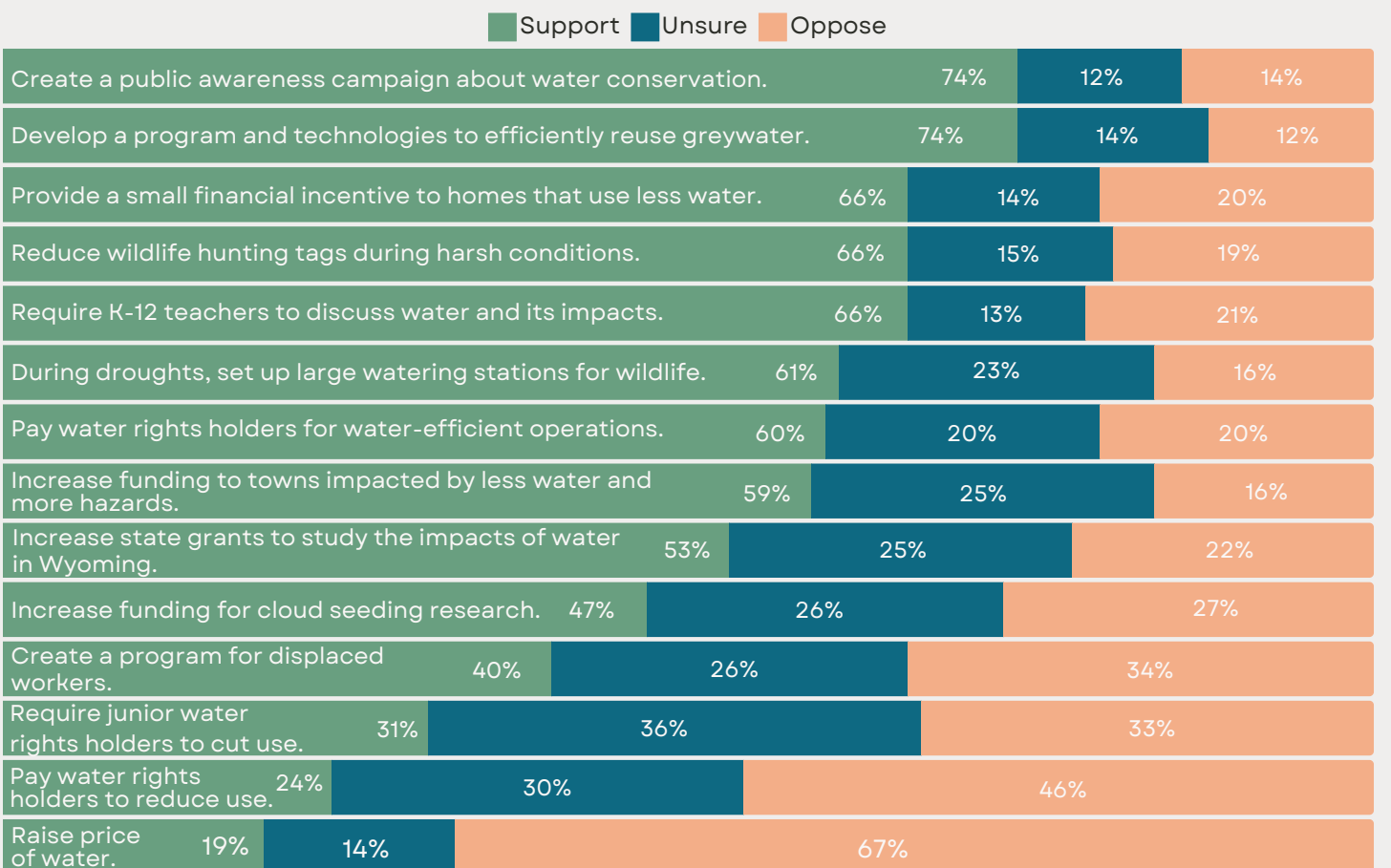
How expensive will it be for Wyoming to develop and implement policies to respond to water changes?



Are the costs to implement policies worth the investment?

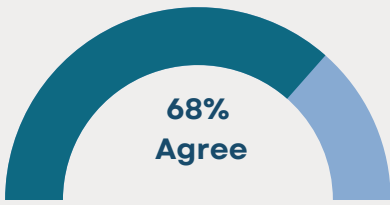


## Many policies have majority support



# Taking the Temperature of Wyoming Public Opinion on Adapting to Climate & Water Change

## Wyoming agrees that community plans can reduce risk



Over two-thirds of Wyoming residents agreed that their community can reduce the risks of water changes with a response plan.



## Wyoming wants community plans, but there's a gap in understanding others' opinions

Wyoming residents overwhelmingly report that changes in water resources are happening and their communities should plan for those changes.

I believe that changes in water resources are happening.



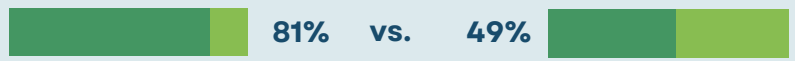
My community believes that changes in water resources are happening.

However, many Wyoming residents report their own communities think differently. This is a misperception of public opinion.



There is more support for creating community response plans than Wyoming residents think.

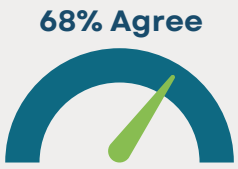
I believe communities should plan for changing water resources.



My community believes we should plan for changing water resources.

## Some are unsure about the effectiveness and feasibility of community plans

While Wyoming residents encourage others to participate in community plans, they feel less certain in their own participation.



I would encourage others to participate in community plans to address water changes.

They also feel less confident that their community has the ability to plan for changes in water resources. They are unsure that the response plan will be effective. Their views on the effectiveness and feasibility of community response plans may be due to their misperception of community support for response plans.

Agree Unsure Disagree

Statement	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
I would participate in creating a community plan to address changes in water resources.	44%	34%	22%
My community and I can work together to plan and adapt to changing water resources.	43%	36%	21%
Community response plans will be effective at reducing the risks of water changes.	41%	42%	17%
My community has the knowledge to plan.	26%	43%	31%
I feel qualified to participate.	22%	32%	46%
My community is motivated.	16%	51%	33%

## Wyoming prioritizes the need for financial resources to support planning



Different resources are needed in Wyoming communities to plan and adapt to water changes.

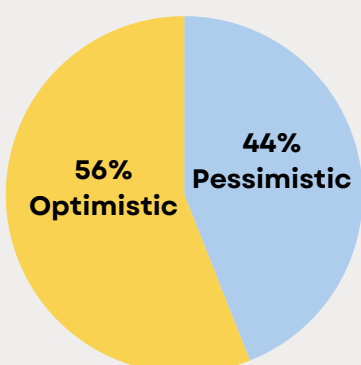
When asked to rank the resources according to their level of concern for their community, Wyoming residents ranked financial resources as their top community concern.

This result reinforces the wide-range of support for policies that increase funding for Wyoming communities.

- 1 Financial resources**  
Money and funding
- 2 Physical resources**  
Technology, equipment, infrastructure
- 3 Governance and legal resources**  
Policy knowledge, legal support
- 4 Cultural resources**  
Wisdom, place-based scientific knowledge
- 5 Information and tools resources**  
Management decision support tools, data
- 6 Community resources**  
Social networks, volunteers, community groups
- 7 Emotional and well-being resources**  
Religious or spiritual groups, counseling services

## Wyoming is more optimistic than pessimistic

Wyoming residents are more likely to express optimism than pessimism when asked if Wyoming can overcome future challenges due to decreased water availability and increased water-related natural hazards.



## People support modeling

When given a brief description about scientific modeling and its use in understanding complex systems, like weather and water, Wyoming residents supported modeling.

76% Agree

I support modeling to help Wyoming communities plan for different water and weather scenarios.

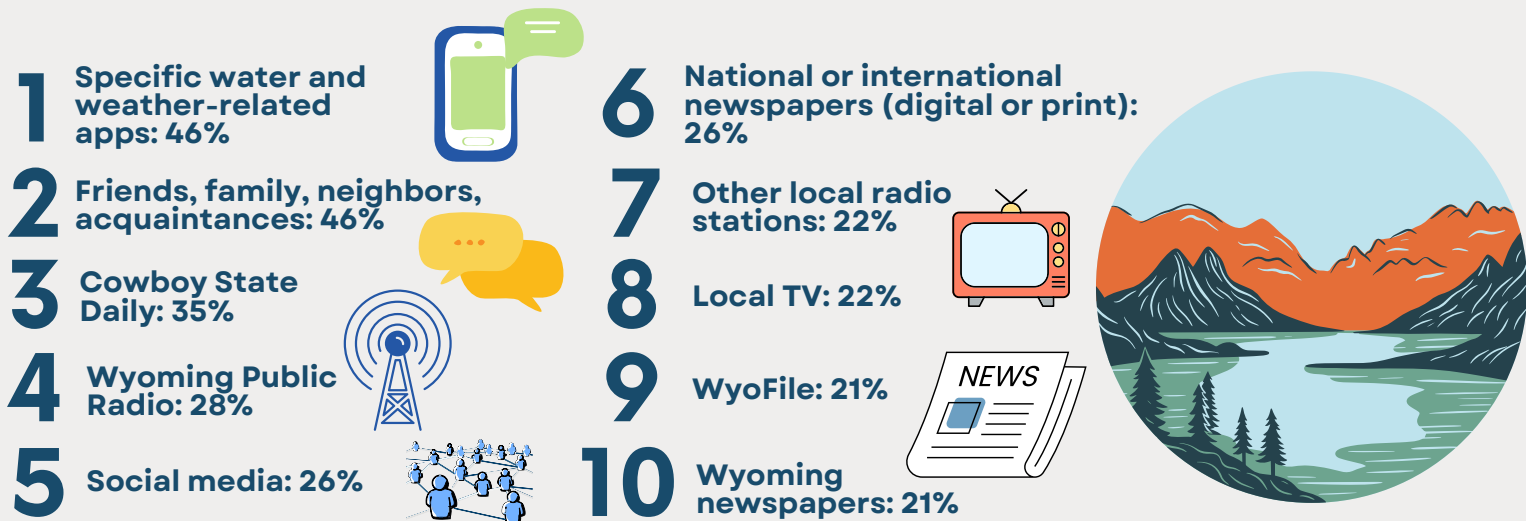
58% Agree

I support using modeling in policymaking in Wyoming to address water changes and weather variability.

# Taking the Temperature of Wyoming Public Opinion on Adapting to Climate & Water Change

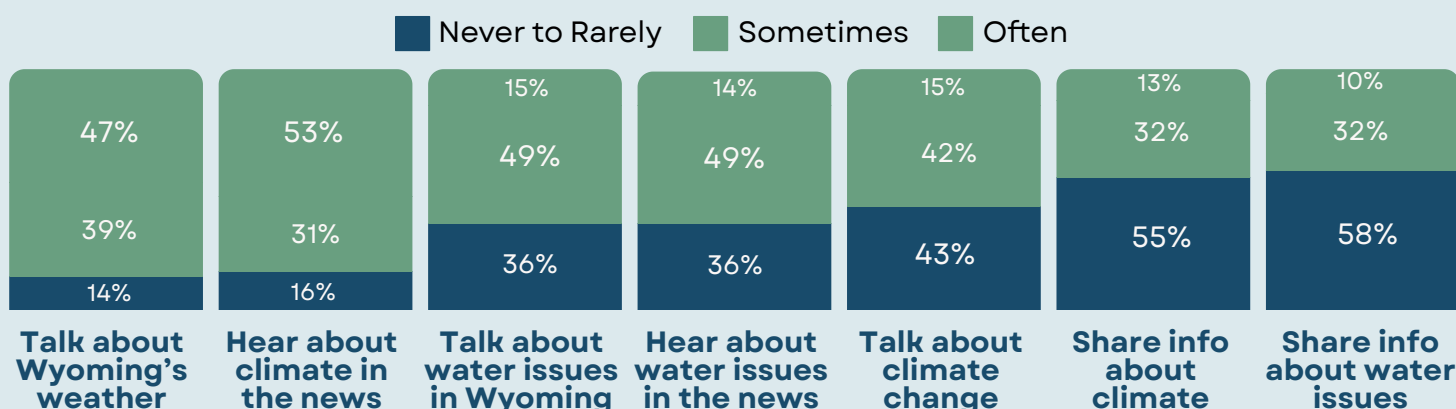
## Apps, interpersonal connections, and Wyoming media outlets are the top sources of water and weather information

Wyoming residents were asked to select all the sources where they come across information about water and weather, including sources that they “purposefully seek out information” and sources that they “may happen to see information.”



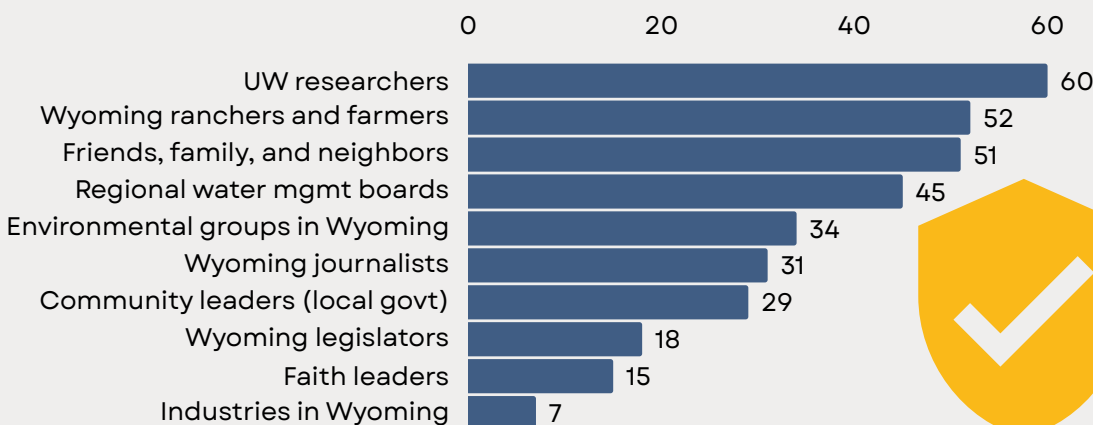
## Wyoming residents talk more about weather than climate change and water

Wyoming residents were asked how often they engaged in various communication behaviors surrounding weather, water, and climate. The most common responses were talking about Wyoming’s weather “often” and hearing about climate change in the news “often.” The least common responses were sharing information about climate and water issues.



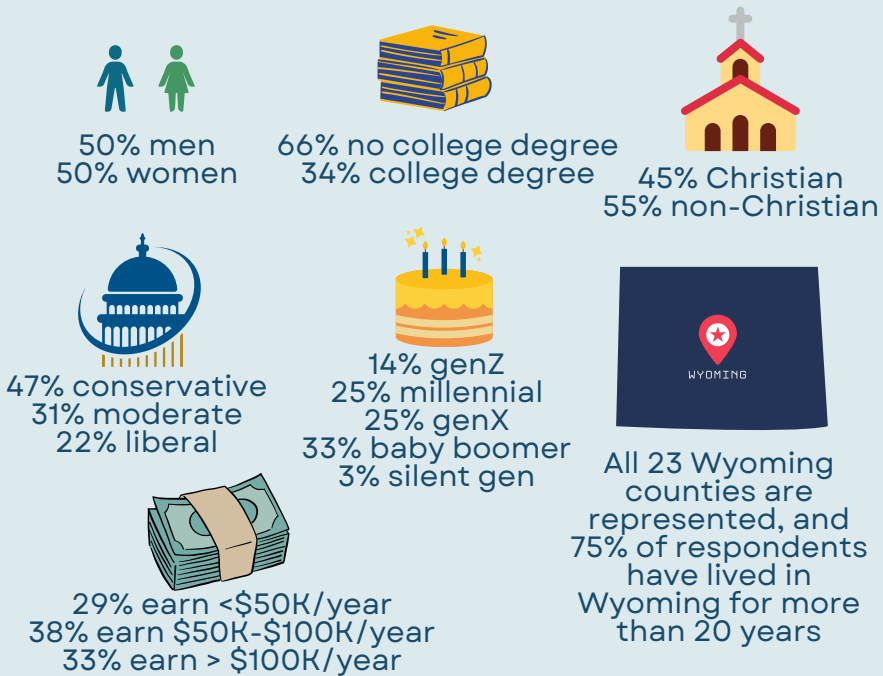
## Wyoming trusts UW researchers to “tell you the truth about changing water resources in Wyoming”

Percent of Wyoming residents who trust each group



Wyoming residents were asked what groups “you trust to tell you the truth about changing water resources in Wyoming.” UW researchers topped the list.

## We surveyed 500 Wyoming residents about their views on Wyoming’s changing water resources and climate



Researchers at the University of Wyoming’s WyACT team and the Center for Rural Resilience and Innovation were interested in Wyoming residents’ views on water and climate issues.

500 Wyoming residents responded to the survey, which was administered by the Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center (WYSAC). The survey is representative, which means the respondents are similar to Wyoming residents in terms of sex, age, education, and county of residence.

For questions about the survey, please contact WyACT researcher Kristen Landreville at [klandrev@uwyo.edu](mailto:klandrev@uwyo.edu).

Visit [WyAdapt](http://WyAdapt) to see more survey data.



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