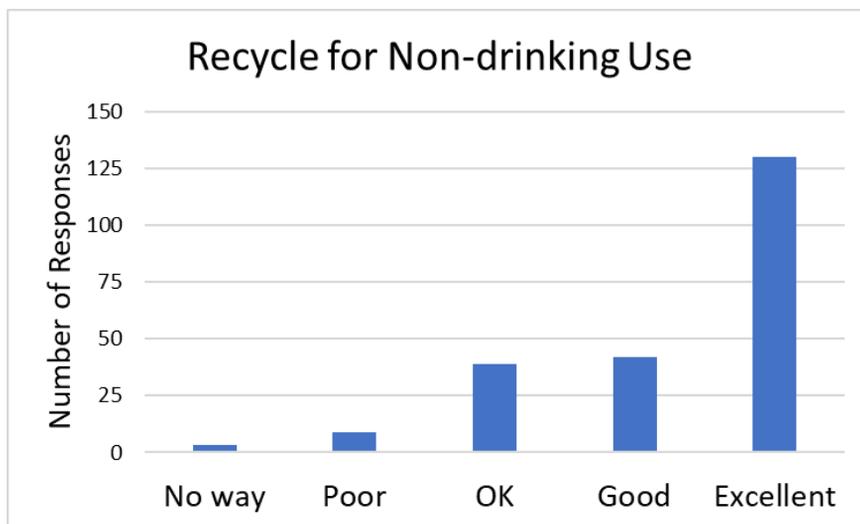
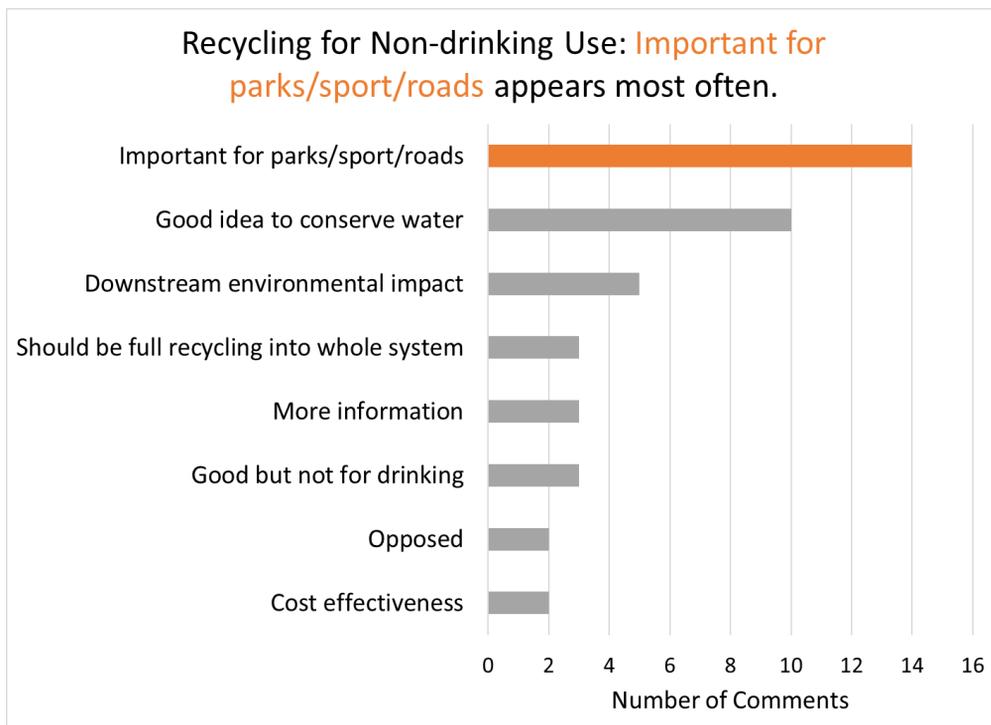


ZNET recently surveyed Uralla Shire residents on nine options for future water security

This is what people said about recycling water for non-drinking use to increase the town water supply



People's comments give an insight into their rating for the option and allow common themes to be identified



Individual comments relating to each theme build a deeper understanding of people's values and opinions

Comment Theme	Type of Comments
Important for parks/sport/roads	Good idea for large areas such as parks and golf courses; should already be doing this to support bowling and golfing greens, water heavy industries like orchards; take the pressure off main town supply; adds to grey water recycling going on in community.
Good idea to conserve water	Recycling is part of continuous conservation, trigger when dam level drops to 50%; we are all drinking recycled water and need to understand and accept this; needs to be implemented for the future; government should help with infrastructure to help town residents to be more water self-sufficient; careful planning 'marketing' campaign to win hearts and minds; may be costly but in drought affected country a valuable option for Council and other businesses.
Downstream environmental impact	Impact on those downstream of treatment plant, especially environment; takes from the environment – creek and ground water; would completely stop the creek which would affect downstream users who rely on creek for domestic use.
Full recycling into whole system	Easier to use all recycled water back into one system; why not do recycled water for all needs? Save water wherever possible recycle all water every time.
More information	As long as treated 100%, some natives don't like recycled water; what cost would be involved with treating water to drinking standards? Can recycled water be put through wetlands to improve quality?
Good but not for drinking	Good to take pressure off town supply to supply non-drinking water; probably would help – perhaps just for council and industrial uses.
Opposed	No; prefer dam/bore
Cost effectiveness	Cost of setting up infrastructure; may need a tank system high cost, reflected in our rates.

Our focus group research provides a rich picture of the *values* that informed people's perspectives

In this project we considered the role that water recycling might play for both potable and non-potable uses. Of the two options the use of recycled water for non-potable uses was generally seen as both positive and a clear preference between the two options. One participant commented, for example, that “People would **happily use it for anything other than being piped back into the dam** and use it for drinking water”, while others suggested that the use of recycled water in parks, gold courses and in roadworks would “be perfect”

While participants were positive about the role of recycled water it was also clear that the **need** for water recycling and the **suitability** of this approach for Uralla remained unclear.

For example, participants questioned whether water recycling would significantly improve water sustainability in Uralla. One participant, for example, questioned: “is recycling water really a viable option for us? Is there enough water in Uralla in the system at the moment? From what we've just said water shortage is not necessarily a major problem. ... **Storage** is the main problem”.

At the same time, the construction of water recycling facilities in Uralla was also understood in the context of wider **values of regional and catchment water management**, and the the potential diversion of water from other uses. Discussion centred here on “people on the bottom of the sewage system who rely on for stock water because during the drought”, and whether the diversion of water from the sewage system would precipitate wider challenges lower in the catchment.

A participant on our focus group summed up much of this discussion by suggesting that moves to consider the role that recycled water may play in Uralla should be **cautious** and **slow**.

If recycling water for non-drinking uses is part of the solution, community concerns would be acknowledged and addressed if Council can communicate on the following key issues:

- ✓ information on the scope of activities that non-drinking water use will be applied and how much reticulated town water will be saved
- ✓ community education campaign on how recycled water can be safely used
- ✓ analysis on how downstream ecosystems and water users could be affected
- ✓ government assistance to recycle wastewater from treatment plant