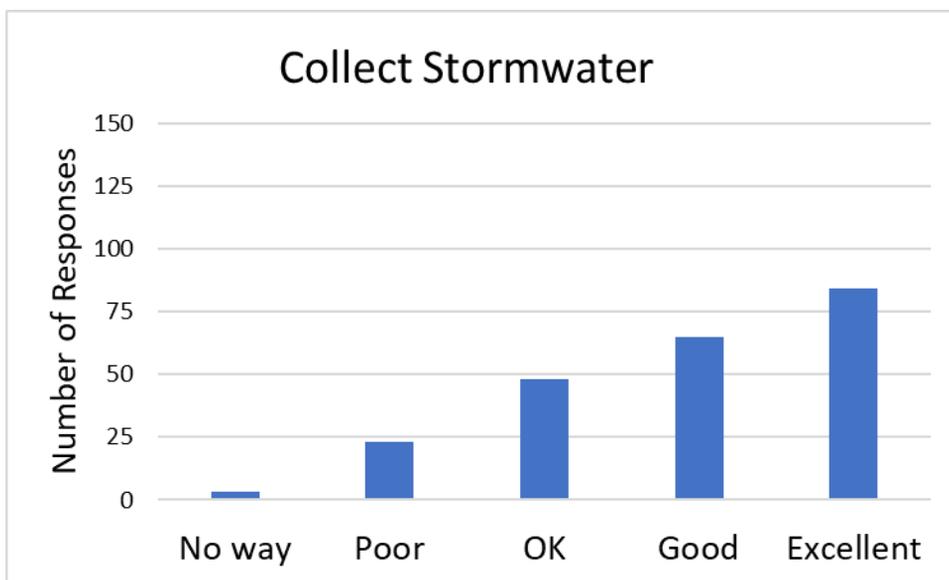
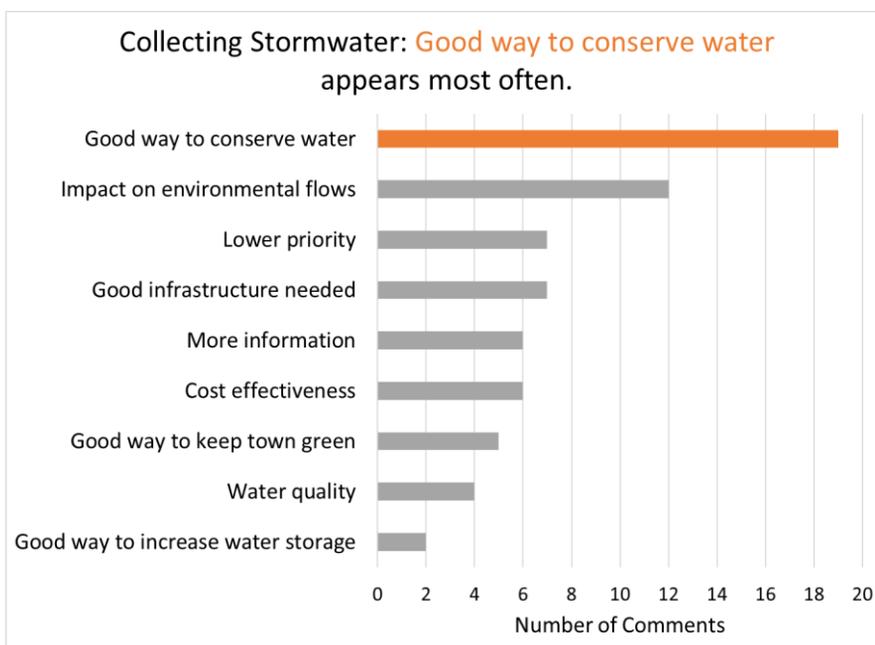


ZNET recently surveyed Uralla Shire residents on nine options for future water security

This is what people said about collecting stormwater run-off to supplement 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
Good way to conserve water	Needs to be implement for the future of our children's children; storage – where will it go? If into the dam then YES, YES, YES!; cost could be high but if done in a high quantum way could last a long time; spend money on this instead of dam wall; potential to increase overall water supply; finally we are thinking! Absolutely should be done!
Impact on environmental flows	Need to guarantee environmental flows into creek; most stormwater needed by ecosystem elsewhere; got to keep the creek life going; takes from the environment – we don't have the right to every drop! Household tanks intercept quite a bit of this already; needs to be a consistent flow in creek for endangered aquatic species and water users downstream.
Lower priority	Lower on the priority list but still useful; household tanks only for storm water harvesting; difficult in Uralla; a higher capacity dam would do this with catchment stormwater.
Good infrastructure needed	Good idea to channel water into wetlands but needs controlled path; tonnes of water flow though our place; there would be a bit of infrastructure but is achievable; put the infrastructure in so it is available when needed; works well elsewhere with right infrastructure; maintenance of gutters and drains; water runs very quickly and floods areas – would need a dam collection point large enough to mitigate flooding.
More information	Like it but need more info; don't really understand the logistics of this; need data on potential quantities and storage capacity; what happens in droughts when it does not rain? How do we balance environmental flows against more water stored?
Cost effectiveness	Cost may be prohibitive due to random nature of storms; high capital input to build system; needs some detailed and careful analysis – could be expensive;
Good way to keep the town green	Keep town vegetation hydrated and alive – better urban microclimate control; could reduce demand on drinking water; good for fire fighting and roads works; would provide Uralla Creek land upgrade; may replenish and direct water to where it is required in Uralla creating a natural flow that can be directed to habitats and wetland; contribute to most liveable town status.
Water quality	Catching plastics and dumped rubbish concerns; suggest only public gardens and roadworks; how filthy is storm water? Is it worse than arsenic?
Good way to increase water storage	Keep more water on site; the more water we can store the better.

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

'Stormwater harvesting' elicited a mixed response in community discussions. It was striking to hear participants discuss stormwater as "lost", or water that had not been "captured". For example, participants spoke of stormwater as "**lost water in the wrong place**" and that the "community isn't **taking advantage of**". Participants spoke vividly of their understanding of stormwater and the prospects for capturing this water for drinking purposes. "I think stormwater [harvesting] is **really interesting**" one participant commented, "because where we are at the top of Hill Street there, the amount of water that runs down from the railway stations down Duke Street, and **I know the catchment** for the creeks are **really important**. So, I've thought about stopping that, but somehow, if you could capture some of that water **it would be remarkable**".

At the same time, participants spoke of the potential cost implications of stormwater harvesting; that "it is going to **cost you an arm and leg and a hip**", and questioned whether "**money-wise, is it worth it?**". Some participants also questioned the safety of stormwater for drinking water. While stormwater harvesting was regarded as generally positive participants questioned whether it should be a **priority**.

There were also concerns about the **ecological value** of stormwater runoff. One participant commented that "stormwater is **doing something for the Murray-Darling** at least because it is water that just literally flows away from the town" while another echoed a concern for the ways in which "we all live in **ecosystems that are used to rely on a certain amount of water**" and asked "how much can we save in water efficiency so those ecosystems get the water they've been operating on for a **hundred** if not **thousands of years?**"

If collecting stormwater run-off is part of the solution, community concerns would be acknowledged and addressed if Council can communicate on the following key issues:

- ✓ the technical feasibility of stormwater collection – yield, infrastructure, and cost
- ✓ impact of stormwater harvesting on flood mitigation, riparian zone health and environmental flows
- ✓ community education on how stormwater water can be safely treated and used for drinking
- ✓ case studies of comparable locations using stormwater to drought-proof their town water supply