

## COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

**Note: Over 1,500 surveys were mailed to randomly chosen residents in all five municipalities in the watershed. Responses from 276 residents are described below.**

- 1. Most people in your neighborhood obtain drinking water from:**  
Private well: 79.3%    Community Well: 14.9%    Unsure: 5.8%  
Comment: Most survey respondents have private wells.
  
- 2. Groundwater and surface water are interconnected:**  
True: 67.8%            False: 5%    Unsure: 27.2%  
Most survey respondents know that groundwater and surface water are interconnected. This concept is critical to understanding watershed ecology.
  
- 3. Your drinking water is (residents could check all boxes that apply):**  
Completely pure and safe: 24.6%  
Tested regularly by you: 23.6%  
Tested regularly by others: 28.6%  
At risk: 13.4%  
Unsure: 30.1%  
Comment: Less than one quarter of survey respondents are confident that their drinking water is pure and safe. Only about half of survey respondents test their water, or have their water tested.
  
- 4. If your drinking water becomes contaminated, do you have an alternative source readily available?**  
Yes: 9.7%    No: 88.1%    Unsure: 2.2%  
Comment: All residents in the Paradise Creek Watershed obtain drinking water from the same groundwater reservoir, either through private or community groundwater wells.
  
- 5. Which stream is nearest to your property?**  
Buzt Run: 4%            Cranberry Creek: 16.9%    Devils Hole Creek: 18.6%  
Forest Hills Run: 9.3%    Indian Run: <1%    Tank Creek: 4%  
Paradise Mainstem: 24.2%    Swiftwater Creek: 22.6%  
Yankee Run: <1%
  
- 6. In which municipality is your property located?**  
Barrett Township: 2.6% (2.5% of watershed residents live in Barrett)  
Coolbaugh Township: 2.9% (20% of watershed residents live in Coolbaugh)  
Mt. Pocono Borough: 12.9% (26.5% of watershed residents live in Mt. Poc.)  
Paradise Township: 65.8% (26.9% of watershed residents live in Paradise)  
Pocono Township: 10.7% (17.1% of watershed residents live in Pocono)  
Tobyhanna Town: 5.2% (6.9% of watershed residents live in Tobyhanna)

Comment: More surveys were mailed to residents in Paradise and Mt. Pocono Borough than other municipalities. This response should not be interpreted to reflect public participation by municipality. This simply represents where most survey respondents reside.

**7. How long have you owned your property?**

Less than one year: 2.9%      One to five years: 20.2%  
Five to ten years: 16.9%      Ten to twenty years: 26.5%  
Greater than 20 years: 33.5%

**8. How do you use your property?**

Primary residence: 94.2%      Seasonal residence: 2.7%  
Agriculture: 1.2%      Recreation: <1%      Business/Commercial: <1%  
Open space/forest: <1%

**9. Does a stream traverse your property?**

Yes: 19.9%      No: 80.1%

**10. Owning property near a stream or lake can have benefits. Which of the following do you consider beneficial (respondents could check all that applied):**

Living in a scenic place: 87.1%      Place for recreation: 55.9%  
Increased property value: 51.3%      Place to fish/hunt: 49.8%  
Place for wildlife to live: 79.1%

**11. Have any of the following caused you concern during the last few years (respondents could check all that apply)?**

More flooding: 16.4%      Water seems dirtier: 20.1%  
Eroding stream banks: 24.6%      Wells going dry: 59.8%  
Less water in stream: 61.5%      Fewer fish or fish kills: 18.0%  
Groundwater contamination: 55.7%

**12. Homeowners activities can contribute to water pollution. Which of the following homeowner activities can cause contamination of surface and/or groundwater supplies (respondents could check all that apply)?**

Poor septic maintenance: 90.2%      Overuse of pesticides: 84.5%  
Animal waste: 60.7%      Hazardous substances dumped into septics: 80.7%  
Hazardous substances dumped onto the ground: 86.0%  
Overuse of fertilizers: 72.8%      Poorly constructed drinking water wells: 58.9%

**13. New growth and development can occur without impacting water supplies and water quality if adequate safeguards are in place:**

True: 48.0%      False: 29.2%      Unsure: 22.8%

**14. Adequate safeguards to protect water supply and water quality are already in place:**

True: 7.6% False: 41.1% Unsure: 51.3%

**15. State agencies are responsible for regulating sewage treatment plants and industrial discharges. In your opinion, how are they doing?**

Doing a good job: 12% Should be doing more: 46% Unsure: 42%

**16. Local municipalities are responsible for land use regulations that can help protect water supplies and water quality. In your opinion, how are they doing?**

Doing a good job: 21% Should be doing more: 44% Unsure: 35%

**17. How important is it to control the following in order to protect the Paradise Creek Watershed?**

Title	Very	Somewhat	Not
Runoff from construction sites	75.1	22.7	1.1
Runoff from parking lots	64.1	30.0	3.3
Leading underground tanks	93.4	4.8	<1
Litter/illegal dumping	82.1	16.5	<1
Sedimentation/erosion	60.4	32.2	3.3
Failing septic systems	87.2	10.3	<1
Sewage treatment plant discharges	89.0	7.0	1.5
Runoff from roadways	56.4	37.7	4.0
Industrial discharges	90.5	6.6	1.5
Runoff from lawns	37.7	44.3	15.0
Runoff from golf courses	45.4	35.2	15.4

**18. The following goals were identified as priorities during a study of the Pocono Creek Watershed. How important are the following to you?**

**(Answers are percent respondents who consider the answer either important or very important)**

Improve water quality 98.9%

Preserve stream corridors and floodplains 99.4%

Coordinate watershed planning between all levels of government 98.9%

Maintain existing stream flow 99.4%

Preserve open space 99.4%

Develop using conservation design 99.4%

Consider economic impacts of new rules 97.2%

**19. I would be more supportive of watershed protection initiatives in the Poconos (respondents could check all that applied):**

If someone would contact me and let me know how to help 19.8%

If I knew these initiatives would promote continued growth and development 21.4%

If I knew these initiatives would slow or inhibit new development 61.8%

If I understood more about watershed ecology 50.4%

**20. I would like to see more public education on the following topics (respondents could check all that apply and/or add their own):**

Septic system maintenance 66.5%  
Drinking water testing/treatment 67.3%  
Existing regulatory programs 44.2%  
Watershed ecology/stewardship 57.3%  
Trees and plants 46.2%  
Wildlife 35.4%  
Bird watching 25.4%  
Fishing and hunting 22.3%

**21. I have the following specific concerns regarding the Paradise Creek Watershed:**

See comments, attached

**22. I hope to attend the public kick-off meeting for the Paradise Creek Watershed Assessment and Protection Plan Project so that I may (respondents could check all that apply):**

Keep track of how the team is spending my tax dollars 59.3%  
Learn more about the health of the Paradise Creek Watershed 91.5%  
Meet the team of scientists conducting this study 52.5%  
Find out how I can become more involved in this project 40.7%

**21. Respondents had the following specific concerns regarding the Paradise Creek Watershed:**

- Mercury. Also, the water does not appear to be clean colorwise or garbage is not taken out. The huge amount of run off and drainages going into the creek.
- Over development.
- Concerned about discharge into streams and local small streams, including ponds.
- That I will always have clean water to drink.
- Higher taxes. Good ideas, but doesn't seem to work except to get higher taxes.
- Maintaining property value and not having to worry about my children if they play in the creek.
- Pollution from growth and people/contractors not disposing of waste properly.
- "Excessive litigation" by our local government in association with private club.

- At one time there was a stream in my back yard. Now it is just a swamp. What can we do to make it a stream again?
- Pollution.
- That there be more done to the Swiftwater Creek. It is eroding terribly. Nobody wants to do anything about it. Everyone passes the buck. I guess we taxpayers don't have any say because no one wants to help us or listen to us about the creek.
- Will it be controlled by the cooperative townships?
- Stream bank erosion.
- Stream bank and stream bed maintenance. Access to the streams for environment-friendly people.
- DEP is very lax. The rules need to be updated. Need very strong, pushy people to keep our water safe in all areas.
- My concern of over-development is for all wildlife and water supplies.
- That it may be polluted.
- Swiftwater Creek is in the worst condition that I have ever seen. I have lived next to it all my life.
- Groundwater contamination – MCTA (Martz).
- Additional development/housing with loss of tree and ground cover.
- New owners of upstream properties being lax or indifferent to discharging wastes into Paradise Stream.
- DER is a joke.
- Over-development near the Paradise.
- Talk and not enough action.
- This is the first time I heard of any concern on this topic.
- Slow new development. This includes industrial and corporations.
- More construction. More people. More pollution.
- Not enough land is permanently protected from development of any kind – including “recreation” projects that require building. New growth and development always creates more impermeable surfaces. No planning/safeguards can prevent this.
- Water quality, flooding of our property/basement, etc.
- Too many people, not enough room for wildlife. Drinking water from Devils Hole Creek 20 years ago was okay. But now it may make you sick.
- Did the lawsuit with Aventis bring on this watershed study?
- None.
- I am interested in the possibilities of more dams and water flow control systems.
- Keeping it clean.
- Runoff from Aventis. Why no retention ponds?
- I know very little about what the Paradise Creek Watershed is all about. Send out more info in the mail (no address supplied).
- There are far too many people on this planet. The same goes for Paradise Creek Watershed. I know George W. Bush goes to church. I don't know

for sure if there is a God, but I hope there is. I know for sure there is an environment.

- More restrictions on the building of dams.
- ATV abuse.
- Unregulated development.
- Aventis – they keep building = more waste. What are they dumping? Several times in paper. Who checks them?
- Excessive building (out of control).
- Who is monitoring streams? How often, and how about publishing the results of the testing for the general public?
- Area does not become over-populated.
- Our tax dollar funds a great deal of the waterways monopolized by the “private, non-resident fishing club” on 940. It would be nice to know how much financial obligation they have to these communities.
- Preserve all wetlands and wildlife areas for the future, and stop builders from building in these areas. More strict zoning laws that are enforced.
- Illegal dumping from previous years.
- Bank erosion along stream.
- I believe this area is in danger from over-development and that the local government is more concerned with attracting and permitting new businesses than with preserving the natural beauty of the area.
- Cost to residents – most of us live pretty close to the bone.
- Simply too many new homes going up and too many unconcerned people moving in.
- Floods tear up my driveway big time. Adult entertainment will pollute all our environment and economy.
- Keep it clean.
- New resident – little knowledge on subject.
- Let’s be honest with the residents of Paradise Township. This is not a “survey,” instead it is a “test” to see just how much residents really know about watershed ecology and their drinking water.
- Neighbors wasting water, even during drought emergency. Residents need to learn the severity of our water situation – everyone believes our water supplies are unlimited and drinkable.
- Pocono Manor sewage disposal and Aventis Pasteur waste disposal.
- Drought – wells drying up. Poor water quality.
- Over population of deer, tick-borne illness.
- Protection of native trout population.
- Protecting native and existing trout population.
- Development.
- Anything that does or may reduce water quality.
- Sure would like to fish/hunt – all seem to be posted “No Trespassing.”
- Pocono Manor, Aventis, PM school, Forest Run are major potential problems.
- Sewage, runoff, and chemicals.

- Deteriorating well water quality in vicinity of high school campus.
- Overall water quality from upstream discharge.
- Not enough knowledge.
- State agencies are not doing well at all. Too many agencies involved with differing agendas – witness Brady’s Lake debacle.
- Mt. Airy golf course runoff fills my well. Sprays for weeds, sprays for bugs, whatever would cost a mint to test for. Two creeks fill Mt. Airy’s so-called lake. Schools waste of water should keep football field green. Who would dare poorly construct drinking water well? Overuse of fertilizer – if you overuse you kill your crops. There’s only so much water in each vein. Watering football field at high school ran my well dry, Mrs. XXXXXX in Paradise Valley and a man on Upper Swiftwater Road. If there were adequate safeguards, automatic washing machines, pools, dishwashers, lawn watering would be condemned. Water meters would help every home and count noses in homes. Do away with macadam.
- Over development and its impact on waters. Do we have enough water to support development? If so, then how much growth is too much?
- Pollution.
- Death of hemlock forests.
- Impact of development: industrial, residential and recreational.
- The maintenance of water quality without falling victim to curtailment of all development and/or the NIMBY syndrome.
- None. If we can maintain a high quality in our streams. Maintain a strict overview of quarry expansion!
- Proper disposal of chemicals, medications, household products.
- Studying the TMDL for Swiftwater Creek and ensuring there are adequate controls to keep it safely below that level.
- Possible quarrying anywhere in Paradise Township.
- Developers buying and building on all vacant Pocono property = killing Pocono Mountains.
- We have beautiful, clear streams in our area. We would like to see them stay that way.
- Increase studies on ecology.
- Winter road salt, anti-skid materials. New growth and development can occur within limits if we know and better understand surface and groundwater systems. State agencies do not yet understand the cumulative effects of multiple discharges into headwater streams. Local municipalities still have a channel and drain approach to stormwater, rather than a retain and recharge approach. Water protection initiatives should properly manage and regulate growth based on available water resources and protecting adequate open space and natural resources. Rapidly expanding disturbance/development (commercial, residential, industrial) of Paradise headwaters. Limited and rapidly decreasing public access to streams and stream corridors.

- It should be completely “safeguarded” for our future generations in the Poconos if we wish and will to survive.
- For the most part, I do not want to see the swamp along 380 near the 940 exist developed. It should be a public park/environmental education area. Who knows what Consolidated Freight dumps on the ground, that flows into the drains. No one checks up on the trucking terminal, to my knowledge. The headwaters for the Swiftwater Creek is a swamp which Pocono Manor is trying to sell to a developer for commercial use. They claim it has “no wetlands.” Someone should buy the 100 acres along 380 and 940 to protect the Swiftwater Creek headwaters.
- Runoff into the Swiftwater and Pocono Manor and High School.
- Devils Hole Creek rises and falls much faster since Pocono Farms East was developed and paved. There is a limit to new growth and development. Topography of Poconos and smallness of streams wasn’t meant to support large population. Streams not large enough to dilute processed sewage. Example: Mt. Pocono, Mt. Airy on Forest Hills Run.
- Are the supervisors using this to get back at Aventis and Mt. Pocono?