

# U.S. Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey Report

DECEMBER 2019



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
**ENERGY**

Legacy  
Management

# Survey Objectives

LM conducted an online survey of its stakeholders that would:

- **Quantify and track** stakeholder satisfaction with current LM communications.
- **Identify the words and phrases** within the central tenet of the master narrative that impact stakeholder favorability.
- **Assess the most important pillars, message, and themes** to drive positive perceptions of LM and its sites.
- Explore the importance, clarity, and effectiveness of **radiation messaging**.



# Survey Methodology

- All stakeholders in LM’s stakeholder database were invited to participate in the survey via email (or postcard for those stakeholders for whom LM did not have an email address).
- A total of 378 DOE LM stakeholders participated in the survey from August 29 to October 20, 2019, with representation across 92 LM sites.
- The margin of error for the survey is  $\pm 5.0\%$ .
- The nearby table details the audience subgroups that are analyzed throughout this report.

Audience Subgroups	Sample Size	Margin of error
<i>Total Stakeholders</i>	378	$\pm 5.0\%$
<i>Elected Officials/Regulators</i>	51*	$\pm 13.7\%$
<i>Community/Tribal Leaders</i>	105	$\pm 9.6\%$
<i>Other Stakeholders</i>	222	$\pm 6.6\%$
<i>Fernald Preserve</i>	144	$\pm 8.2\%$
<i>Grand Junction</i>	73*	$\pm 11.5\%$
<i>Rocky Flats</i>	55*	$\pm 13.2\%$
<i>Other sites**</i>	160	$\pm 7.8\%$

\*Indicates small sample size  $n < 100$ . Directional findings only.  
\*\*All other sites had  $< 50$  respondents. Respondents were able to select multiple sites that they were familiar with.



# A Note on Survey Tracking

- Elements of the 2019 stakeholder survey were designed to track against questions from a previous stakeholder research conducted by LM in 2012.
- Where possible, this report tracks the shifts in stakeholder perceptions over time.
  - Total sample size for the 2012 survey was 252 with a margin of error of  $\pm 6.2\%$ .
  - Total sample size for the 2019 survey is 378 with a margin of error of  $\pm 5.0\%$ .
- Changes from 2012 to 2019 of  $\pm 12$  percentage points or more are statistically significant and have been highlighted throughout this report.



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# Executive Summary

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ROCKY FLATS SITE  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
NO TRESPASSING  
TELEPHONE NUMBER: (877) 695-5322  
[www.LM.doe.gov](http://www.LM.doe.gov)

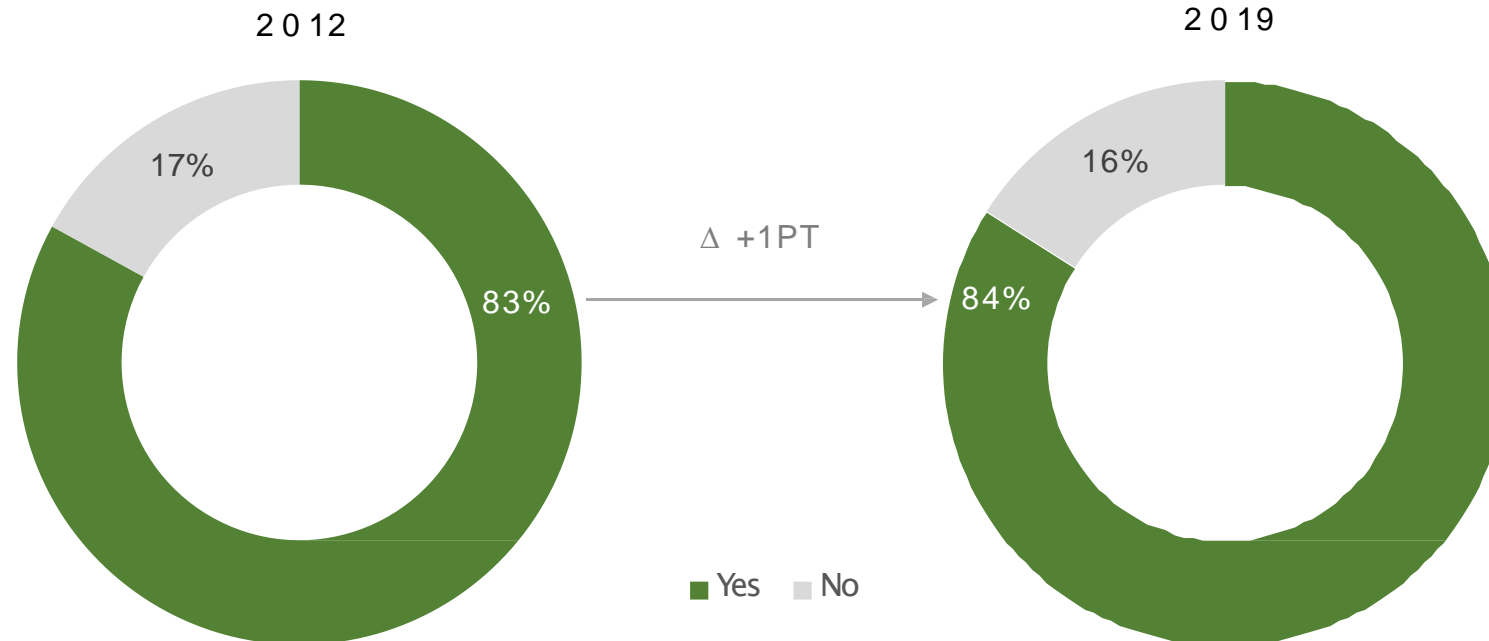


U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
**ENERGY**

Legacy  
Management

# Performance Satisfaction: Trust in LM's Remedies Remains High

LM's Remedies Are Protective of Stakeholders and the Environment  
(Shown: Percent-Selected Response)



Q8. Concerning the sites you value most or are more familiar with, do you feel that LM's remedies are protecting you and the environment? (Shown among Total [2012 217, 2019 293]; 2019 data rebased to exclude respondents who selected "Don't Know")  
Statistically significant differences from 2012 to 2019 are highlighted in red or blue.

# Communications Satisfaction: Key Findings and Implications

## FINDINGS

## IMPLICATIONS

1

Stakeholders are moderately satisfied with LM communications, but positive ratings have declined significantly since 2012. This is primarily driven by an overall dip in stakeholder engagement with LM communications.



Deepen outreach efforts and leverage email to drive stakeholders to additional LM channels, especially the website.

2

Engagement and satisfaction varies by audience and site. Satisfaction is highest among stakeholders at Fernald and community/tribal leaders. Ratings are lowest among stakeholders at Rocky Flats, those at other sites, and elected officials/regulators.



Identify best practices from priority sites that can be applied more broadly; and, consider opportunities to bolster communications with elected officials and regulators.

3

Moving forward, stakeholders want to see LM build on its foundation of trust through more community engagement and communications outreach. There is consistent interest across audiences in getting more information from the LM website, meetings, and in local news.



Expand LM's communications on owned channels like the website and on social media.

# Master Narrative: Key Findings and Implications

## FINDINGS

## IMPLICATIONS

4

The central tenet of stewardship performs well across audience sub-groups and resonates with their understanding of LM's mission. Top performing language reinforces LM's commitment to stewardship and positions LM as a caretaker and a protector of its stakeholders and the environment.



Amplify language that reinforces LM's role as protecting human health and the environment and being a steward of cultural, historical, and natural resources at its sites

5

Stakeholders believe the most important master narrative pillars for LM to communicate are protecting the "environment" and "public health and safety." While the "community" and "history" pillars are perceived as less important, history messaging is still critical as it relates to clean-up and risk mitigation.



Prioritize communicating to stakeholders on how LM prevents public exposure to hazardous waste; monitors environmental impacts; conducts and shares results of regular inspections; and collaborates with federal, state, and local agencies.

6

Stakeholders are in unanimous agreement that it is also important for LM to communicate about radiation. Phrases like "naturally occurring," "exposed to radiation everyday" and "reduced radiation levels" help stakeholders understand this messaging.



For LM sites with radiation concerns, explain how radiation is naturally occurring and contextualize site radiation levels compared to exposure from everyday experiences.



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# KEY FINDING 1:

Stakeholders are moderately satisfied with LM communications, but positive ratings have declined significantly since 2012.

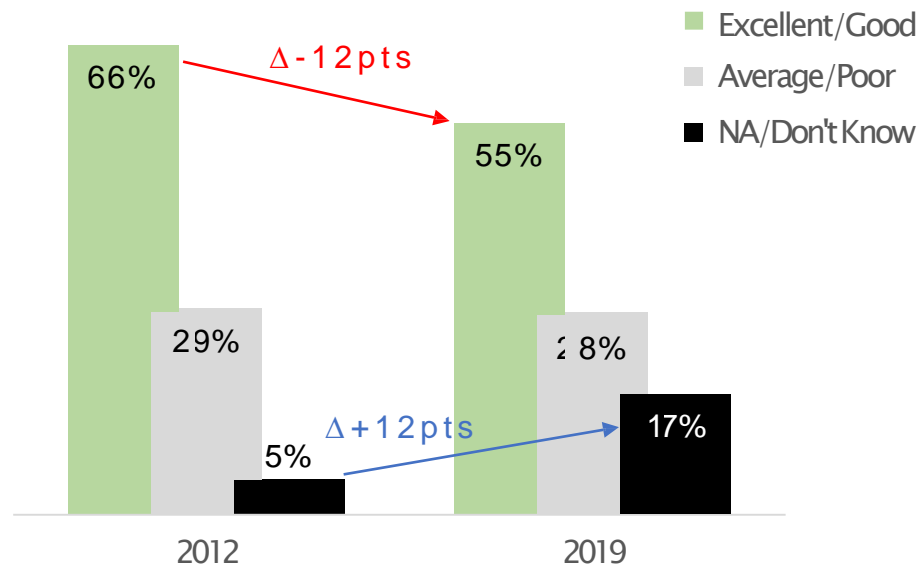
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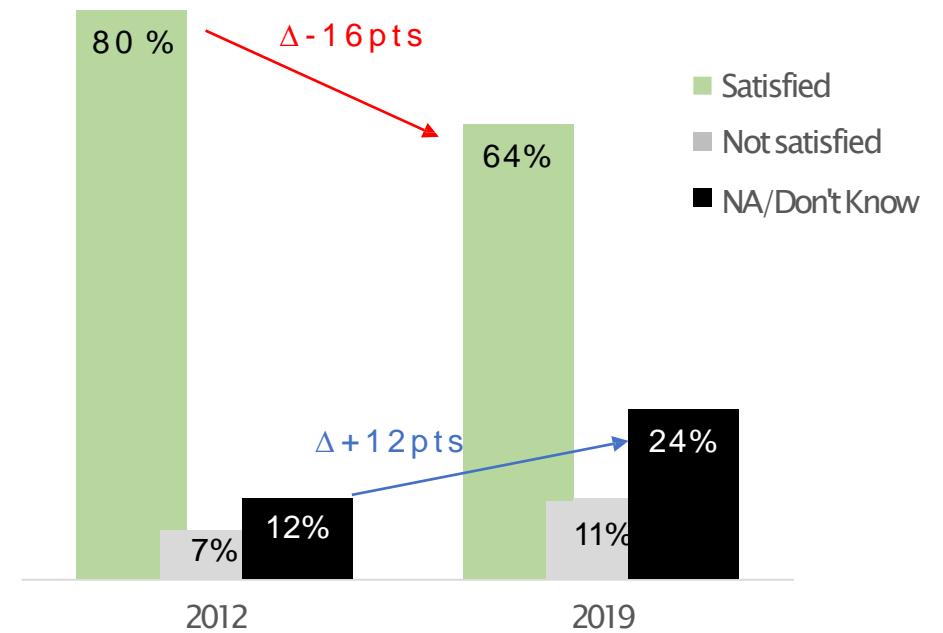
# Key Finding 1 – Overall Satisfaction Ratings

Stakeholders are moderately satisfied with LM’s communications, but engagement with LM outreach has significantly decreased.

Communications Rating  
(Shown: Top 2 Box/Bottom 2 Box/Don't Know)



Satisfaction with Public Involvement Opportunities  
and Responsiveness to Input/Questions  
(Shown: Top 2 Box/Bottom 2 Box/Don't Know)



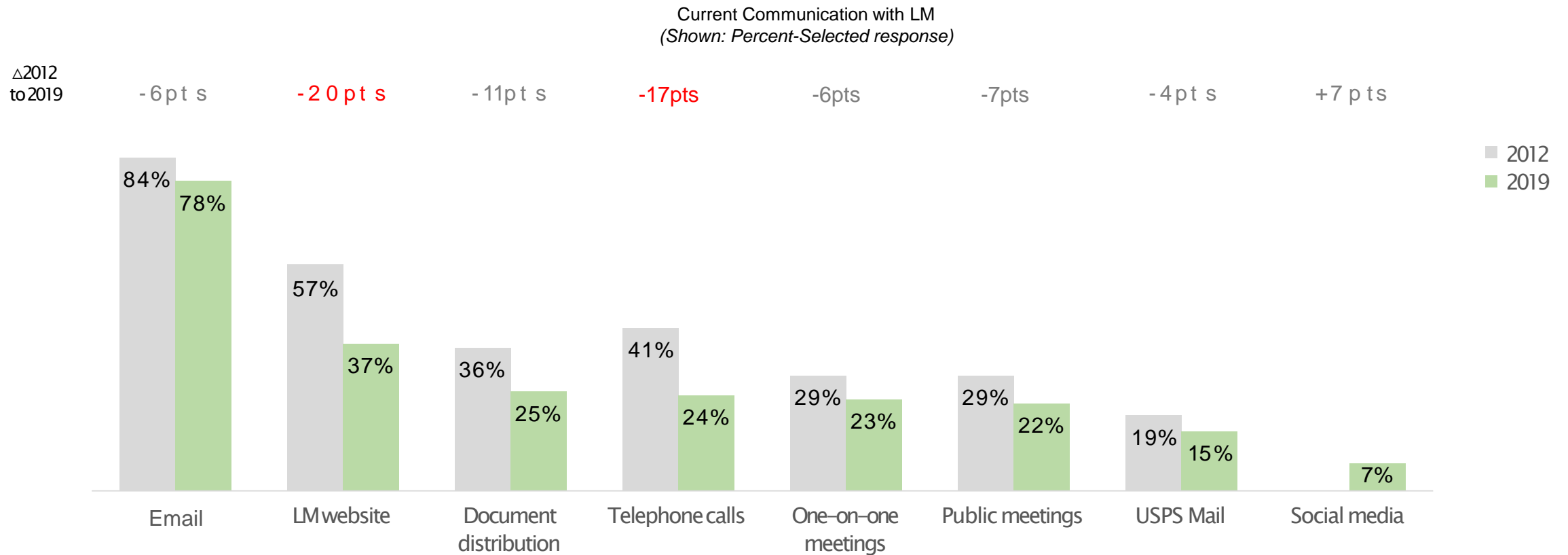
Q7. How would you rate your communications with LM? (Shown among Total [2012 239, 2019 378])

Q11. Overall, how satisfied are you with LM's public involvement opportunities and responsiveness to your input/questions? (Shown among Total [2012 222, 2019 378])

NOTE: Statistically significant differences from 2012 to 2019 are highlighted in red or blue.

# Key Finding 1 – Current Communication Channels

Reported communication has dropped across nearly all channels since 2012.



Q3. In what ways do you initiate communication and/or receive information from LM?  
(Shown among Total [2012 242, 2019 378])

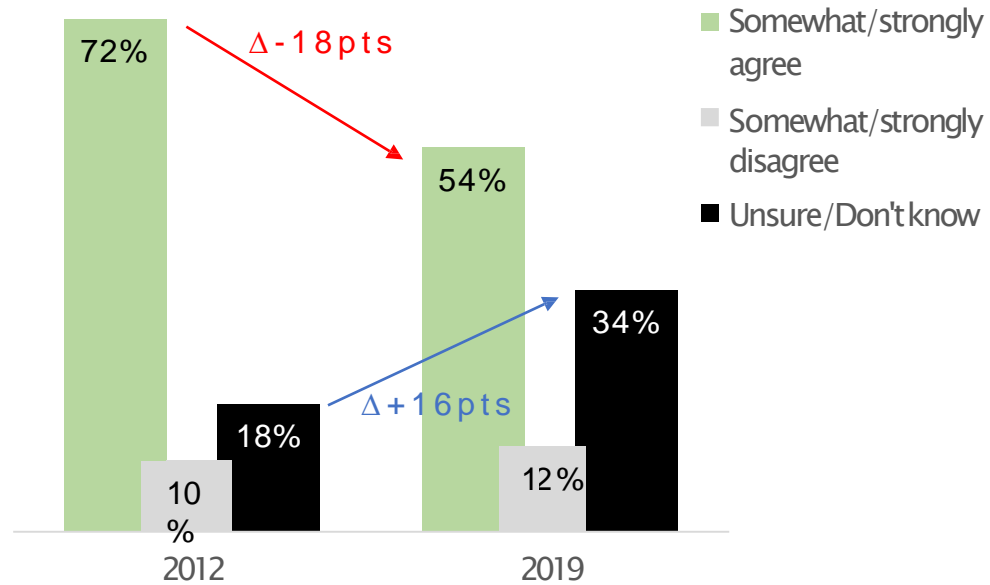
NOTE: Statistically significant differences from 2012 to 2019 are highlighted in red or blue.

# Key Finding 1 – LM Website Satisfaction

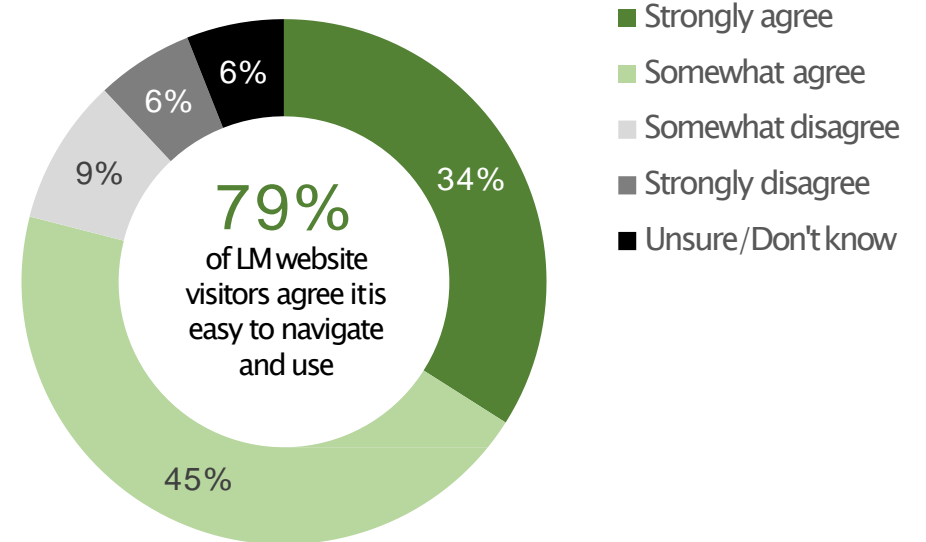
Satisfaction with LM website navigation has also declined, driven by a dip in overall usage...

...However, those who **have** visited the site rate it as **somewhat** easy to navigate and use.

LM Website Ease of Navigation and Use  
(Shown: Top 2 Box/Bottom 2 Box/Don't know)



2019 LM Website Ease of Navigation and Use  
Among Those Who Have Visited the LM Website  
(Shown: Percent-selected Response)



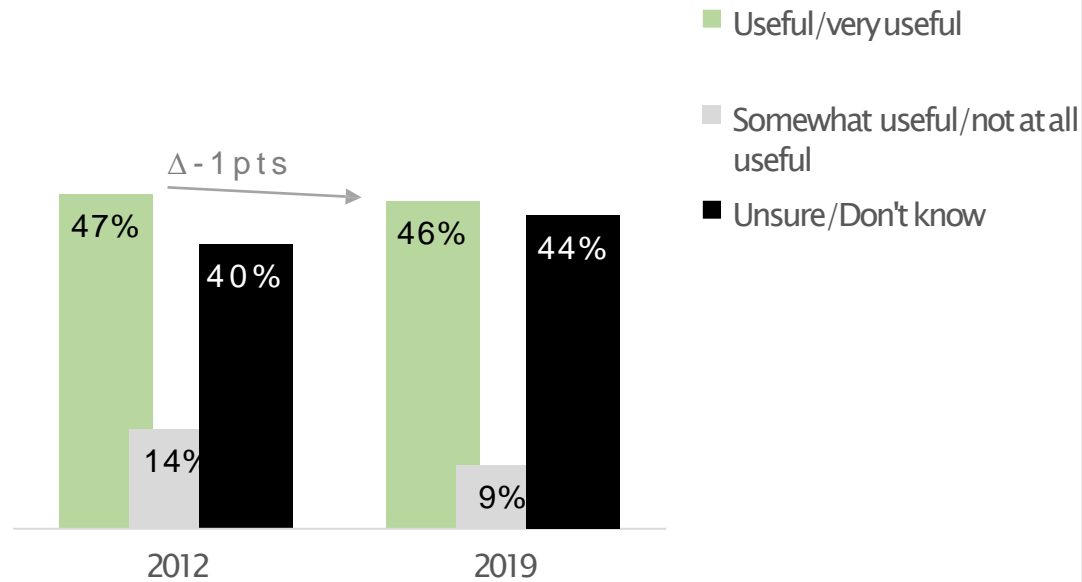
Q5. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: LM's website is easy to navigate and use.  
(Shown among Total [2012 241, 2019 378] and stakeholders who have visited the LM website [140])  
NOTE: Statistically significant differences from 2012 to 2019 are highlighted in red or blue.

# Key Finding 1 – Public Meeting Satisfaction

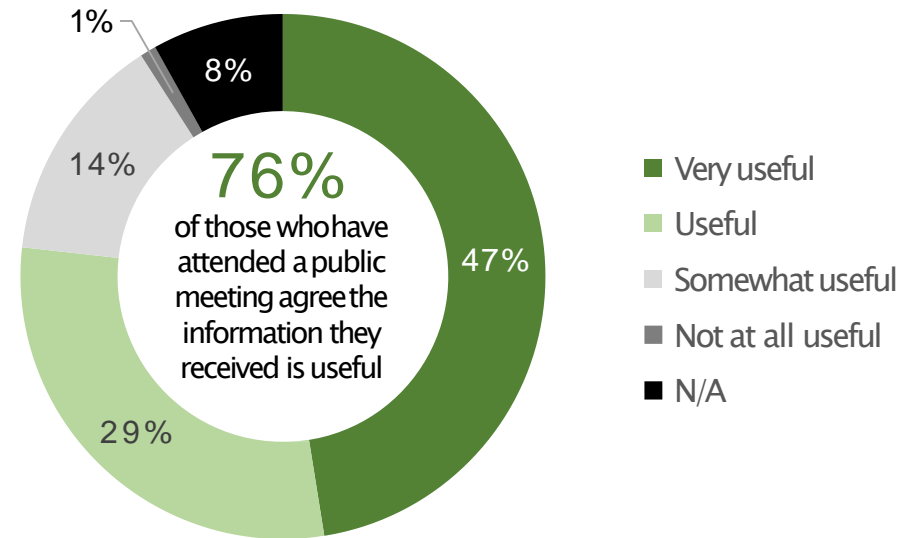
Satisfaction with information received at public meetings remains steady...

...And, those who **have** attended an LM meeting rate the information they received as **very** useful.

Usefulness of Information at Public Meetings  
(Shown: Top 2 Box/Don't know)



2019 Usefulness of Information at Public Meetings Among Those Who Have Attended an LM Meeting  
(Shown: Percent-Selected Response)

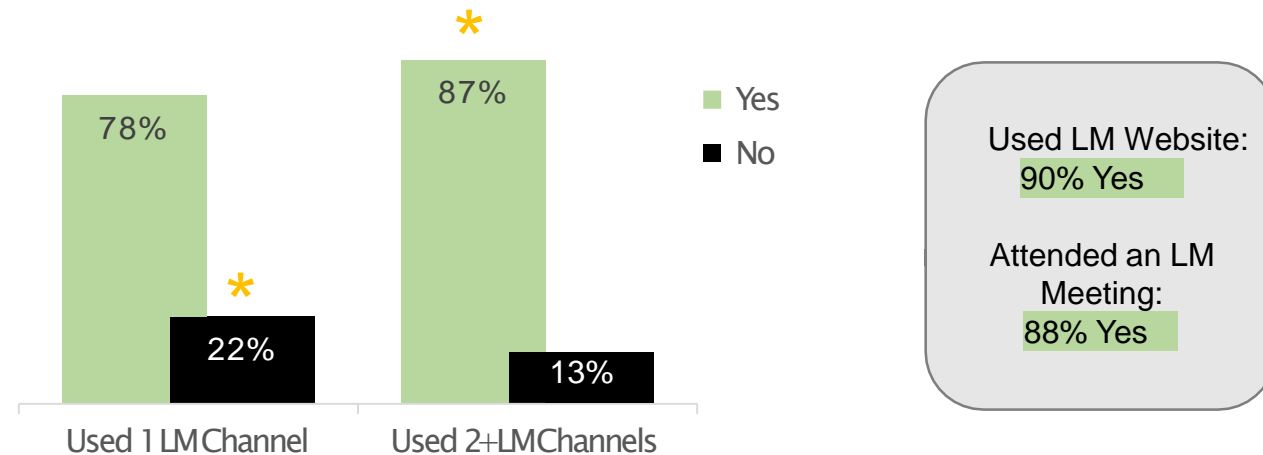


Q6. If you have attended a public meeting and/or workshop, how useful was the information that you received?  
(Shown among Total [2012 n=238, 2019 n=378], attended meeting, n=83).

NOTE: Statistically significant differences from 2012 to 2019 are highlighted in red or blue.

Those who have used multiple channels are more trusting of LM’s remedies.

2019 LM’s Remedies Are Protective of Stakeholders and the Environment by Use of LM Communication Channels  
(Shown: Percent-Selected Response)



Q8. Concerning the sites you value most or are more familiar with, do you feel that LM’s remedies are protecting you and the environment?  
(Shown among those who used 1 LM channel [2019 109], used 2+ LM channels [2019 184], used LM Website [2019 125], attended LM Meeting [2019 115]; Data rebased to exclude respondents who selected “Don’t Know”).

NOTE: Statistically significant differences by 2019 channel usage are highlighted in yellow.



## Strategic Implication:

Deepen outreach efforts and leverage email to drive stakeholders to additional LM channels, especially the website.



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# KEY FINDING 2:

Engagement and satisfaction varies by site and audience.

*NOTE: All data shown in the remainder of the report is 2019 data only.*

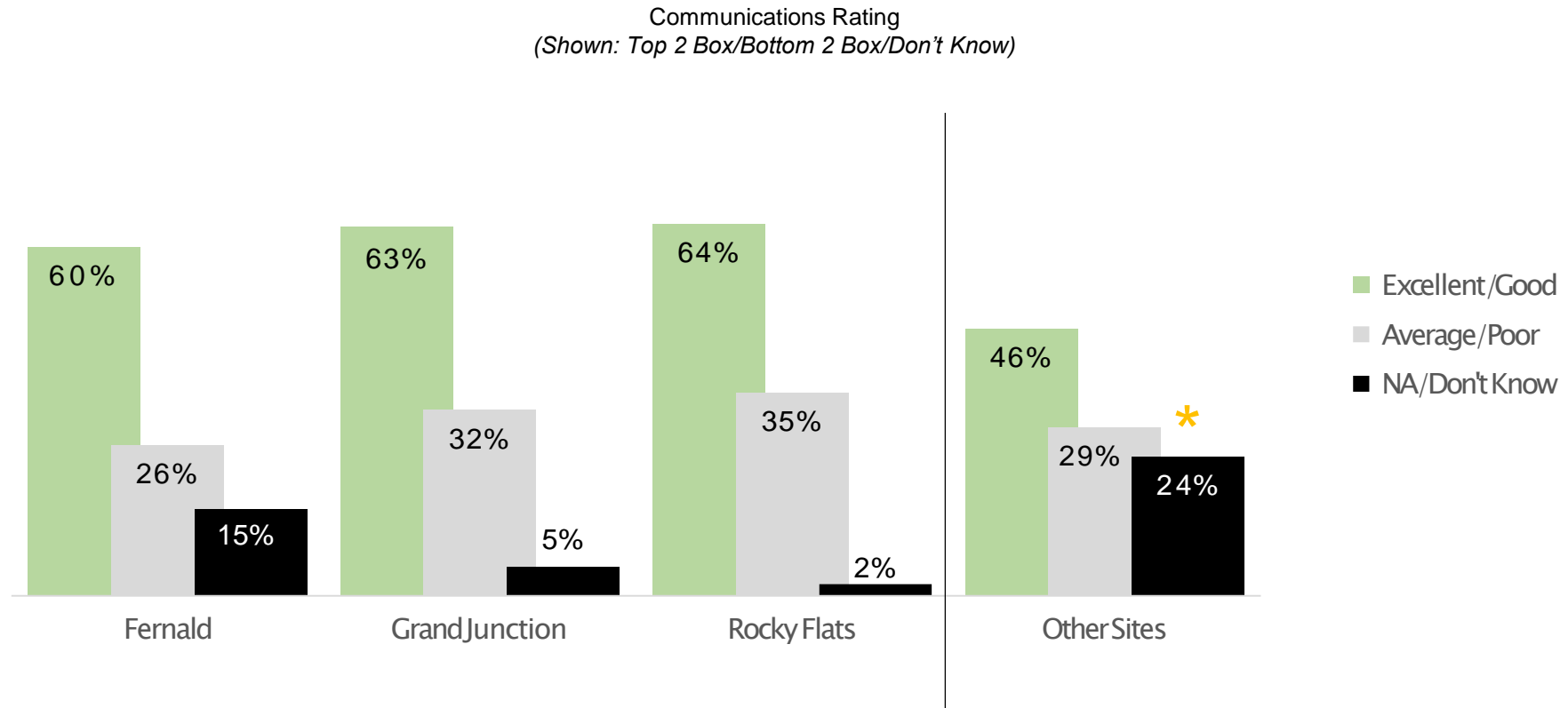
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## Key Finding 2 – Overall Ratings by Sites

Satisfaction is higher among priority sites. At other sites, less than half rate LM communications as “good” or “excellent.”



Q7. How would you rate your communications with LM? (Shown among stakeholders at Fernald [144], Grand Junction [73\*], Rocky Flats [55\*], and Other sites [160])

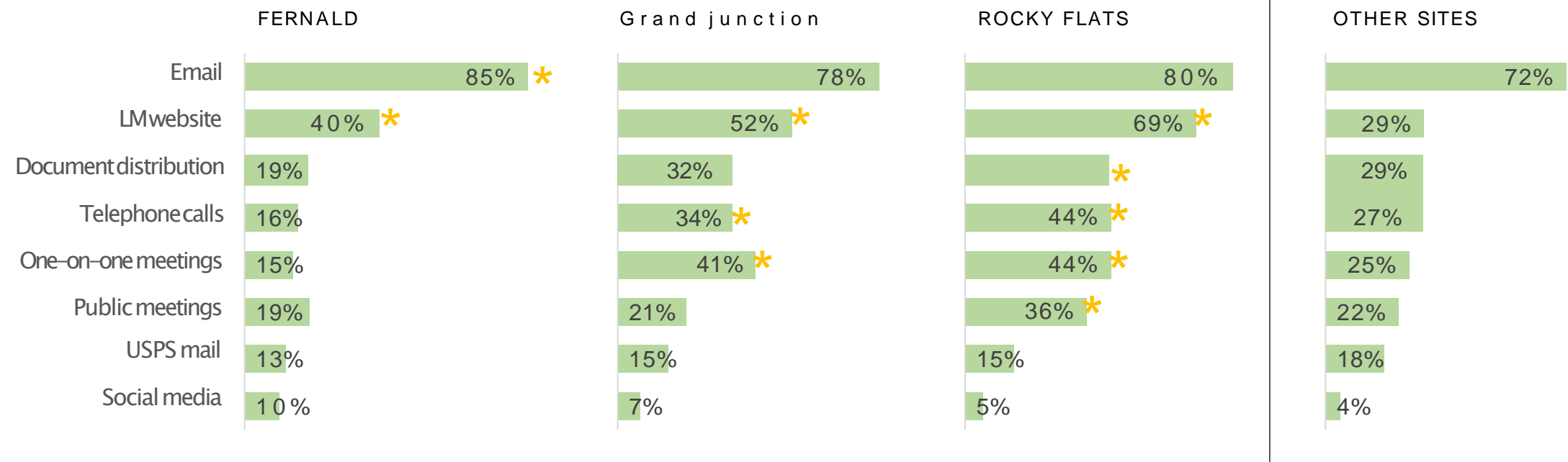
\*Indicates small sample size n<100.

Statistically significant differences by site are highlighted in yellow.

# Key Finding 2 – Current Channels by Site

Rocky flats stakeholders use the greatest range of channels. Usage is lower across channels at other sites.

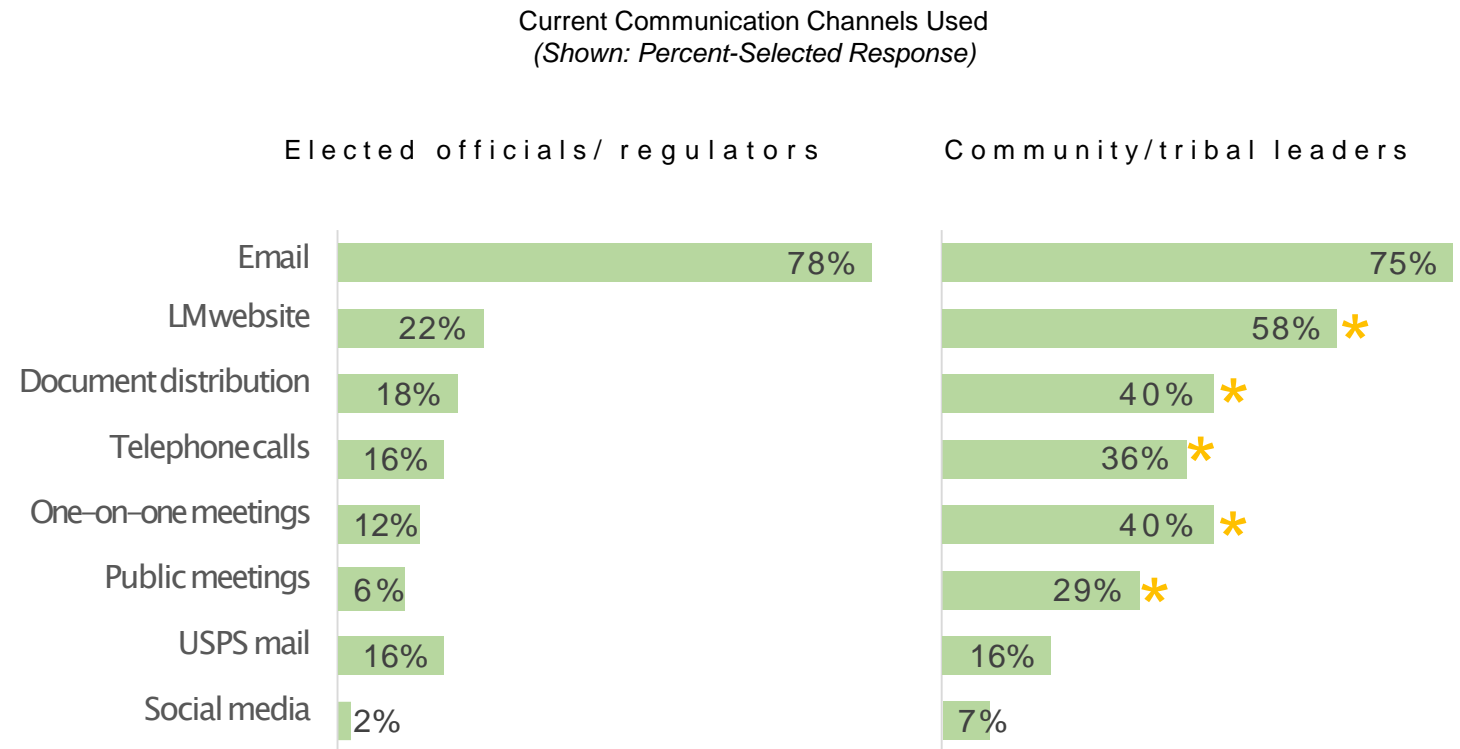
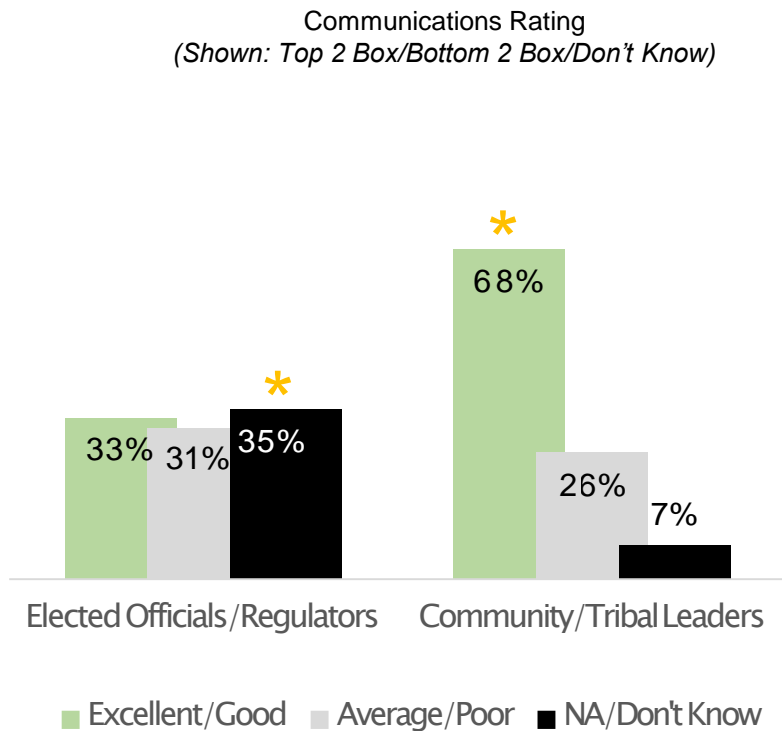
Current Communication Channels Used  
(Shown: Percent-Selected Response)



Q3. In what ways do you initiate communication and/or receive information from LM? (Shown among Total [2012 242, 2019 378])  
 (Shown among stakeholders at Fernald [144], Grand Junction [73\*], Rocky Flats [55\*], and Other sites [160]) \*Indicates small sample size n<100.  
 Statistically significant differences by site are highlighted in yellow.

# Key Finding 2 – Ratings and Channels by Audience

Community and tribal leaders are far more engaged and satisfied than elected officials and regulators.



Q7. How would you rate your communications with LM? (Shown among Elected Officials/Regulators [51\*], Community/Tribal Leaders [105])

Q3. In what ways do you initiate communication and/or receive information from LM? (Shown among Total [2012 242, 2019 378])

\*Indicates small sample size n<100. Statistically significant differences by audiences are highlighted in yellow.



## Strategic Implication:

Identify best practices from priority sites that can be applied more broadly, and consider opportunities to bolster communications with elected officials and regulators.



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## KEY FINDING 3:

Moving forward, stakeholders want to see LM build on its foundation of trust through more community engagement and communications outreach.

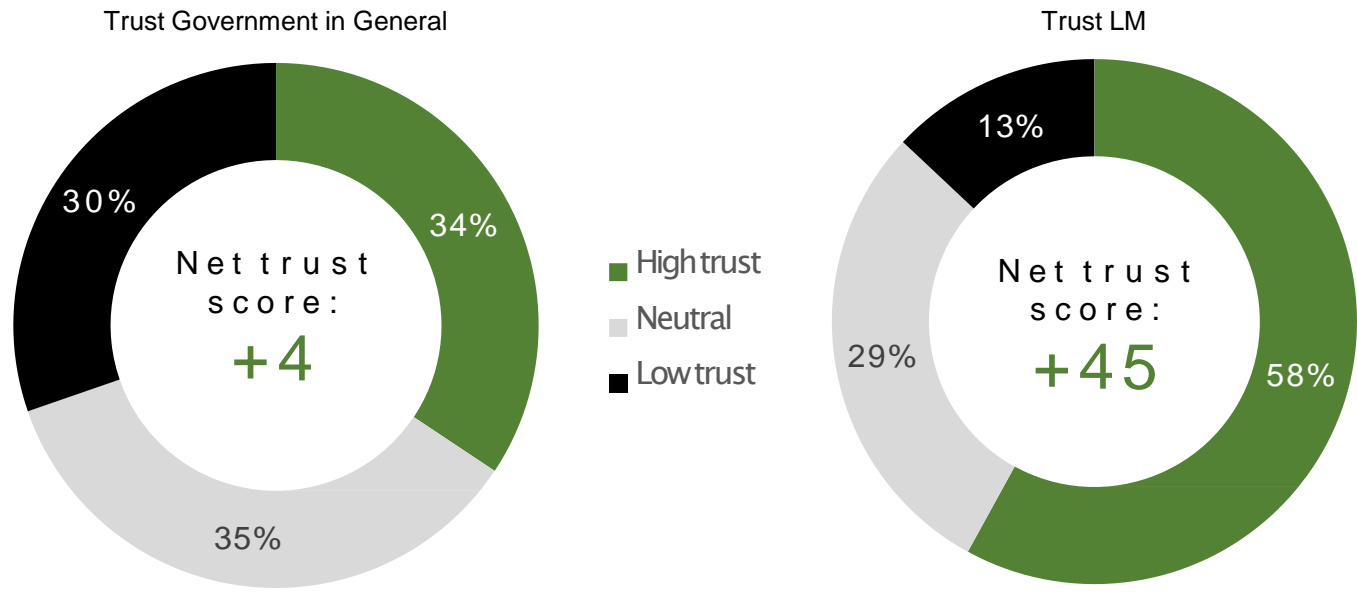
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# Key Finding 3 – Trust in LM Versus Government

LM is trusted more than the government in general. Highly engaged stakeholders are most trusting.

Trust in Government vs. LM  
 (Shown: Top 3 Box [High Trust], Neutral, Bottom 4 Box [Low Trust])  
 "Net Trust Score" = % "High Trust" minus % "Low Trust"



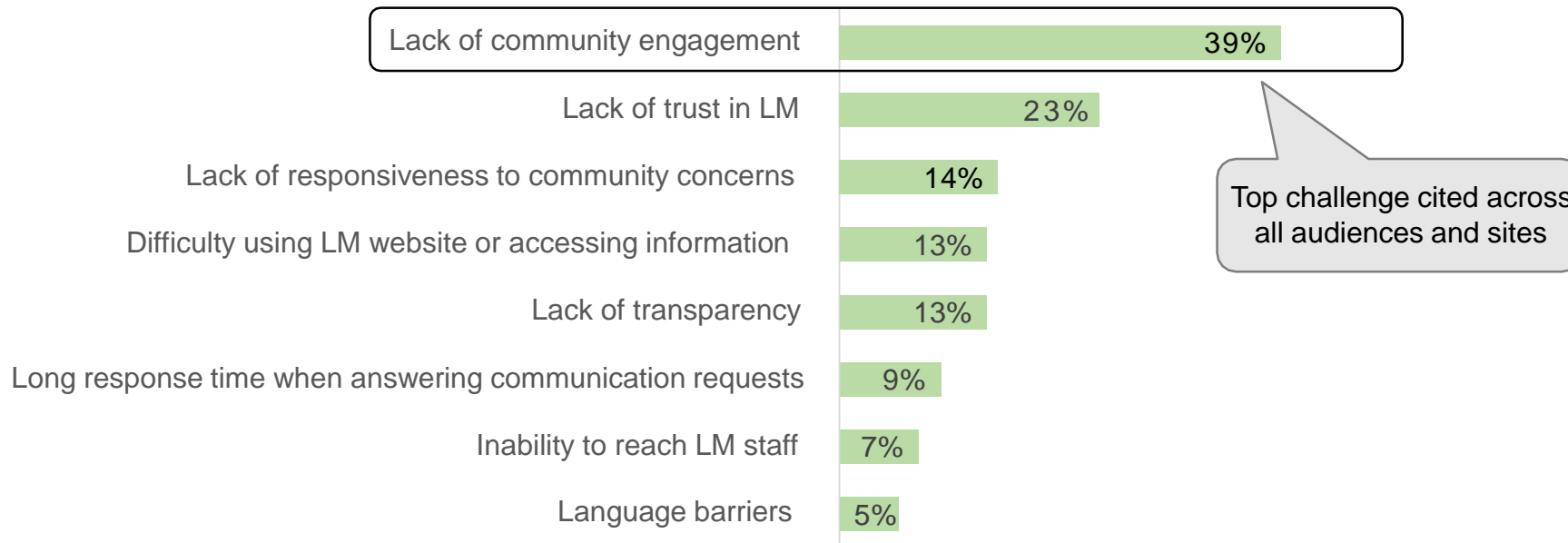
LM Net Trust Score By Audience Subgroup	
Fernald	+53 *
Grand Junction	+48
Rocky Flats	+38
Other Sites	+37
<hr/>	
Elected Officials/Regulators	+22
Community/Tribal Leaders	+57 *
<hr/>	
Used 1 LMChannel	+31
Used 2+ LMChannels	+54 *

Q13. How much do you trust LM to do what's right? (Shown among Total [378], Fernald [144], Grand Junction [73\*], Rocky Flats [55\*], Other sites [160], Elected Officials /Regulators [51\*], Community/Tribal Leaders [105], those who used 1 LM Channel [162], and those who used 2+ LM channels [216])  
 Q14. How much do you trust the government in general? (Shown among Total [378])  
 \*Indicates small sample size n<100. Statistically significant differences between audience sub-groups are highlighted in yellow.

## Key Finding 3 – Main Communication Challenges

However, stakeholders say LM must deepen its engagement at the community level to improve communications — especially at Rocky Flats.

Main Challenges in Communicating with Communities  
(Shown: Percent-Selected response)



### Site-Specific Findings

Stakeholders at Rocky Flats are more **likely than those at any other site** to identify the following challenges:

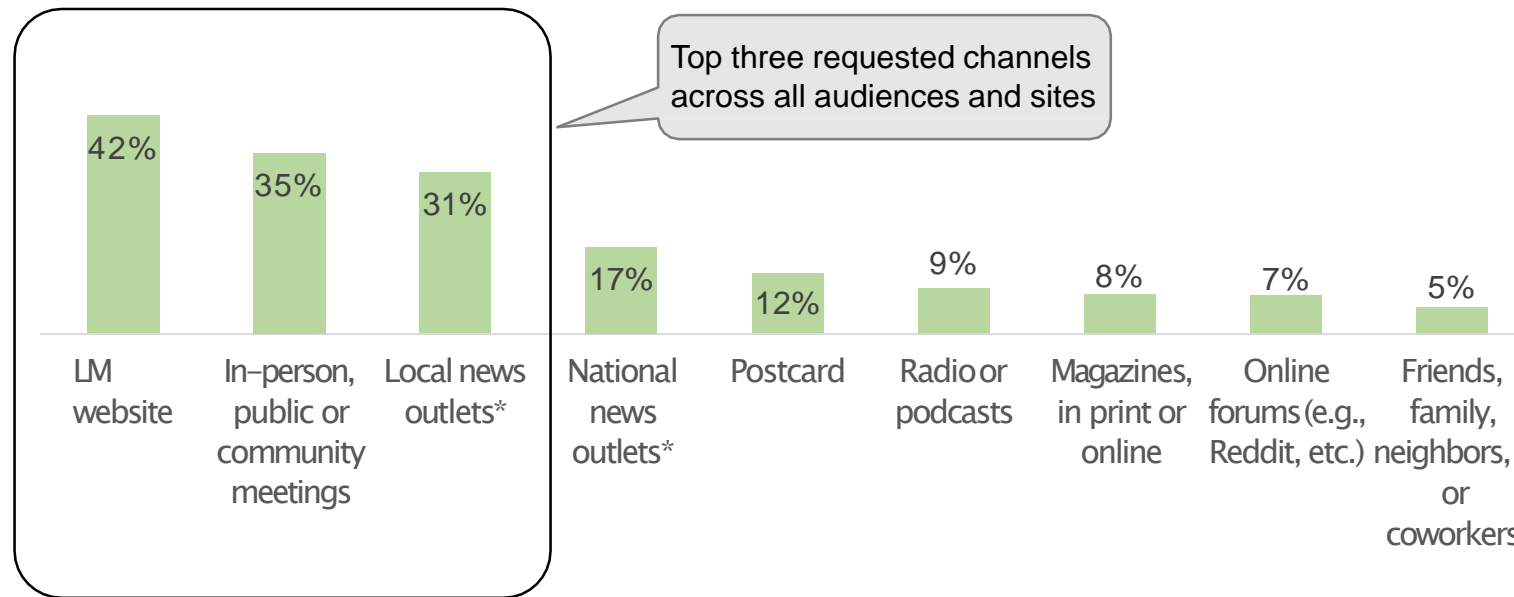
- Lack of community engagement
- Lack of trust in LM
- Lack of responsiveness
- Lack of transparency
- Lack of ability to reach LM staff

Q12. In your opinion, what do you see as LM's main challenges in communicating with your community?  
(Shown among Total 378) [Note question changed from open-end format]

# Key Finding 3 – Desired Communication Channels

There is appetite for getting more information about LM, even at sites that are already highly engaged with LM channels.

Additional Desired Communication Channels  
(Shown: Percent-Selected Response)



Top three requested channels across all audiences and sites

### Site- and Audience-Specific Findings

- Rocky Flats and Grand Junction stakeholders are most interested in getting more information from LM through its website or meetings.
- Interestingly, elected officials and regulators are just as likely as stakeholders overall to want more information across each of the tested channels.

Q4. And what additional ways would you like to receive information from LM? (Shown among Total [378])  
\*Includes print or online newspapers, blogs, or TV news





## Strategic Implication:

Expand LM's communications on owned channels like the website and on social media.



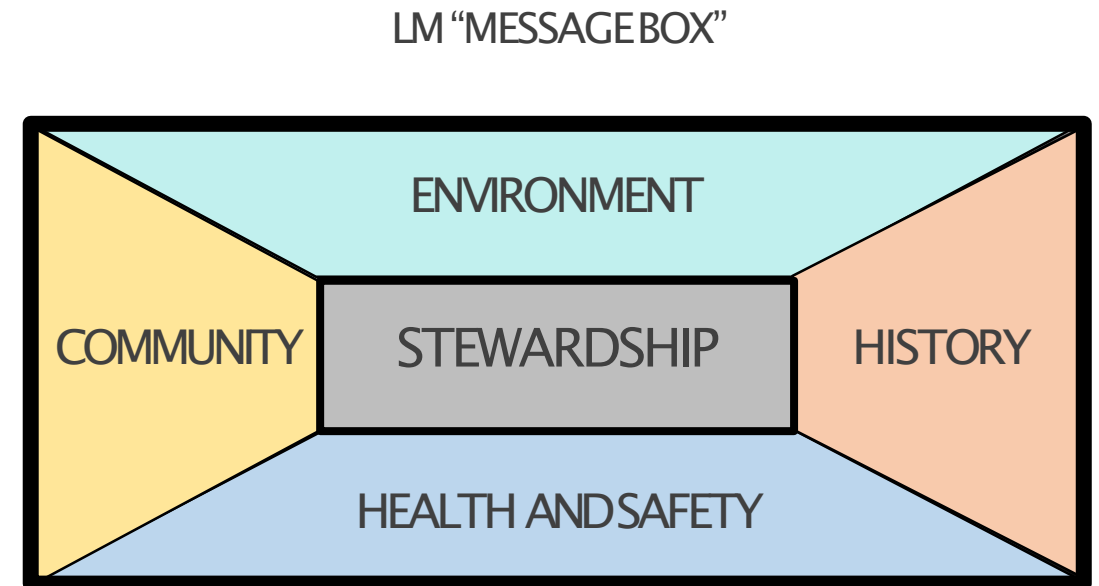
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# Master Narrative Testing

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Next, stakeholders were asked survey questions about each of the following to inform the LM master narrative:

- Perceptions of LM's mission and role to gauge consistency with the master narrative.
- Reactions to the master narrative's central tenet: stewardship.
- Importance of the master narrative's supporting pillars:
  - Environment
  - Health and Safety
  - Community
  - History



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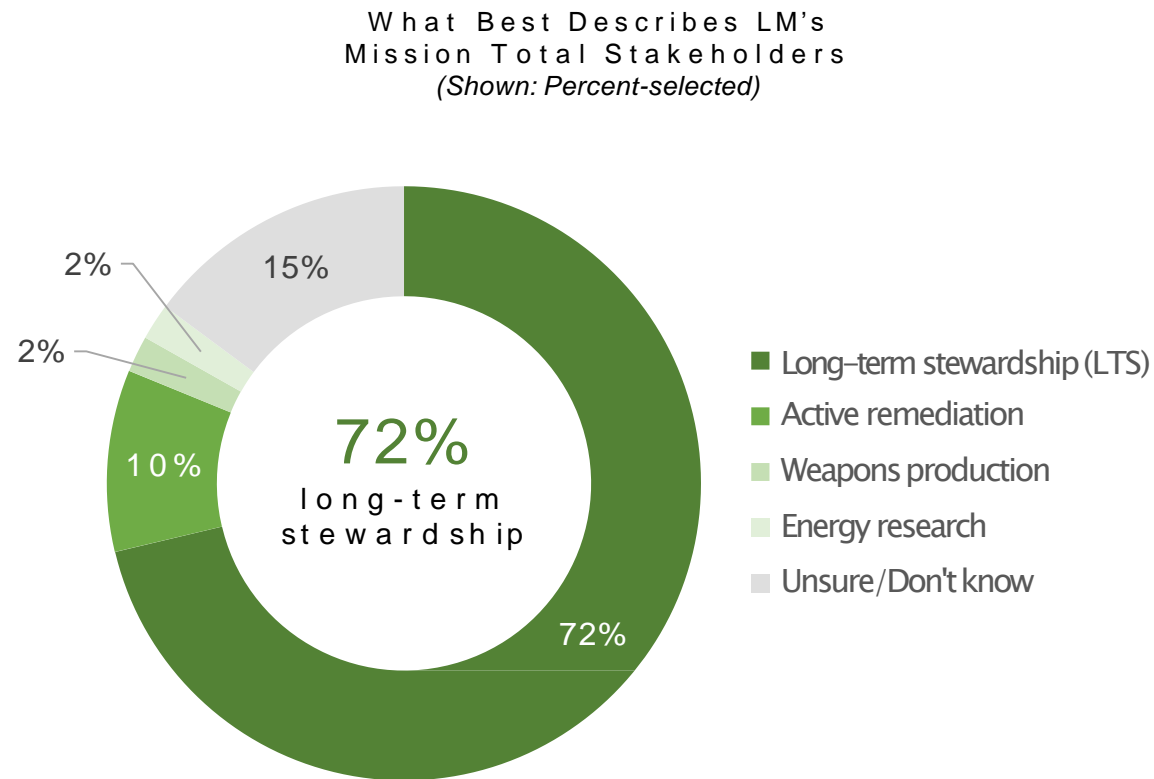
## KEY FINDING 4:

The central tenet of stewardship performs well across audience subgroups and resonates with their understanding of LM's mission.

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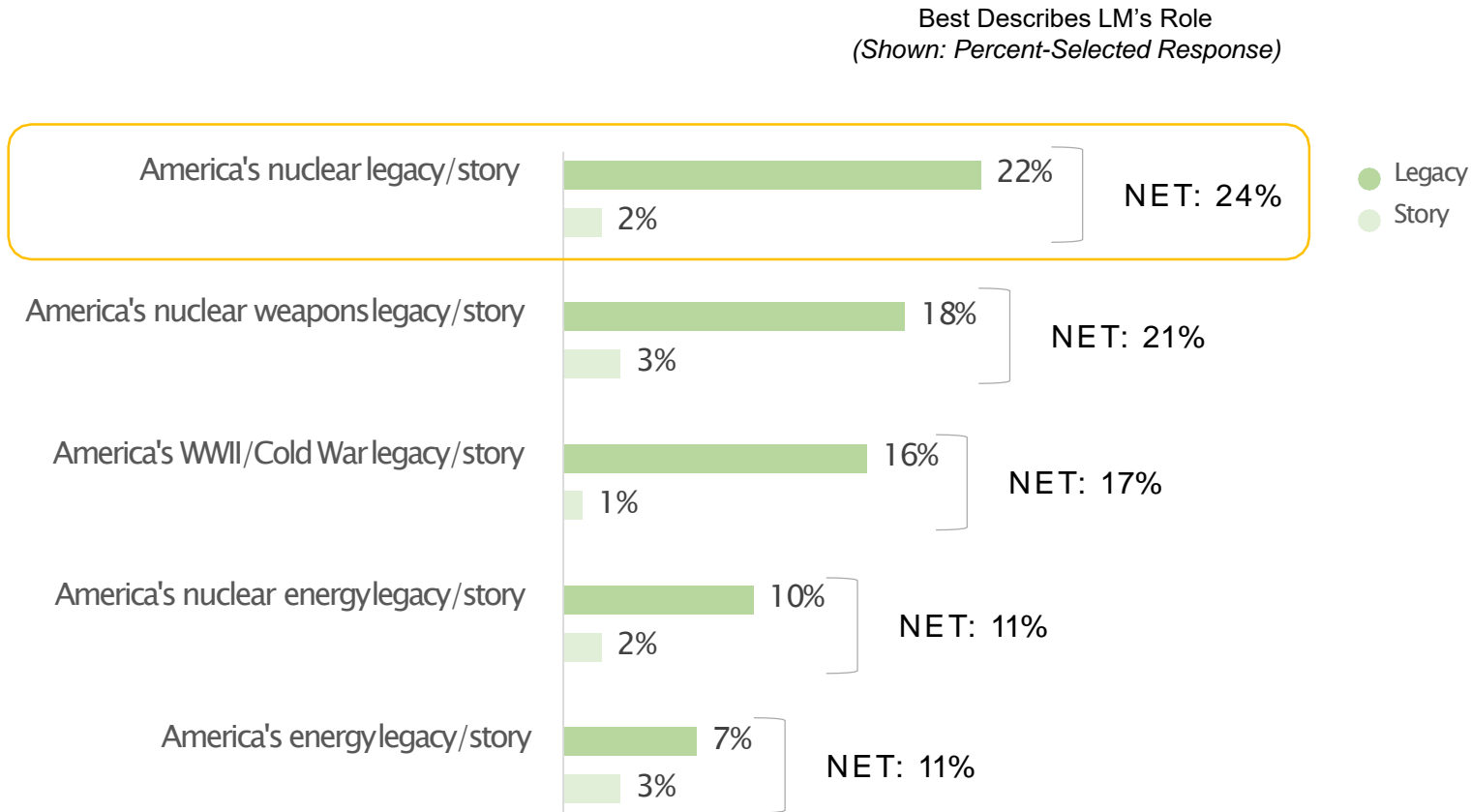
Stakeholders unanimously understand LM's mission to be long-term stewardship.



### Site- and Audience-Specific Findings

- A majority of all audience subgroups describe LM's mission as long-term stewardship
- Elected officials/regulators and stakeholders at other sites, besides Fernald, Grand Junction, and Rocky Flats, are most likely to say that they are unsure or do not know LM's mission.

## Stakeholders primarily associate LM's role with "America's nuclear legacy."



### Site- And Audience-Specific Findings

- Fernald and Rocky Flats stakeholders are more likely to say LM's role has to do with America's **nuclear weapons legacy**.
- However, stakeholders at Grand Junction and other sites say LM's role has to do with America's **nuclear legacy**.
- Both community/tribal leaders and elected officials/ regulators agree that LM's role has to do with America's **nuclear legacy**.

Q15. Which of the following best describes LM? (Shown among Total [378])

Stakeholders were shown the following description of the central tenet of LM's master narrative.

The text-highlighting heatmap on the following slide **serves as an illustration of respondents' collective reactions to the description.**

### Central Tenet: Stewardship

A commitment to stewardship is at the center of everything LM does, beginning the moment we take over a site and continuing throughout our long-term management efforts. Our stewardship is demonstrated through protection of human health and the environment, as well as a commitment to transparent communication and management of taxpayer dollars.

- We are the caretakers of legacy sites that played a critical role in America's nuclear history. By supporting the Manhattan project and additional nuclear weapons development, as well as experimental peace-time nuclear energy applications, our sites helped America win World War II and the Cold War.
- The expertise of our 75 federal employees and 500 contractor partners helps protect human health and the environment by maintaining nearly 100 sites in 30 states and territories, from Puerto Rico to Alaska.
- We are the federal land managers and stewards of cultural, historical and natural resources at sites that have been successfully cleaned up and have remedies in place. We work closely with federal, state, local, and tribal governments to set clear expectations and monitor results to ensure public and environmental safety for generations to come.
- We use advancements in science and emerging technologies to efficiently maintain or improve the existing levels of protection at our sites.
- As stewards of taxpayer dollars, we are steadfast in our commitment to conservatively manage our funds.

NOTE: Respondents were instructed to click on the specific words and phrases that make them feel more favorable toward LM.

# Key Finding 4 – Reactions to Central Tenet

## Text Highlighting Heatmap

A **commitment to stewardship** is at the center of everything LM does, beginning the moment we take over a site and continuing throughout our **long-term** management efforts. Our stewardship is demonstrated through **protection of human health and the environment**, as well as a **commitment to transparent communication** and **management of taxpayer dollars**.

- We are the caretakers of legacy sites that played a critical role in America’s nuclear history. By supporting the Manhattan project and additional nuclear weapons development, as well as experimental peace-time nuclear energy applications, **our sites helped America win World War II and the Cold War**.
- The expertise of our 75 federal employees and 500 contractor partners helps protect human **health and the environment by maintaining nearly 100 sites in 30 states and territories, from Puerto Rico to Alaska**.
- We are the federal land managers and stewards of cultural, historical and natural resources at sites that have been successfully cleaned up and have remedies in place. We work closely with federal, state, local, and Tribal governments to set clear expectations and monitor results to ensure public and **environmental safety** for generations to come.
- We use **advancements in science and emerging technologies** to efficiently maintain or **improve** the existing levels of **protection** at our sites.
- As stewards of taxpayer dollars, we are steadfast in our **commitment to conservatively manage our funds**.

- Most impactful words and phrases
- Moderately impactful words and phrases
- Less impactful words and phrases
- Least impactful words and phrases

**MOST IMPACTFUL WORDS AND PHRASES**

- **“Commitment to stewardship”**
- **“Commitment to transparent communication”**
- **“Caretakers of legacy sites”**
- **“Protection of human health and the environment”**
- **“Stewards of cultural, historical and natural resources”**
- **“Advancements in science and emerging technologies”**

**LEAST IMPACTFUL WORDS AND PHRASES**

- **“Beginning the moment we take over a site”**
- **“By supporting the Manhattan project and additional nuclear weapons development, as well as experimental peace-time nuclear energy applications”**
- **“Our 75 federal employees and 500 contractor partners”**
- **“100 sites in 30 states and territories, from Puerto Rico to Alaska”**

Q16: Next, you will see some more information about LM. As you read this information, please click on the specific words and phrases that make you feel more favorable toward LM. (Shown among Total [378])





## Strategic Implication:

Amplify language that reinforces LM's role as...

- Protecting human health and the environment.
- Being a steward of cultural, historical, and natural resources at its sites.



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## KEY FINDING 5:

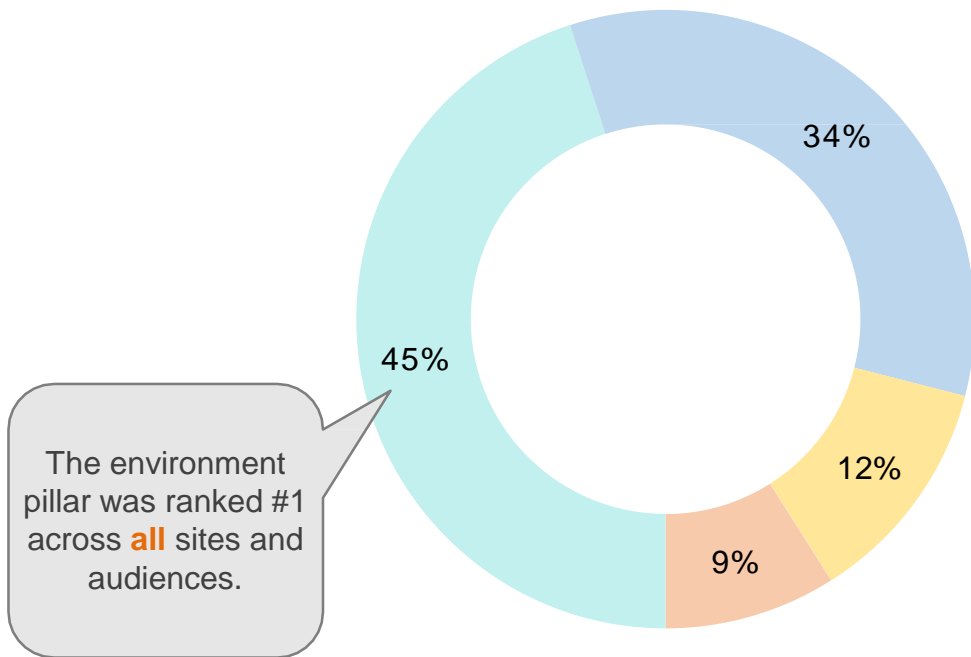
Stakeholders believe the most important master narrative pillars for LM to communicate address protecting the “environment” and “public health and safety.”

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The “Environment” and “public health and safety” pillars rank most important.

Most Important Pillar  
(Shown: Percent Selected “Most Important”)

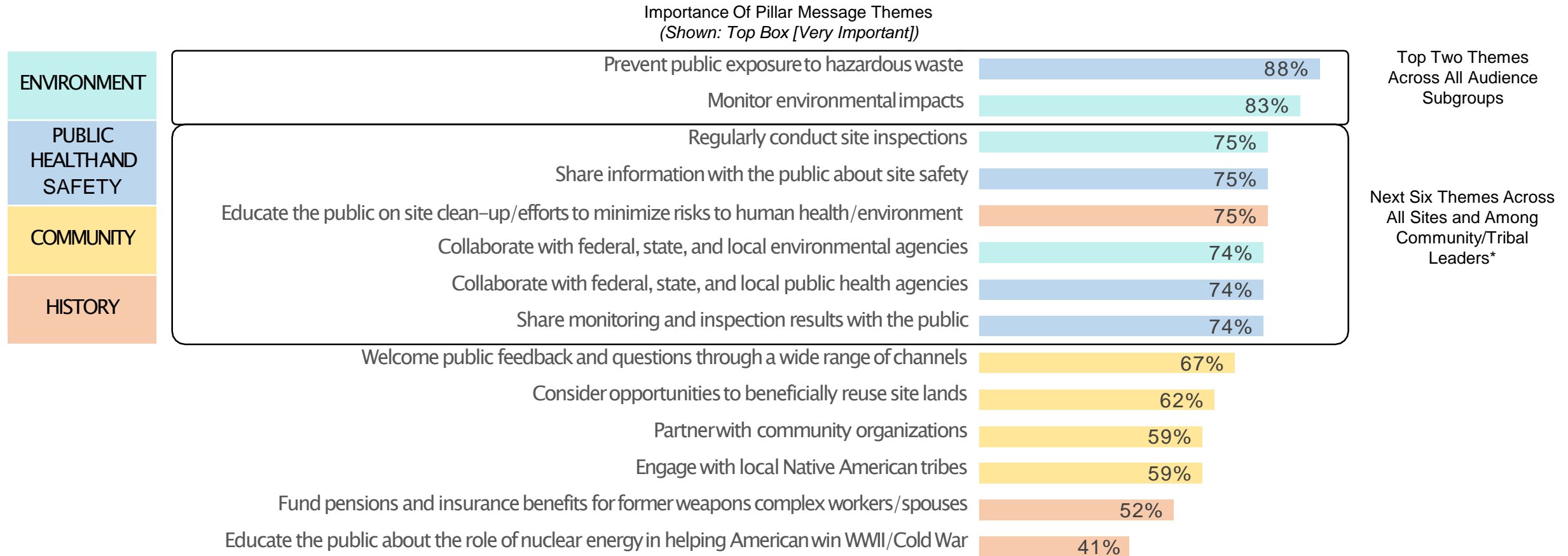


ENVIRONMENT	Coordinating closely with federal, state, and local environmental and public health agencies to monitor the environmental impact of legacy sites through air, soil, and water testing, as needed.
PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY	Transparently sharing information about the role our sites played in America’s nuclear history and the long-term surveillance and maintenance work to prevent public exposure to hazardous waste.
COMMUNITY	Consulting with tribal nations, state and local government, community organizations and the public; and sometimes returning sites to the community to be reused as playgrounds, dog parks, wildlife refuges, or other beneficial spaces.
HISTORY	Telling America’s nuclear story by communicating the significant natural, cultural, and historic importance of legacy sites

Q18. Which of the following do you think are most important for LM to communicate about its legacy sites? Please rank each of the following, with 1 being the most important, and 4 being the least important? (Shown among Total [378])

# Key Finding 5 - Pillar Message Themes

Messaging around protecting the environment and the public are considered Most important. History is important in the context of clean-up and safety.

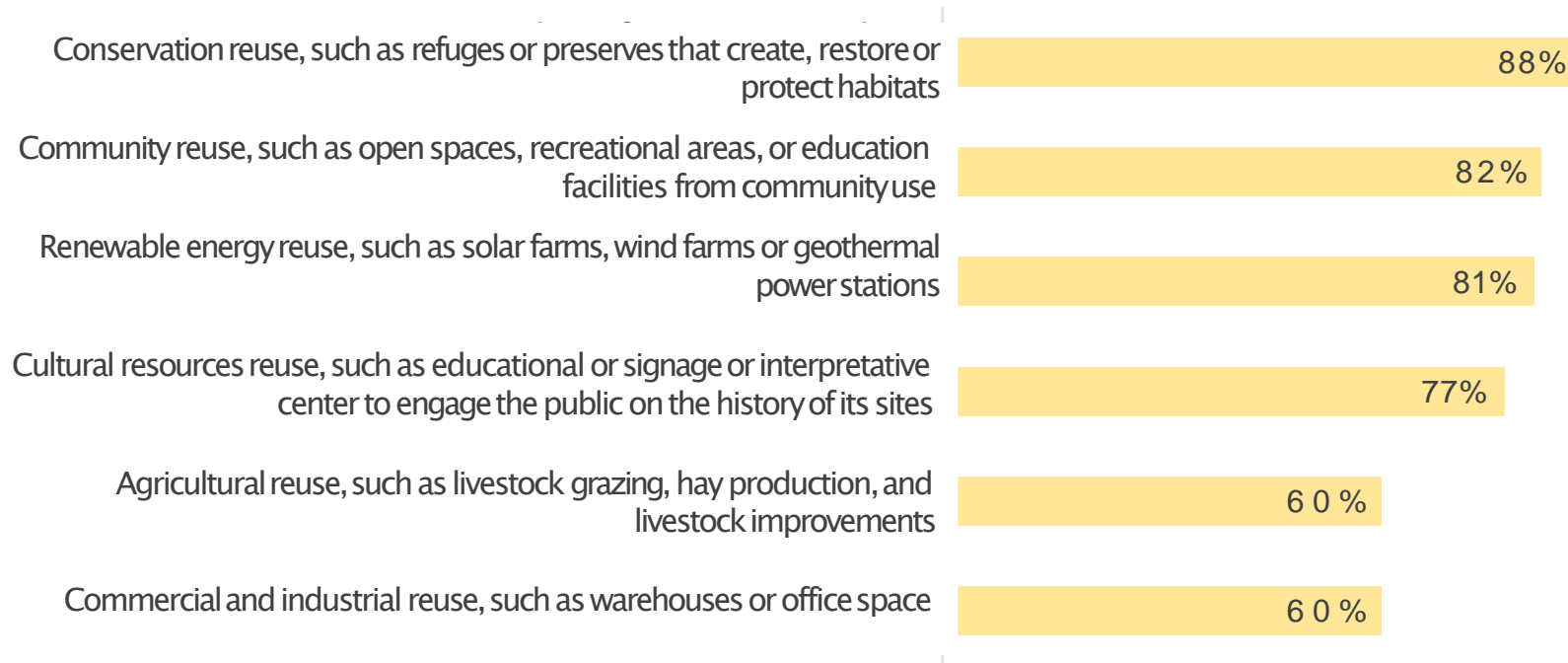


Q17. The next question is about how you would like to see LM manage its legacy sites moving forward. How important is it for LM to do each of the following as it relates to managing its legacy sites? (Shown among Total [378])

\*Elected officials and regulators prioritize “welcome public feedback and questions through a wide range of channels” over “share information with the public about site safety” in top eight ranking.

While not most important, there is interest in stories about beneficial reuse.

Interest in LM Reusing Its Sites and Property for...  
(Shown: Top 2 Box [Somewhat/Very Interested])



### Site- And Audience-Specific Findings

- Conservation is the most preferred form of reuse across all sites and audiences.
- Community/tribal leaders are most interested in reuse overall.
- Rocky Flats stakeholders are most skeptical of reuse overall.
- Stakeholders at other sites are more open to agricultural and commercial reuse.

Q19. LM looks for opportunities for some of its legacy sites and property to be reused in various beneficial ways where possible. Below is a list of different ways that some legacy sites and property could potentially be reused. How interested would you be in seeing LM reuse its legacy sites and property in each of the following ways? (Shown among Total [378])



## Strategic Implication:

Prioritize communicating to stakeholders about how LM:

- Prevents public exposure to hazardous waste.
- Monitors environmental impacts.
- Conducts and shares results of regular inspections.
- Collaborates with other federal, state, and local agencies.



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## KEY FINDING 6:

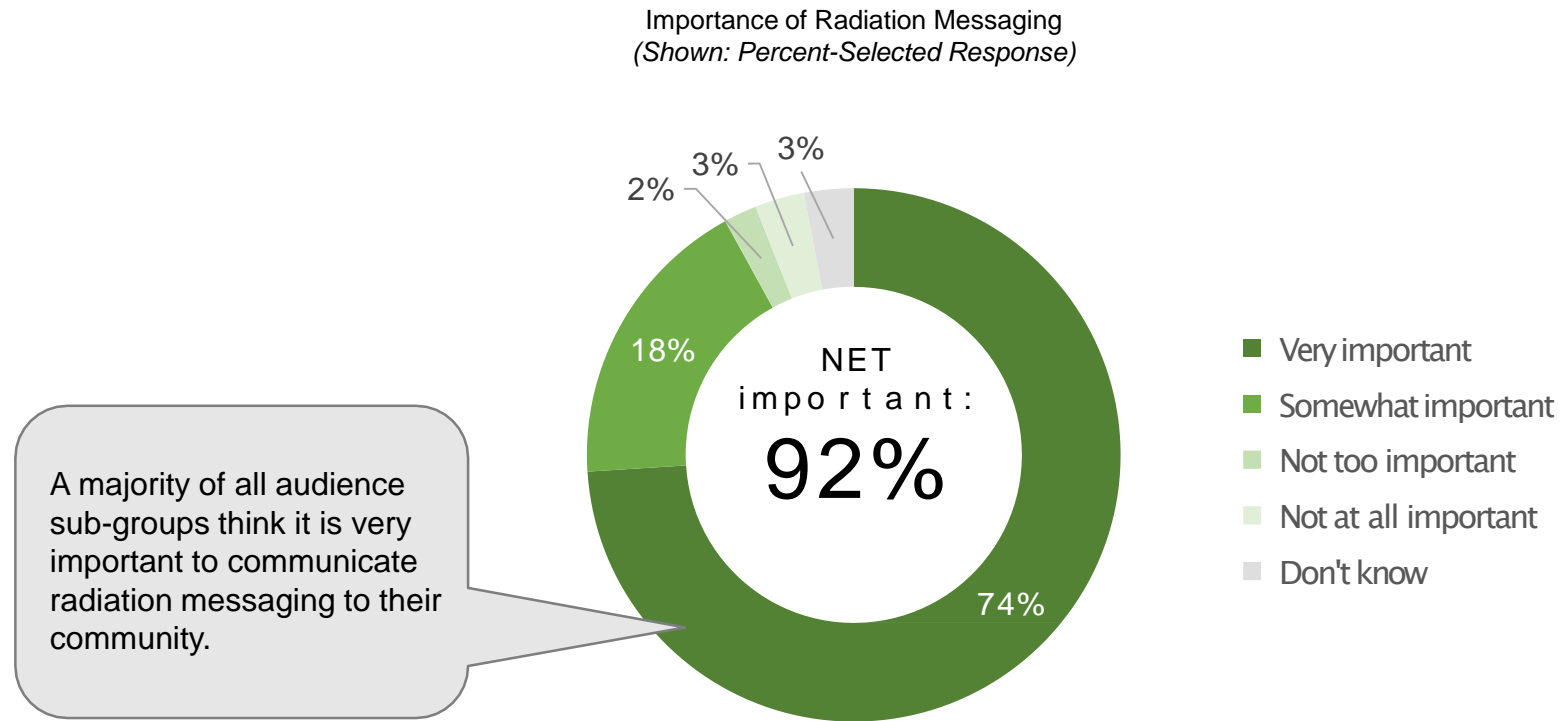
Stakeholders are in unanimous agreement that it is also important for LM to communicate about radiation.

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## Key Finding 6 – Importance Of Radiation Messaging

Stakeholders unanimously feel it is important for LM to communicate about radiation and the levels of radiation at some of its sites.

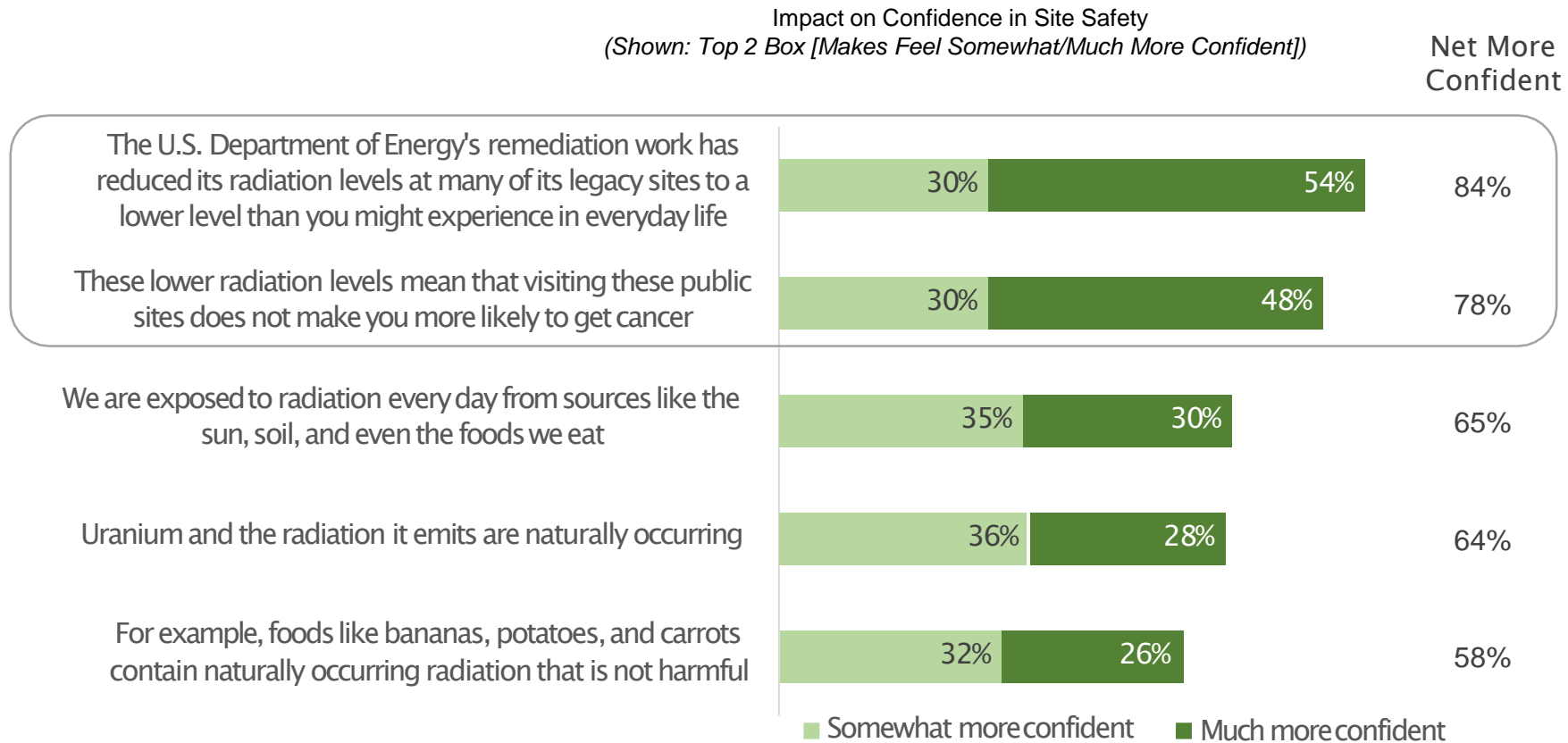


Q20. How important is it to communicate this to your community? (Shown among Total [378])



# Key Finding 6 – Impact of Messaging on Confidence

Messaging that contextualizes site radiation levels at sites compared to everyday experiences are most helpful.



## Key Finding 6 – Impact of Messaging on Understanding

Phrases like “naturally occurring,” “exposed to radiation everyday,” and “reduced radiation levels” help stakeholders understand this messaging.

Text Highlighting Heatmap:  
“Makes This Statement Easy to Understand”

It’s important to remember that uranium and the radiation it emits are **naturally occurring**. We are exposed to radiation every day from sources like the sun, soil, and even the foods we eat. For example, foods like bananas, potatoes, and carrots contain naturally occurring radiation that is not harmful. The U.S. Department of Energy’s remediation work has reduced radiation levels at many of its legacy sites to a lower level than you might experience in everyday life. These lower radiation levels mean that visiting these public sites does not make you more likely to get cancer.

- Most helpful words and phrases
- Moderately helpful words and phrases
- Less helpful words and phrases
- Least helpful words and phrases

### Most Helpful for Ease of Understanding

- **“Naturally occurring”**
- **“Exposed to radiation everyday”**
- **“Reduced radiation levels”**
- **“Lower levels than you might experience in everyday life”**

### Least Helpful for Ease of Understanding

- “For example, foods like bananas, potatoes, and carrots contain naturally occurring radiation”

Q22. Finally, please highlight the specific words and phrases that make this statement easy to understand in green. If no words or phrases make this statement easy to understand, simply select the checkbox. (Shown among Total [378])



## STRATEGIC IMPLICATION:

For LM sites with radiation concerns, explain how radiation is naturally occurring and contextualize site radiation levels compared to exposure from everyday experiences.



# SUMMARY OF SURVEY IMPLICATIONS

- 1 Deepen outreach efforts and leverage email to drive stakeholders to additional LM channels, especially the website.
- 2 Identify best practices from priority sites that can be applied more broadly; and consider opportunities to bolster communications with elected officials and regulators.
- 3 Expand LM's communications on owned channels like the website and on social media.
- 4 Amplify language that reinforces LM's role as protecting human health and the environment and being a steward of cultural, historical, and natural resources at its sites.
- 5 Prioritize communicating to stakeholders about how LM prevents public exposure to hazardous waste; monitors environmental impacts; conducts and shares the results of regular inspections; and, collaborates with other federal, state, and local agencies.
- 6 For LM sites with radiation concerns, explain how radiation is naturally occurring and contextualize site radiation levels compared to exposure from everyday experiences.



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# THANK YOU

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