Climate Action Planning Community Engagement

November 16, 2024

Climate Summit

Betsy Riley, Sustainability Manager, Alachua County

Full Interviews Coming Soon

The full interviews will be on display at the Matheson Museum in early 2025.

Climate Action Plan
Community Engagement Pilot

How do we ensure climate action planning encompasses all of Alachua County's residents?

New Alachua County Community Engagement Procedures

Effective 8/21/2023

Community Engagement

OVERVIEW: This procedure outlines Alachua County's Community Engagement process.

SCOPE: After the County Commission provides direction to proceed with a project/initiative, staff must initiate a community engagement process. Community Engagement increases awareness, allows advocacy, and offers a format to gather advice or guidance based on the community's expertise and experiences.

PROVISIONS: Community engagement will help guide County staff in their development of the project/initiative, defining its focus, identifying unexposed information, and creating a network of stakeholders. Stakeholders are educated on the project/initiative and invited to contribute to the process thereby expanding access to available knowledge and skills. When communities are engaged at the beginning and throughout the project/initiative they are more receptive to the outcome, have the capacity to implement change, and long-term partnerships are developed.

While not an inclusive list, and there is not a "one size fits all" approach, Departments/Offices should consider one or more of the following methods in which to engage communities:

- Make documents available for public inspection both online and in person. In person inspection should include a public facility within/near the impacted community (such as a Library or Community Center)
- Accept written response/comment for 30 days or more.
- Engage with stakeholders (such as Homeowners Associations, faith community, neighbors, professional groups, other government agencies, 501(c)3 organizations, advisory boards)
- Community representative who already has trust/rapport within the community
- Door-to-door outreach
- Post cards/direct mailing
- Signage (including brochures and flyers in multiple languages)
- Media advisories
- Social media boosted posts
- Community meetings/charettes (both in-person and virtual options)
- Surveys (both in print and online)
- Robo calls
- Sign-up sheets to develop email distribution / call lists

Staff should track and measure community engagement methods used. This information should be included when reporting back to the County Commission.

- "Engage with stakeholders (such as Homeowners Associations, faith community, neighbors, professional groups, other government agencies, 501(c)3 organizations, advisory boards)
- Community representative who already has trust/rapport within the community."

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Who are our climate-vulnerable communities?

Two criteria:

1. Climate Vulnerability Analysis identifies them as <u>high risk of experiencing climate impacts</u>

2. Have so far been <u>unwilling or unable to engage in climate planning process</u>

Alachua County, Florida

Who is Climate Vulnerable?	What Makes Them Climate Vulnerable?
Historically marginalized communities (racial/ethnicity); low-income communities with aging infrastructure	Groups with fewer social and economic resources will have thus lower resiliency to extreme circumstances like those anticipated via climate change
Historically marginalized communities (physical/social/linguistic ability)	Non-English-speaking communities, impairments to sight/hearing may have trouble accessing information about existing services
Younger generations, including both K-12 school-aged children and young adults aged 18-25	Will most strongly feel the impacts of climate change, but don't currently have a platform or context for how to get involved
Members of the agricultural community	Livelihoods are built on climactic consistency/predictability. As these change, big changes will be required in sustainable business models, which is not always easy, particularly for those whose strategy has been successful for multiple generations
Rural communities	Disproportionately impacted by flooding and wildfire events, as well as urban spread. Rural and community identity will compete with access to infrastructure such as emergency shelters and transportation.

Bailey Learning and Arts Collective

Who took this survey?

- Residents of Spring Hill, Duval, Lake Forest, Highland Courts, Porters Quarters, Duck Pond, Sugar Hill, Lincoln Estates, and 5th Ave (Gainesville's historically Black communities)
- 58% self-identified as African American
- 74% female
- 58% held a bachelor's degree or higher
- 30% were over 65-years or older

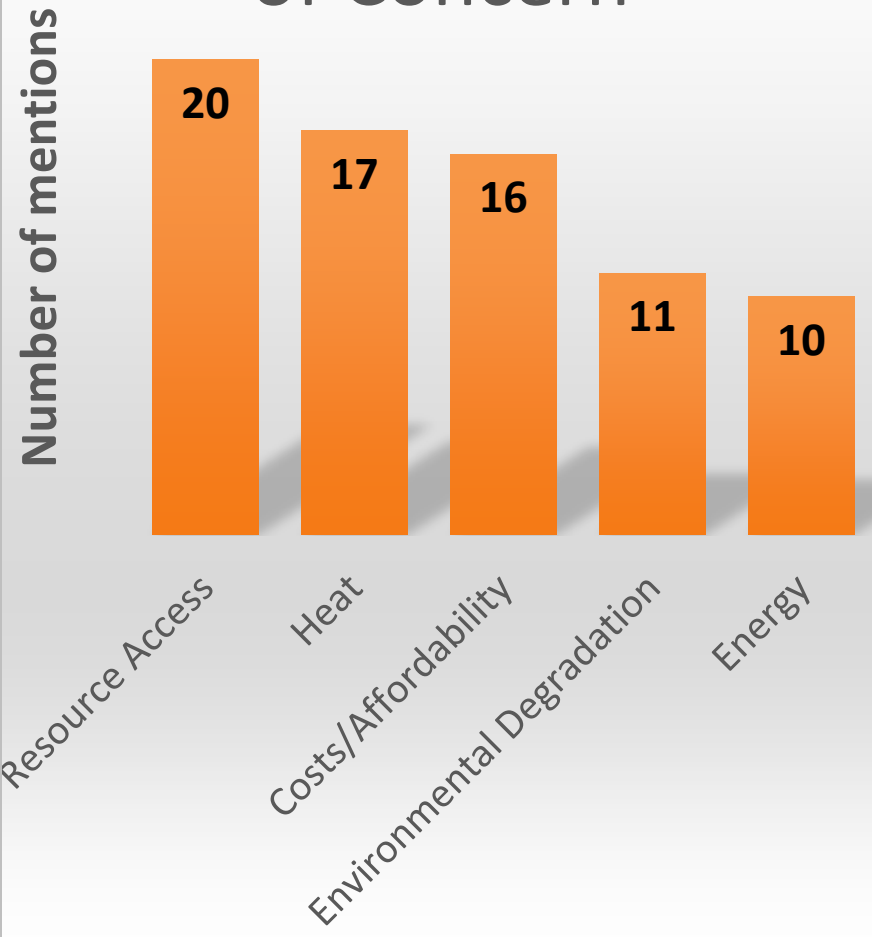What are your major Concerns about climate change?

Top Five Themes of Concern

Number of mentions

- Resource Access: 20
- Heat: 17
- Costs/Affordability: 16
- Environmental Degradation: 11
- Energy: 10

Extrapolated from qualitative data via Content Analysis

42%
Of residents **do not know where to go** the event of an environmental emergency

What do your communities need?
(Multiple questions addressed)

- **Better access to information and experts** (mentioned 31 times)
- **Access to renewable energy technology** (mentioned 14 times)
- **Reliable governance/leadership** (mentioned 13 times)
- **Energy efficiency improvements** (mentioned 10 times)

Bailey Learning & Arts Collective, Inc.
BLAAC 2 BASICS

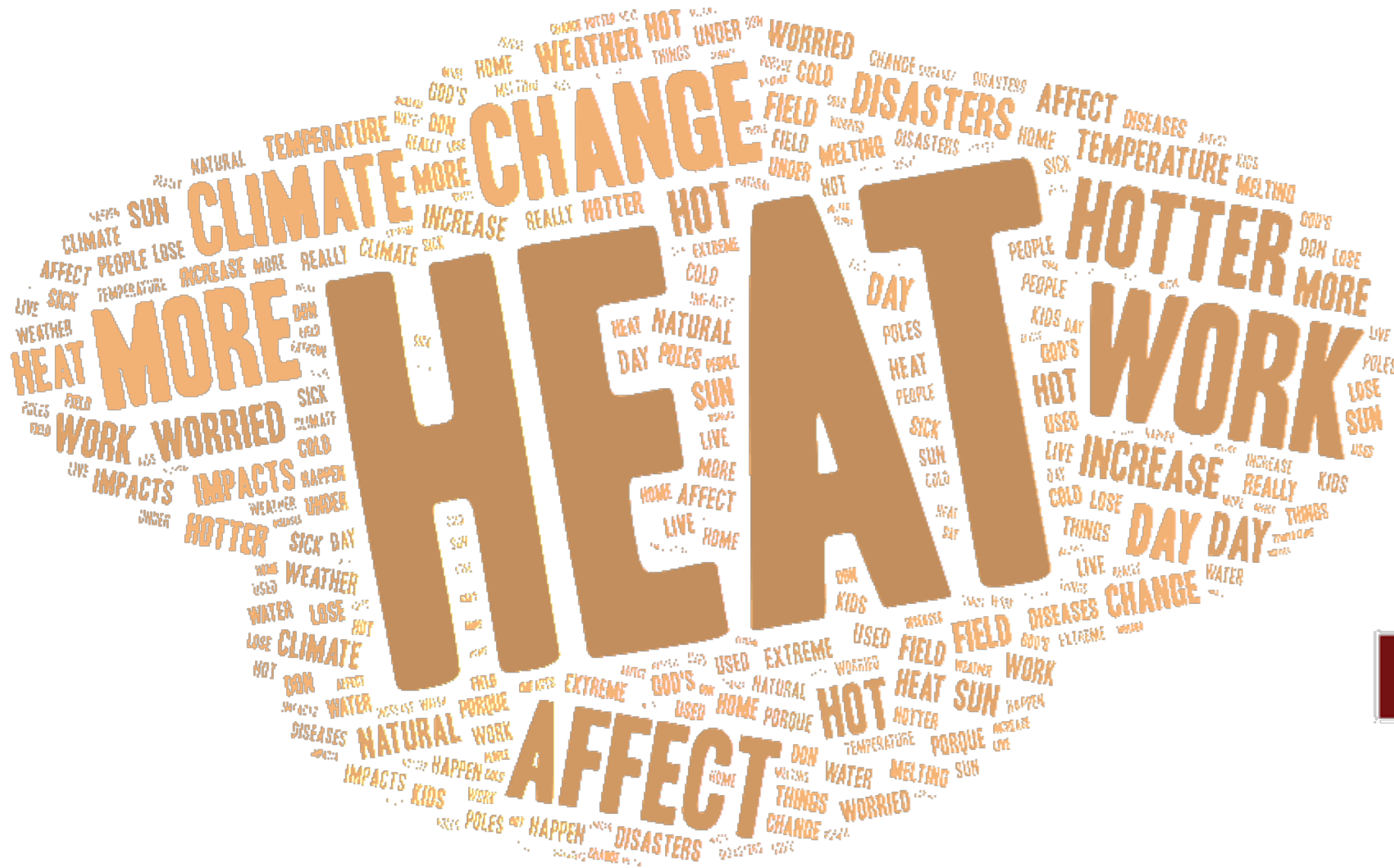Alachua County, Florida

Rural Women's Health Project

Who took this survey?

- Residents from 20 different countries, speaking 8 languages

- Average age was 41, with 38% under 40-years-old

- 31% had some education beyond high school

- 60% female

- 85% reported speaking no or limited English

- 53% work outside, with cleaning, agriculture, and construction most common fields
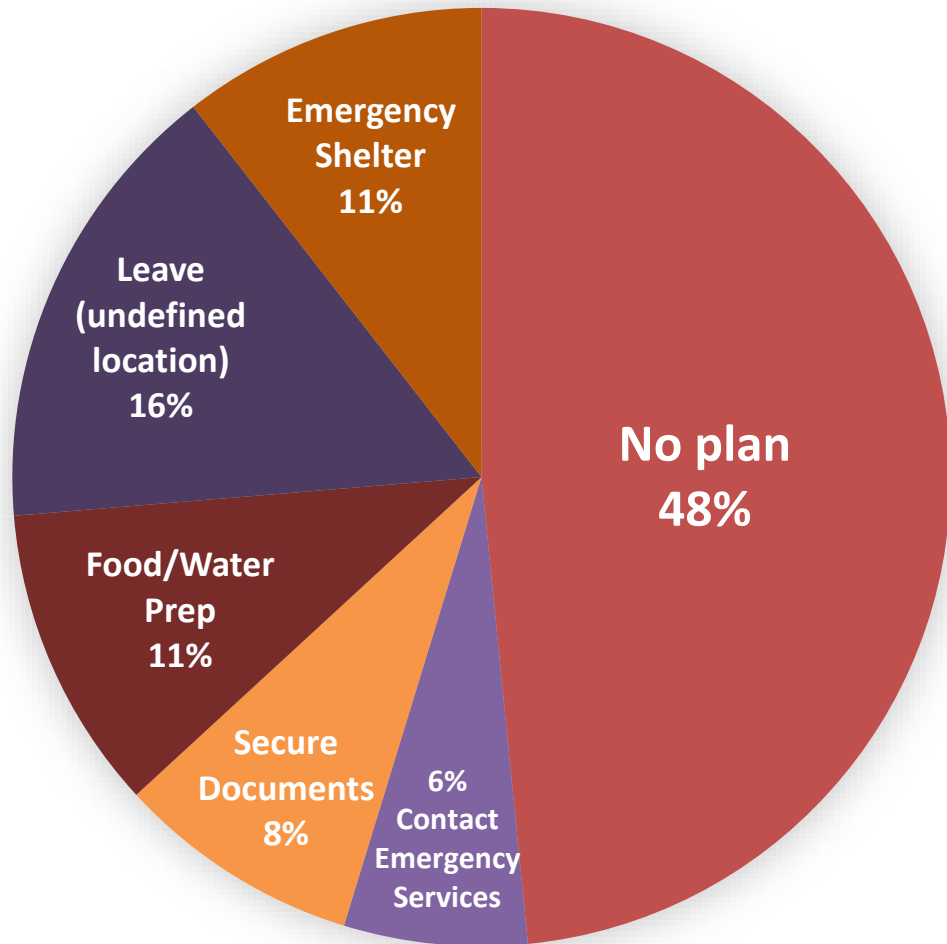
Alachua County, Florida

RWHP
rwhp.org

Rural Women's Health Project

"Are you concerned about impacts of climate change? Why or why not?"

What is your "emergency plan" in case of a climate emergency?

Pie chart:
- No plan: 48%
- Leave (undefined location): 16%
- Emergency Shelter: 11%
- Food/Water Prep: 11%
- Secure Documents: 8%
- Contact Emergency Services: 6%

80%
Of non-English-speaking residents **do not know where to find information in their language** the event of an environmental emergency

Top Places for Finding Emergency Information
- Local Authorities
- Social Media
- Churches
- Project SALUD

What do your communities need in an emergency?

- **Better access to information** (mentioned 54 times)
  - Information in an accessible language (mentioned 5 times)
- **Access to food/water** (mentioned 17 times)
- **Access to shelter and medical aid** (mentioned 22 times)

Alachua County, Florida

RWHP
rwhp.org

St. Peter St. Paul Community Council of Archer

Survey Overview

- Ten questions, comprised of yes/no & Likert scales

- Demographic data not collected

- Focus was on small cities and rural areas in Alachua County

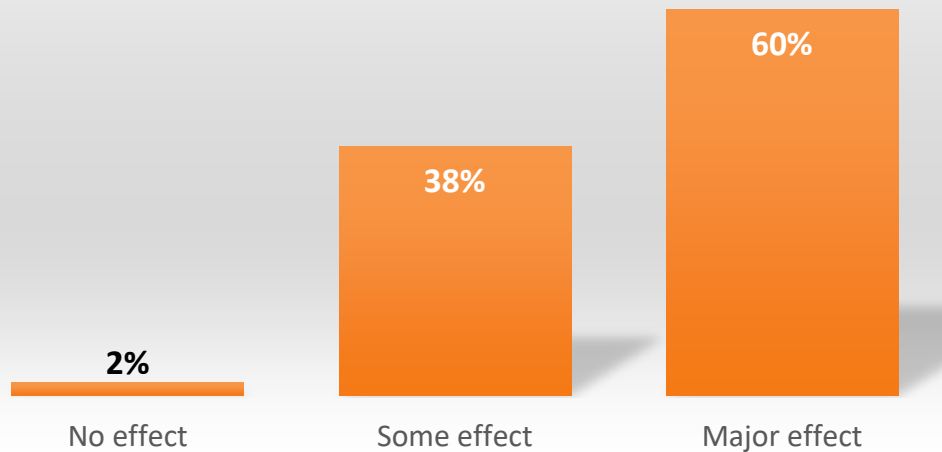# St. Peter St. Paul Community Council of Archer

What effect do you think the changes in temperature on earth will have on our food supply/distribution for farming/rural communities?

60% — Major effect

38% — Some effect

2% — No effect

31%

Of residents **report being unprepared** in the event they are displaced due to an environmental emergency. (Only 6% report feeling fully prepared.)

83%

Of residents **are willing to attend** a community forum that would help them better prepare for climate change

Saint Peter Saint Paul Community Council

Alachua County, Florida

Flourish Farms

Survey Overview

- 8 questions, comprised of yes/no, multiple choice, & open-ended

- 70% self-identified as farmers, 12% forester, 18% plant nursery

- 23% female

- Average age is 52-years-old

- Partial data (n=16)

Flourish Farms

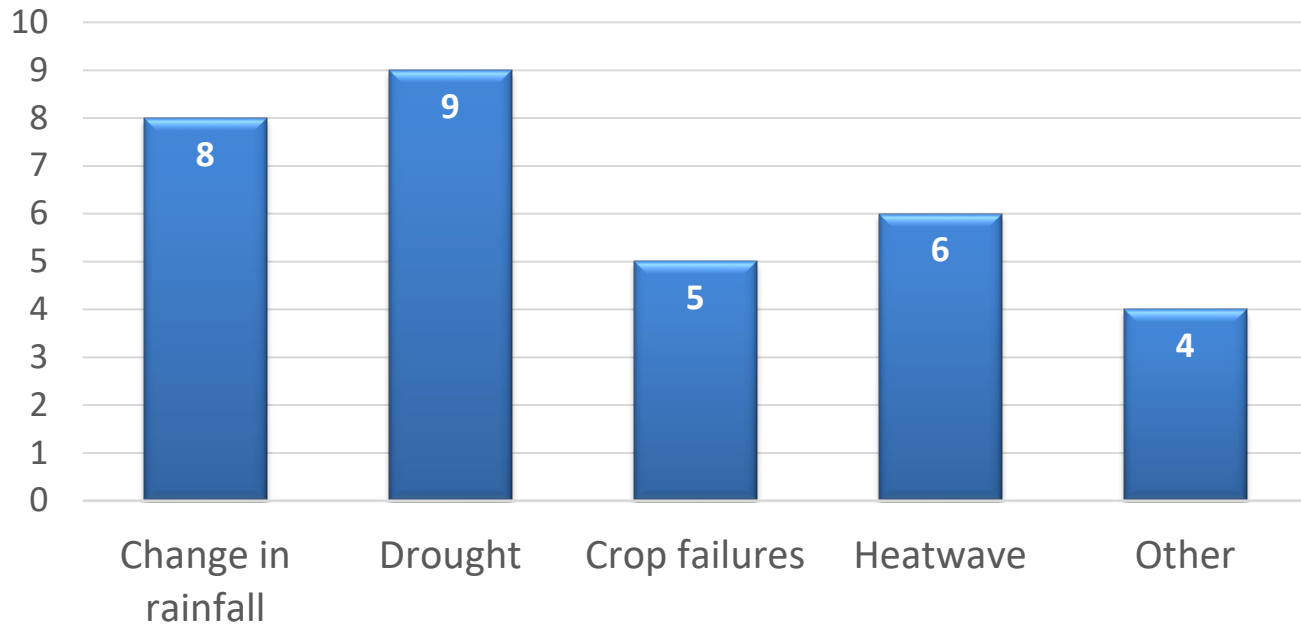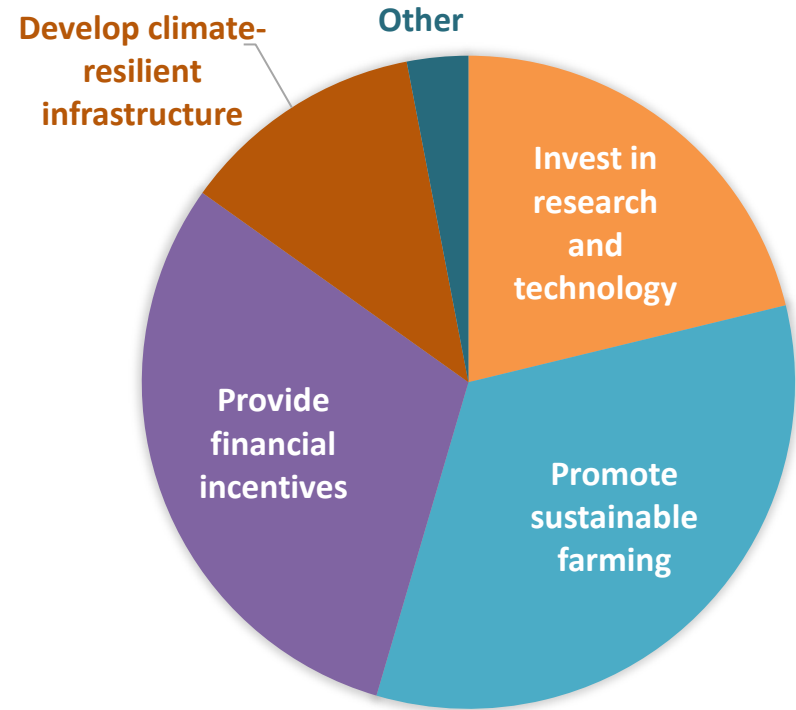## How do you think Climate Change will impact farming in the future?
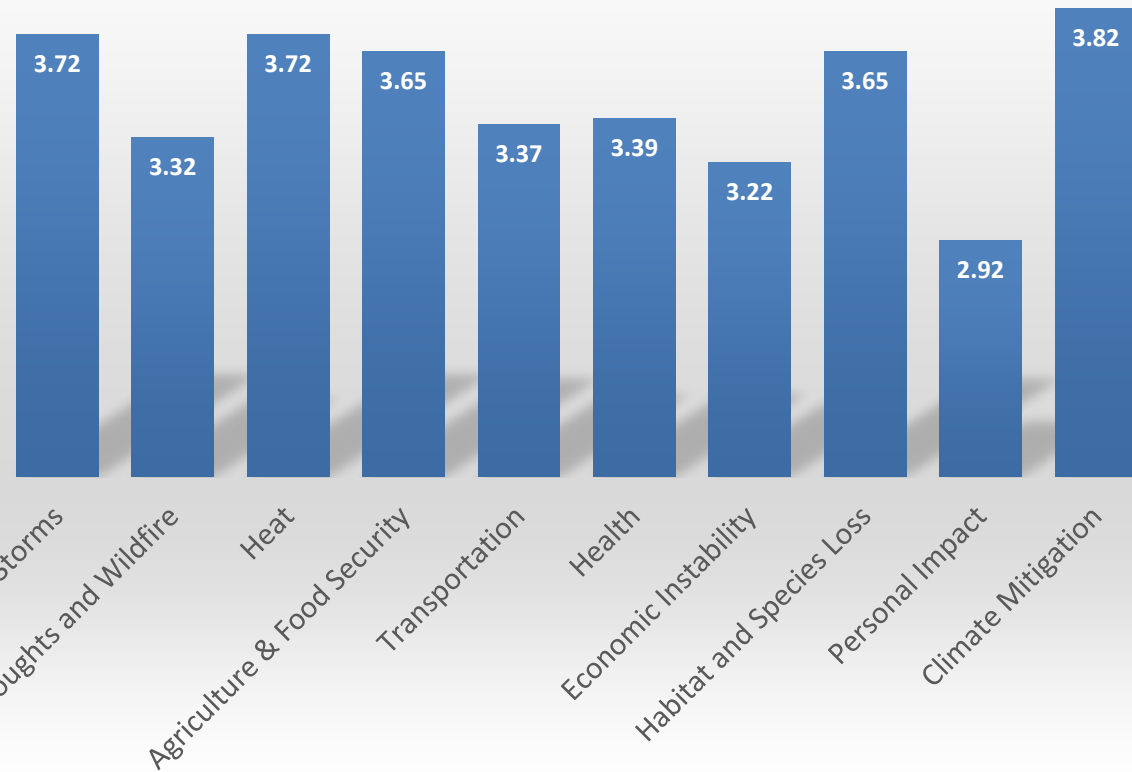
Grace to Overcome

- Results pending
- Focus on k-12 children in Alachua County, with emphasis on children in rural areas

Climate Summit Attendees

How concerned are you about the following issues in Alachua County as they relate to climate change?

Category	Value
Flooding and Extreme Storms	3.72
Droughts and Wildfire	3.32
Heat	3.72
Agriculture & Food Security	3.65
Transportation	3.37
Health	3.39
Economic Instability	3.22
Habitat and Species Loss	3.65
Personal Impact	2.92
Climate Mitigation	3.82

Top 5

1. Climate Mitigation
2. Flooding and Extreme Storms
3. Heat
4. Agriculture & Food Security
5. Habitat and Species Loss

Conclusions

- Critical to prioritize community outreach and engagement

- Evidence suggests climate-vulnerable communities are unprepared for coming extreme weather

- Strong need to hold community conversations

Alachua County, Florida