

Vadnais Lake Area Water  
Management Organization  
**Watershed  
Management  
Plan- June 25,  
2025**

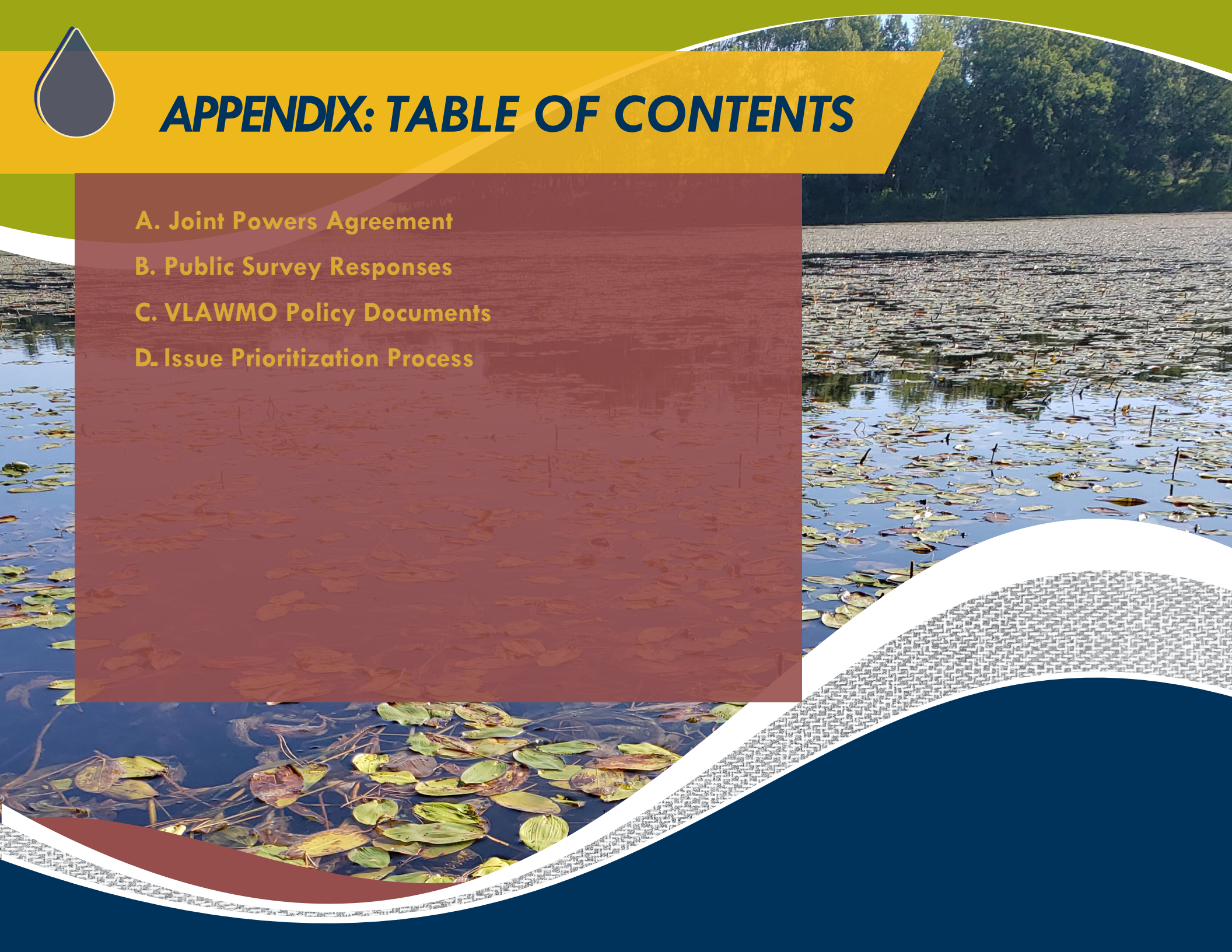
# Appendix

Formal Review Draft



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# ***Joint Powers Agreement***

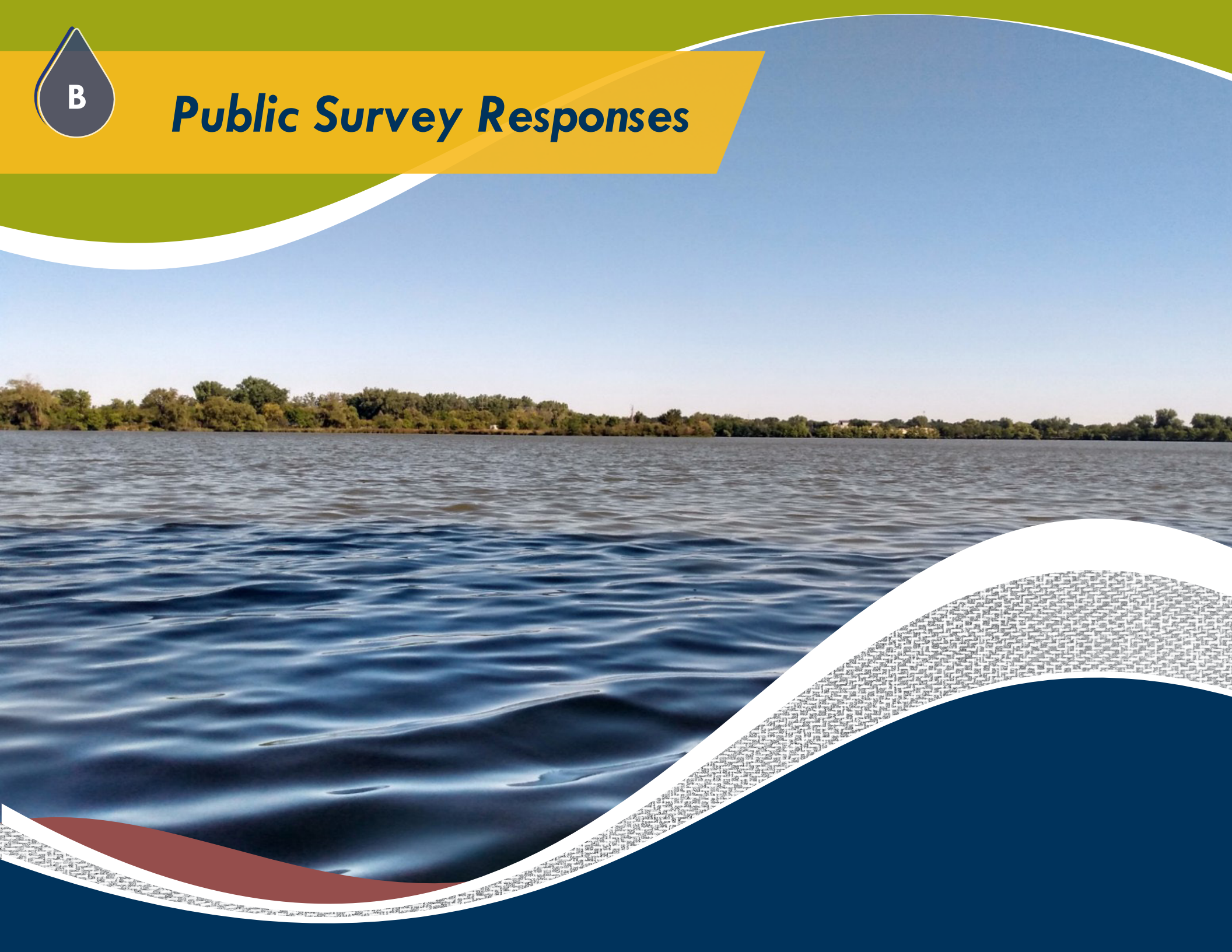


## APPENDIX A. JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT

**The VLAWMO Joint Powers Agreement is currently under development.**



# ***Public Survey Responses***





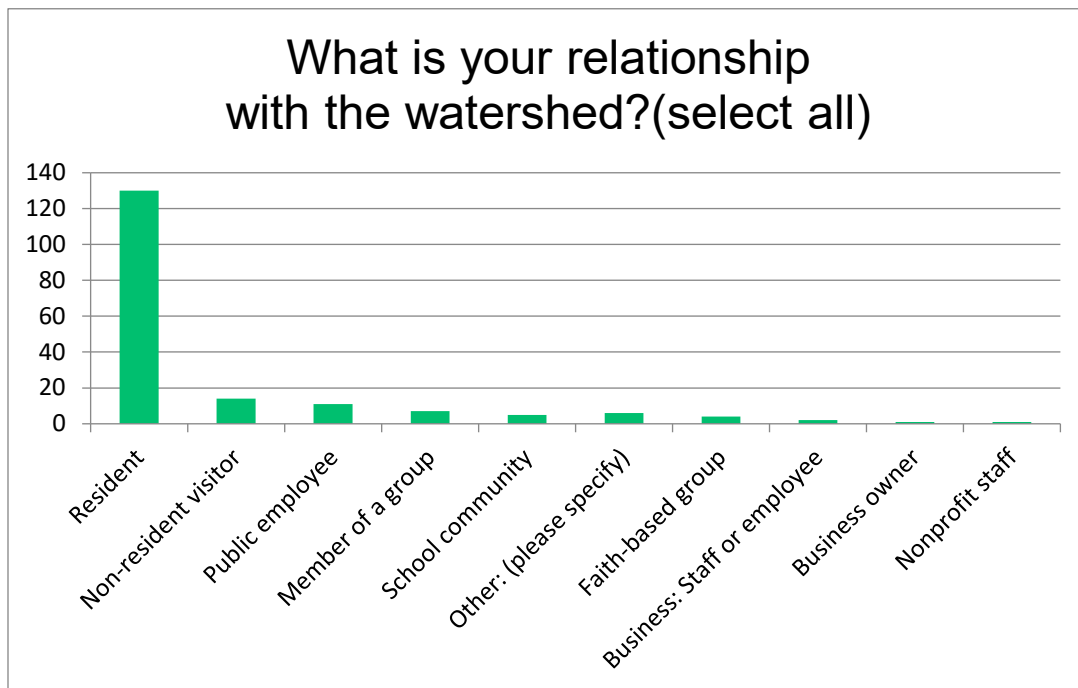
## **VLAWMO Watershed Management Plan Appendix B: Public Survey Responses**

March 13, 2024

**Total number of surveys completed: 146**  
**Survey results by question for Q1-6 below**

**Q1: What is your relationship with the watershed?(select any/all that apply)**

What is your relationship with the watershed?(select any/all that apply)		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Resident	89.04%	130
Non-resident visitor (recreation, fishing, etc.)	9.59%	14
Public employee	7.53%	11
Member of a non-profit, civic, or advocacy group (Scouts, etc.)	4.79%	7
School community	3.42%	5
Other: (please specify)	4.11%	6
Faith-based group	2.74%	4
Business: Staff or employee	1.37%	2
Business owner	0.68%	1
Nonprofit staff	0.68%	1
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>146</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>0</b>

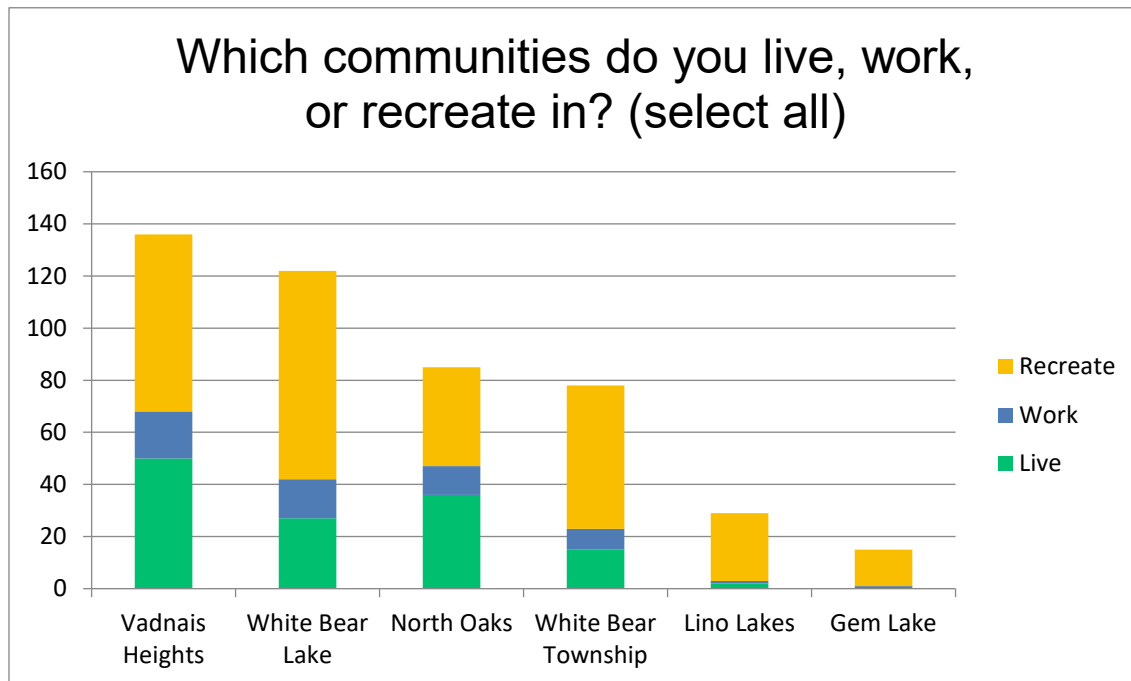


Other:

- Recreation
- Former resident of VH. I live in Shoreview now but love our waters
- City Council member
- Member of WBL Rotary club
- Individual Volunteer
- Environmentalist

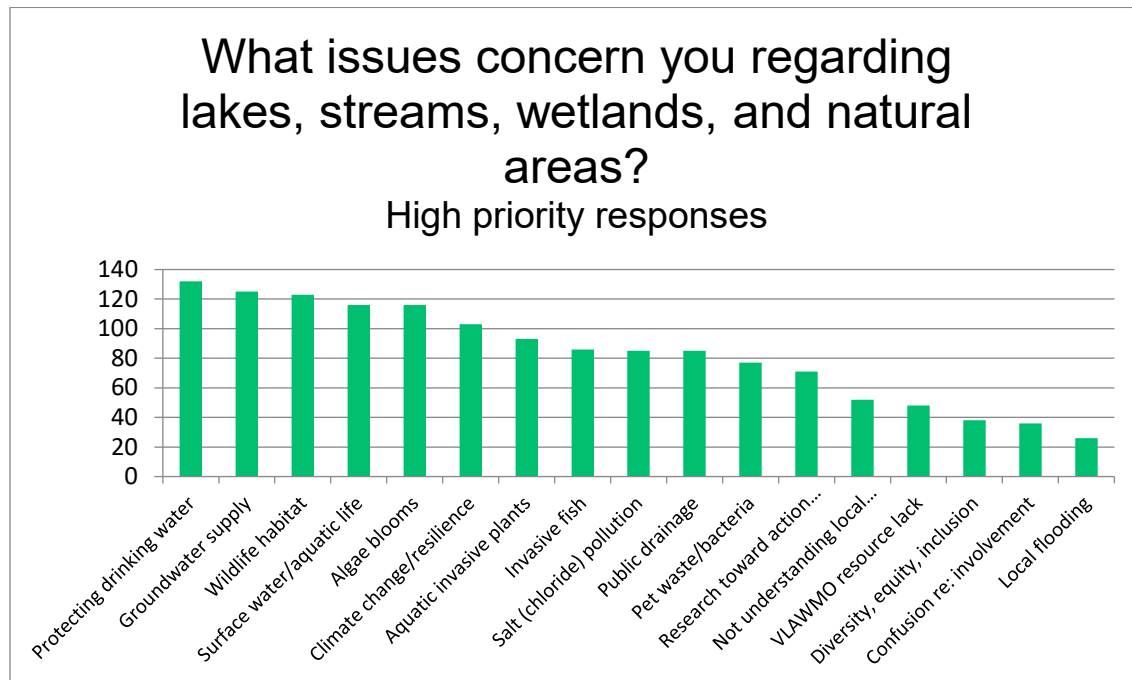
**Q2: Which community/ies do you live in, work in, or recreate in? (select any/all that apply)**

Which community/ies do you live in, work in, or recreate in? (select any/all that apply)							
		Live		Work		Recreate	Total
Vadnais Heights		50		18		68	136
White Bear Lake		27		15		80	122
North Oaks		36		11		38	85
White Bear Township		15		8		55	78
Lino Lakes		2		1		26	29
Gem Lake		0		1		14	15
						Answered	143
						Skipped	3



**Q3: What issues concern you regarding our lakes, streams, wetlands, and natural areas? Please indicate high or low priority level, or select "N/A" if not an issue.**

What issues concern you regarding our lakes, streams, wetlands, and natural areas? Please indicate high or low priority level, or select "N/A" if not an issue.				
	High priority	Low priority	N/A	Total
Protecting quality of drinking water	132	9	1	142
Protection and promotion of sustainable groundwater supplies	125	16	1	142
Protection and enhancement of wildlife habitat	123	15	3	141
Protecting and improving surface water for aquatic life	116	15	2	133
Algae and blue-green algae blooms impacting recreation	116	21	3	140
Impacts of climate change and building climate resiliency	103	28	6	137
Aquatic invasive plant species such as curly leaf pondweed	93	39	4	136
Aquatic invasive fish species such as common carp	86	46	4	136
Salt (chloride) pollution	85	45	5	135
Maintenance and repair of public drainage infrastructure	85	38	9	132
Pet waste and other bacteria sources of pollution	77	56	5	138
A need for research and analysis to better develop action plans	71	45	15	131
A lack of understanding on local water policies	52	61	15	128
A lack of VLAWMO resources to help meet issues	48	55	22	125
Diversity, equity, inclusion	38	69	25	132
Confusion on how to be involved	36	62	34	132
Local flooding	26	85	20	131
Other: (please specify)				17
			Answered	145
			Skipped	1



Other responses:

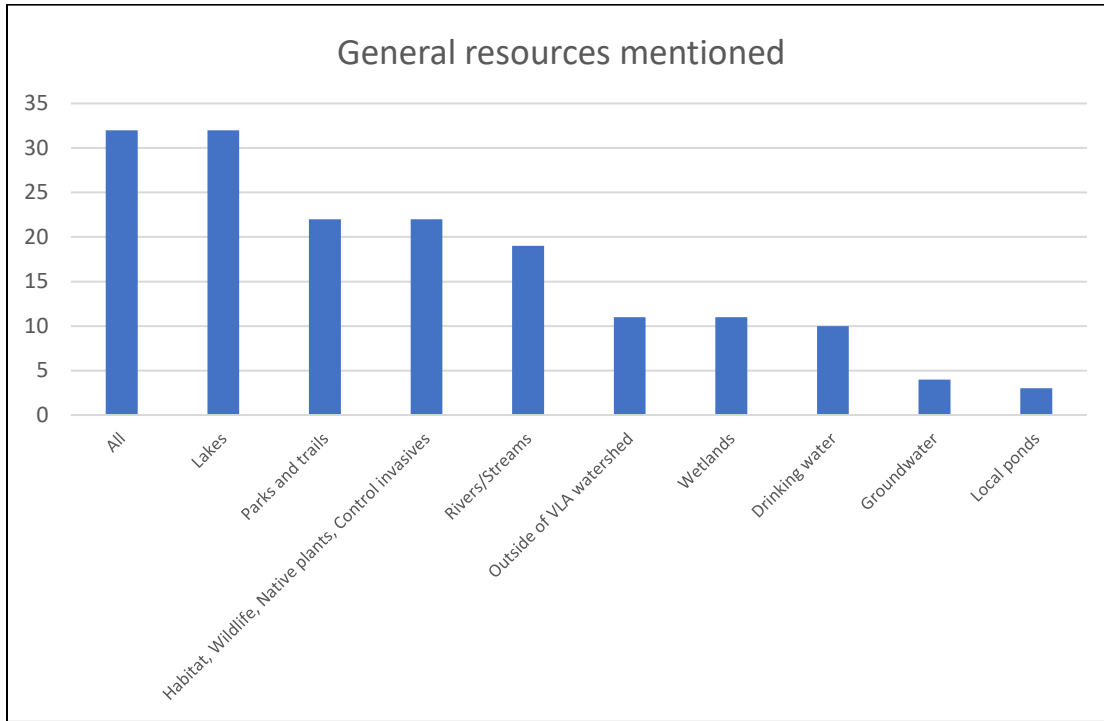
- Add pet sustainable poop bags
- Lake level
- Pollinator gardens and corridors
- What residents and businesses dump that hurt our water resources and wildlife
- my pond that is over drained and wildlife use it for sustenance and water to drink.
- Birch Lake becoming a "dead" lake. Weed control, sediment, inflow, outflow.
- I'm very concerned what will happen to Otter LAke as they put in the new bridge at County J Road and 35E - where will drainage into Otter Lake come from? The lake is down and I live/own the lake shore... the lake is definitely a selling point for my home!!

- Extra emphasis on impacts of climate change
- Lawn chemical runoff. People who live on or near the lake either apply themselves or hire companies who apply fertilizer, herbicide, and pesticide with no care about runoff. I see lawn chemicals in the streets, in the curb, etc. But they have no problem complaining when lake levels are low and putting up SAVE THE LAKE signs.
- Invasive purple loosestrife
- Many of these issues do not pertain to WMOs. Groundwater option write-in: "Not an issue for VLAWMO"
- effects of drought
- Invasive terrestrial plants such as buckthorn that impact watershed health
- Reduction of development near lakes if applicable.
- better access for recreation (kayak, canoe launches on more lakes)
- Keeping swimmers itch under control in Pleasant Lake is the highest priority for us, we can't use the lake as it is now!
- Why was a huge housing facility built on the edge of a water reservoir? When will we stop developing on fragile watersheds?

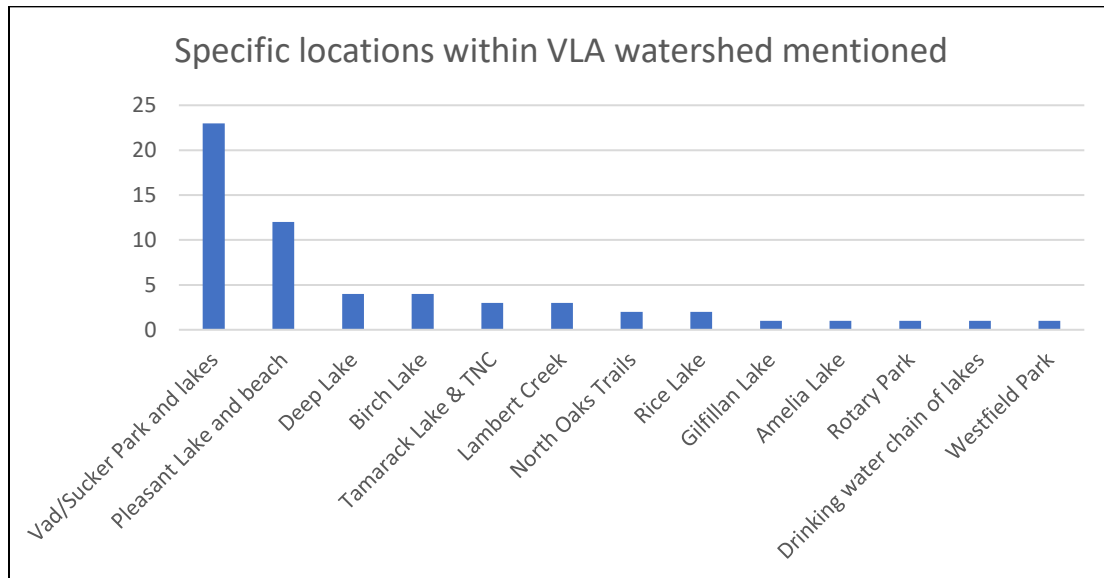
**Q4: What resources (lakes, rivers, streams, parks, trails) are you most passionate about, and why?**

What resources (lakes, rivers, streams, parks, trails) are you most passionate about, and why?									
Answered	127								
Skipped	19								

**General resources mentioned in responses and coded for graphical expression in Q4:**



**Specific locations mentioned in responses and coded for graphical expression in Q4:**



\*For details on coding used for each comment to develop the two graphs above, click here to view Attachment A.

**Top 5 Themes used to summarize “Why” people mentioned resources Q4:**



\*For details on coding used for each comment to develop the “why” themes shown above, click [here](#) to view Attachment B.

All responses received:

- Sucker Lake, Vadnais Lake, Grass Lake, Snail Lake
- All of the above. For habitat improvement and recreation.
- Snail lake area. Don't build on the mission property - animal wildlife will be ruined.
- All. It's all part of the ecosystem.
- Sucker Lake Park, North Oaks Trails. We use them.
- Rice Lake. I live on the lake.
- Pleasant Lake, Deep Lake, Deep Lake channel. Proximity to my residence.
- Sucker Lake. Wonderful walking area around lake - Trumpeter Swans, mallards, bird life, beaver?
- All of above. We live amongst them all.
- all
- Sucker Lake, Lake Vadnais, snail lake regional parks and bald eagle lake. Biking through parks. Sometimes fishing.
- Lakes and rivers - it's why we love MN.
- White Bear Lake. My boat is on WBL.
- Lake Gilfillan, Pleasant Lake. Heavy weeds, animal waste pollution, geese.
- All water resources. Water is essential for everything, changing weather patterns aren't helping. Want to conserve and protect where possible.
- All of them. Quality of all life in our community.
- Wetlands and trails. We enjoy walking on trails and wetlands are critical habitat and to water quality.
- Native plantings to restore pre-colonization habitats and to accommodate future climate change
- Lakes, because a lot of runoff and pollution impact the people and organisms that rely on the lake.
- Lake Vadnais
- All of them why I'm taking survey. My concern is VLAWMO getting involved in any waterway and ruining it for everyone. This organization is the worst.
- Lakes near me. I worry about water quality, which funnels to the fish, birds, and us.!
- Wetlands all around the VH area
- Lambert Creek. Vadnais Lake, Sucker Lake. Lambert Creek is in my yard, and I visit Vadnais and Sucker almost daily to walk my dogs.
- Lakes because I grew up near a lake and know how important they are to a healthy environment for plants, animal life and human beings as well.
- I love all of them. I grew up in area.
- Lakes/rivers/streams equally. Desire to be a good steward of aquatic resources (and surrounding lands) so as to enable aquatic life and other local wildlife to thrive.
- My pond. many forms of wildlife use the pond.
- All.
- Vadnais Lake. Use trails around lake for walking, wildlife watching.
- Birch Lake. Refer to question #3 other.
- The lake. People use.
- Amelia, Pleasant, Tamarack, Birch. Where I live and spend time.
- White Bear Lake
- Habitat

- I have a deep seeded passion for all waterways. I am a former aquatic ecologist for the MNDNR. I also am very fond of the trails and paths that we have in the watershed.
- Rice Lake - it's where I live White Bear Lake - It's a hub in my community
- Lake Vadnais because of the natural setting
- All of the above. Enhancement of my entire area all year around.
- The watershed - whole
- White Bear Lake and surrounding lakes quality as our source of drinking water. Businesses using way too much salt.
- Lakes, rivers, streams, parks, trails. Recreation.
- Tamarack park and trails. I use and visit Tamarack.
- Lakes, trails. Why: Protection of lakes in my community - aquatic life, curly leaf, protect groundwater, protect wildlife, recreation.
- White Bear Lake, Vadnais Lake, Sucker Lake, Snail Lake, also all the rivers and streams in Minnesota - it is in reality all connected. Why: It's the water.
- Lakes, streams, parks, & trails. I live, work & recreate near to these resources.
- All of the above, we need to find sustainable ways to utilize our water sources for drinking and sanitation without depleting our natural resources and protect wildlife.
- wetlands: better common-sense rules for development and allowing wetland credits to be purchased out of the area so prices are more realistic and not a money grab for cities.
- Clean lakes, hiking trails that are well maintained (that doesn't mean hacked to pieces or hardscaped), xc skiing trails, walking paths, wooded and wildlife areas. To preserve habitat for local and migrating wildlife.
- Sucker Creek & Regional park, i love the trail system for hiking. Protecting wetlands from invasive plant species.
- Parks, trails
- All - Over use/ abuse is affecting the current and future availability of all our clean water resources.
- White Bear Lake and Lost Lake; recreation
- All of them but primarily WBL. They are together, each is part of the whole.
- need to improve groundwater quality. so we all have good drinking/washing water.
- parks, trails, lakes, rivers. It's important for the health and wellbeing of people and wildlife to properly maintain and conserve natural resources.
- WBL, local runoff ponds. Lots of use, runoff ponds i.e. peppertree pond, receives road runoff that is heavily polluted.
- all of them. quality of life.
- All of the above but especially monitoring invasive species and maintaining the natural beauty of our water resources.
- Lakes, rivers, streams, parks. I'm just passionate about them all.
- Wetlands for wildlife habitat, buffer zones around lakes, water clarity everywhere. Why: Need wild spaces for wildlife habitat.
- Water is important to me because it can have unseen issues, get overlooked in contrast with public eye projects such as trails and parks
- White Bear Lake because I live near it and recreate there.
- Parks, trails, and groundwater. Waterways that my children can safely swim in and clean drinking water.
- vadnais lake and sucker
- Birch Lake (we live on Birch Lake) Rotary Nature Preserve (I'm a member of WBL Rotary Club)

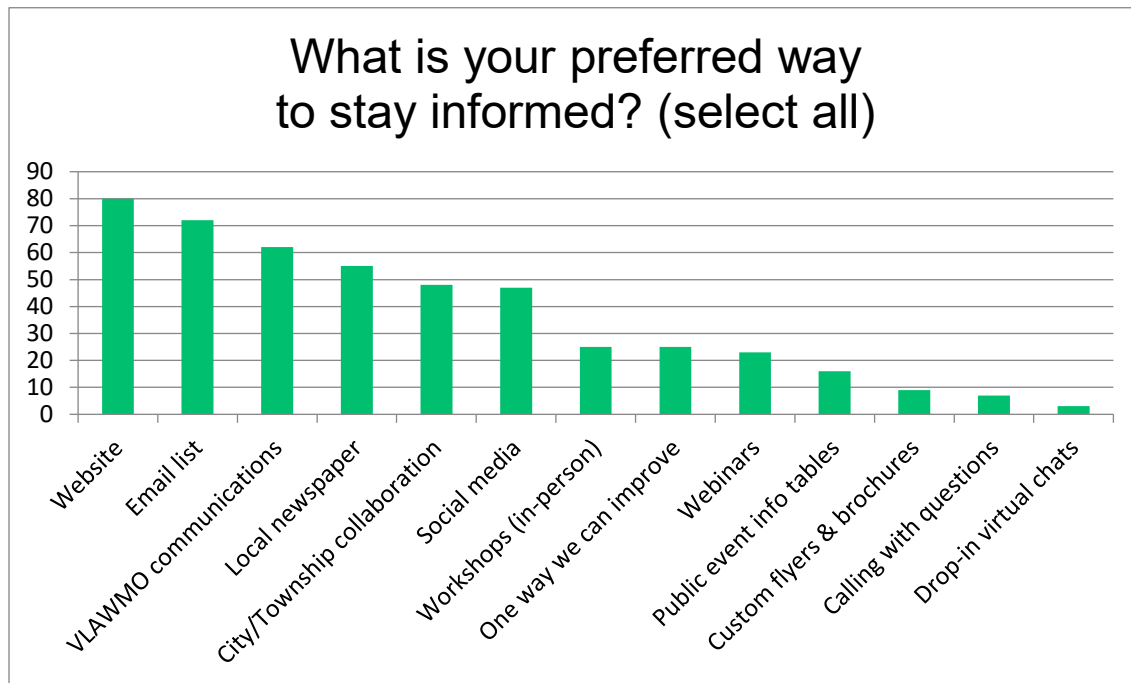
- Aquatic ones including wetlands. My interest area at this time.
- lakes, rivers, and parks high impact on quality of life and they are at risk of negative impact
- white bear lake and around it St Croix river and Stillwater Miss river - old man river William Obrain - great park I live near and use
- sucker lake regional park lake vadnais
- Lakes/fishing
- All! Diversity of species, general health of waterways, recreation
- all the trails and wetlands in Vadnais Heights. They are a great resource for our community.
- Birch Lake, because it's most visible to me
- trails, rivers, lakes, streams, parks I want them in the most natural status
- Sucker Lake, I live nearby.
- all
- Parks and trails because I used them more. But all are very valuable resources.
- All of the above as they are interconnected
- Lakes and trails.
- Vadnais Lakes
- lakes
- I am passionate about them all.
- Vadnais and Sucker Lakes since they are close to home and we recreate around them all year. Lambert Creek (and the wetlands it is connected to) since it is in my backyard!
- Lake Vadnais as it is important for our clean water supply
- Lakes and Rivers as they provide the water for us.
- Vadnais Lake and Sucker Lake
- All natural resources. Rivers and streams because they flow into our lakes. Lakes because water is so important as a natural resource. Parks and trails because green space enhances our areas immensely. Development and destruction of these areas is a concern. It seems development trumps natural areas.
- Pleasant lake beach is in horrible condition due to invasive species and weeds.
- I work at Tamarack, so I'm most passionate about Tamarack and Fish Lake on site. Since these are at the top of the watershed, I also recognize how their health affects everything downstream.
- I want using lead fishing tackle to be illegal in Vadnais and Sucker to save swans and whatever carnivores feed on the dead swans. Loons have tried to nest in West Vadnais. Is there a way such as a nesting box to make their lives easier? Vadnais Lake and Sucker paved trails have often not been maintained and have had huge dips in them. I want more wildflower plantings like at Snail Lake but not at the expense of cutting trees. I want Lot A opened at Sucker in the winter. If there is no snow, Lot D should also be open. The goal is to make it easy for people to access the lakes. Maybe have a naturalist walk through with a group of people and put the video on YouTube or the website. I would like a brochure with pictures to identify plants and birds in the watershed. Lambert Creek has been impaired and I would like it cleaned up before it exits to Vadnais.
- Lakes, rivers and streams. All humans and animals depend on them for life.
- Sucker Lake, Lake Vadnais.
- Parks and trails. To keep people healthy and happy.
- Hard to choose but am most passionate about Lakes and Rivers—water is life!
- lakes, rivers, streams and other water retention/mitigation ponds.
- All of them. They all need our protection, and it's our responsibility to do so.
- Overall water quality in our area including drinking, natural, and recreational.

- Pleasant lake Beach -- It used to be something we could enjoy and now its unswimmable! North Oaks community wants to know what we can do to help make it a family friendly beach where we can swim again!
- Deep Lake, because we live next to it, and Pleasant Lake because we want to ensure all of these connected bodies of water are protected and well maintained.
- Drinking water safety, after seeing neighboring communities affected and residents forced to mitigate and deal with risks or move. Concerns about flooding of neighborhoods with weather patterns creating more extreme extremes.
- Lakes and water bodies that connect them. Why? They are both a treasured resource for wildlife, but also a valuable resource for people (recreation, zen moments, drinking water).
- All. I want to boat, water ski and float on them
- I walk around Pleasant Lake almost daily, so I'm particularly a tuned to that lake. The trails in North Oaks are an amazing resource and I would love to see them well taken care of. The restoration project going on at Pleasant Lake is fabulous.
- Lakes and rivers for recreation. Swimming, kayaking, etc.
- Wetlands in VH are all impaired
- Lakes and trails
- Vadnais Lake
- Pleasant Lake - the health of the lake has taken a poor turn
- Lakes and rivers. We need to protect our natural resources!
- Protection of lakes and wetlands from invasive, non natives- so next generation will also have utility and recreation of same.
- Pleasant Lake, we want to take the kids swimming but can't due to the constant swimmers itch.
- Used to enjoy the lakes so much more, but now many, if not most, are not swimmable due to algae, swimmer's itch, bacteria, etc - heartbreaking to see an important facet of MN culture deteriorate due to climate change.
- The chain of lakes providing St Paul water supply. I live near them and recreate near them.
- Pleasant and Deep Lakes in North Oaks since I live here and also any watershed that impacts my well water. We thought Pleasant Lake Beach was an awesome benefit to living in North Oaks but in the two years we have been here we have had E. coli or other bacteria by the end of June making it unsafe for swimming or for my toddler to play with the water table and in the sandy areas near the water.
- Lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands. We are all connected and our actions have deep consequences.
- Lakes, trails for recreation.
- Pleasant Lake we see it from my home everyday
- The aquifer that we draw our water from to bring water to our house. Ensuring pleasant Lake is swimmable
- Deep Lake (I've watched its shoreline and water quality degrade over 25 years. Rehabilitation efforts in the last couple of years seem to be bearing fruit, but I'm concerned that local government is becoming distracted by other issues and that we're going to lose momentum.) Vadnais/Sucker Lakes (This is a gem in the north metro. Heavily used by both walkers and fishermen, but it's shocking how much trash is being left along the shoreline.)
- Drinking water supply.
- Sucker Lake, Lake Vadnais
- All of above
- Lakes, rivers, streams, trails, to help wildlife areas and slow climate change effects

- I am deeply passionate about all of the natural and wild areas in the watershed. Humans have developed too much land and destroyed too much of natural ecosystems. It is critical that we protect as much of our lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, parks, and trails as possible. We need to protect and improve the water, land, and ecosystems to sustain aquatic life, wildlife, and human life.
- Westfield Park is our favorite. I would like more trails to walk or bike. Parks and playgrounds are a high priority for us; pickleball courts, continue to maintain and build
- We like to walk at Vadnais Lake all year around. Please protect this area. We are not invited to the private lakes in North Oaks. But they are invited to use our water. Let's stop all the wasteful irrigation/toxic fertilization that's damaging the watersheds. If we're living in a drought, teach people how to conserve water!!! We used to see a lot more diversity in wildlife here. Now we see less and less. We need more laws that prohibit motorized boatcraft. How about some quiet?

**Q5: What is your preferred way to keep informed on the progress of the watershed plan? (select any/all that apply)**

What is your preferred way to keep informed on the progress of the watershed plan? (select any/all that apply)					
Answer Choices	Responses				
Website	80				
Email list	72				
VLAWMO communications	62				
Local newspaper	55				
City/Township collaboration	48				
Social media	47				
Workshops (in-person)	25				
One way we can improve	25				
Webinars	23				
Public event info tables	16				
Custom flyers & brochures	9				
Calling with questions	7				
Drop-in virtual chats	3				
Answered	136				
Skipped	10				



What's one way we can improve our communications to keep you informed?

- Any of the above. More frequently tie in to the cities (events, website links).
- Emails
- Communication with North Oaks Homeowner Assoc. to communicate with residents via our internal social media channel.
- Partner with city to piggy-back on their outreach.
- Public fliers and notices, especially in public parks or facilities
- Post more information in the VH Press and VH News.
- Please keep me informed via US Mail.

- List projects and their status, i.e. started, finished, planned
- I didn't know your organization existed. My Otter Lake is in both Ramsey and Anoka Counties so I hope everyone works together - so glad I am aware of you all now! I don't do live chats.
- You are doing a very good job! Thank you!
- Facebook or twitter.(X)
- Public updates via the library.
- inform newspapers
- get local paper to prominently make your info available
- I don't have suggestions for improvement, but I appreciate the variety of info sources being offered.
- Email
- focus on core responsibility and use the items I checked to let people know what you are doing and what they can do to help.
- actually send them to me
- I really like the emails that link to the website. I read most of them.
- I think you do a good job at trying to get your information out.
- Several times a year have info tables at the major grocery stores.
- provide more detail of what is included or would be included in an upcoming event so we can prioritize what the information is and whether we would want to adjust our schedules to participate.
- You are doing a good job now
- You need to develop a higher profile on social media. Reach out to administrators of local sites/pages/groups and solicit permission to post content to their sites.
- More physical mail
- Well, don't put up the world's ugliest sign right in front of the nicest view of Turtle Lake. Put the signs down in the parking lot. Don't strip the detritus off the whole park area surrounding the lakes. Don't kid yourself that you need the priority of an all oak savannah if that is what it once was. Let the past be done. What we need are solutions that fit today--not yesterday.

**Q6: Is there anything else you'd like us to know as we conduct our planning process?**

Is there anything else you'd like us to know as we conduct our planning process?					
Answered	42				
Skipped	104				

Response Theme #1

Suggestions that fit  
VLAWMO's focus.

*"I also strongly encourage VLAWMO to include an environmental justice lens in their approach to the work."*

Response Theme #2

Organizational support.

*"Keep up the great work!"*

Response Theme #3

Appreciation for the  
opportunity to provide  
feedback.

*"Thank you for the opportunity to offer feedback!"*

\*For details on coding used for each comment to develop these themes, click [here](#) to view Attachment B.

- Please promote the Jr Watershed program and booklet at local libraries - it was awesome!
- Thank you for the contributions to our community.
- please maintain walking paths both paved and non paved paths!
- Please keep the area pet friendly/make it more pet friendly. Pets are the only reason many get exercise/go outdoors.
- Are there any efforts to control buckthorn which chokes out native plants?
- Keep up the great work!
- Please coordinate efforts amongst public agencies. I live in the extreme SE corner of VLAWMO and our neighbors across the street have different management criteria and resources and opportunities than I do.
- It is time to open up the east side of Lake Vadnais to pet walking. Put up some places for bags, and enforce water pickup on Both sides of the lake.
- Please do nothing. Everything you do makes things worse.
- Keep doing good work! It's important that the community is involved.
- I value VLAWMO and what they have already done to improve the environment.
- School field trips, info signs at parks, lakes of interesting facts about said areas, contests so more homeowners create/construct rain gardens, etc, then set up home tours. Thanks
- What is being done about lawsuit between DNR and WB Lake Association?
- I would like to be involved. As mentioned I have a background in aquatics.
- I am Loni Kay 5955 Otter Lake Rd White Bear Lake, MN 55110. Thank you for caring.
- Please make protecting our water source a hug priority!
- Clean water benefits all animals, i.e., humans and other species.
- Not at this point - thanks for the opportunity to offer feedback!

- At this time, I have not had a lot of involvement with your organization.
- You guys may be entering into "mission creep."
- Stay awesome!
- Curious whether there are any TMDLs for the watershed, what pollutants are high concern, residential efforts we can do to address pollutants of high concern, and what ways are you engaging with the municipalities
- And of course, with global warming, I want to make sure people's houses don't flood. I know you have done some work on that. If we had 8 inches of rain in 24 hours, how high would Lambert Creek be? Do we have flood maps for 4 inches of rain in 24 hours, 8 inches and 10 inches for instance.
- You are so appreciated!
- Allow city staff (and others as appropriate) to discuss the process, analysis, results and recommendations with citizens who contact them. Avoid the - we'll let you know; sorry, we can't discuss this now - responses. If they can't be discussed, provided more descriptive reason why and when the information could be discussed.
- Safe water takes research and resources that require financial investments.
- What do experts from this group believe is the cause for problems with Pleasant Lake beach? What can residents do to help?
- Make sure to set clear measurable goals for short/median/long term outcomes. Communicate necessary steps and progress with the affected community members.
- Stop raising the fees on our taxes...well over 100% in nine years. That's BS
- Need more access points to canoe and kayak on lakes and rivers. Vadnais Lakes canoe launch would be awesome!
- Would love to see pleasant lake swimmable again.
- Really appreciate your reaching out for input. Frankly very uninformed about this despite living in North Oaks for 24 years. Embarrassed to say I am uninformed about what the top opportunities and challenges are
- I look at your volunteer possibilities. I am too old for most. I wish you well.
- I hope VLAWMO gets more funding to do more and grow and have a bigger impact. VLAWMO does excellent work and should receive more resources from local government to expand their work and impact. I also strongly encourage VLAWMO to include an environmental justice lens (i.e., social justice and consideration of privilege, power, oppression, and marginalization) in their approach to the work.
- Don't use plastic pens to advertise--make pencils instead. Limit plastic as much as possible. Stop cutting down trees to build rain gardens. Save our precious trees. Promote organic maintenance of local land near/in our watersheds. Slow down the traffic. Move stop signs, speed bumps. Thanks for listening. Listen with your heart.

Attachment A: Coding used to categorize responses and build graphs for Q4

Attachment A

Response	General resources mentioned										Specific Locations within VLA mentioned												
	All	Lakes	P&T	Hab	Rivers	N/A	Wet	Drinking	Ground	Pond	VSP	Pleas	Deep	Birch	TNC	Lamb	NOt	Rice	Gil	Amelia	Rot	Chain	West
Sucker Lake, Vadnais Lake, Grass Lake, Snail Lake						1					1												
All of the above. For habitat improvement and recreation.	1			1																			
Snail lake area. Don't build on the mission property - animal wildlife will be ruined.						1																	
All. It's all part of the ecosystem.	1																						
Sucker Lake Park, North Oaks Trails. We use them.											1						1						
Rice Lake. I live on the lake.																	1						
Pleasant Lake, Deep Lake, Deep Lake channel. Proximity to my residence.												1	1										
Sucker Lake. Wonderful walking area around lake - Trumpeter Swans, mallards, bird life, beaver?				1							1												
All of above. We live amongst them all.	1																						
all	1																						
Sucker Lake, Lake Vadnais, snail lake regional parks and bald eagle lake. Biking through parks. Sometimes fishing.			1			1					1												
Lakes and rivers - it's why we love MN.		1			1																		
White Bear Lake. My boat is on WBL.						1																	
Lake Gilfillan, Pleasant Lake. Heavy weeds,												1							1				

animal waste pollution, geese.																						
All water resources. Water is essential for everything, changing weather patterns aren't helping. Want to conserve and protect where possible.	1																					
All of them. Quality of all life in our community.	1																					
Wetlands and trails. We enjoy walking on trails and wetlands are critical habitat and to water quality.			1				1															
Native plantings to restore pre-colonization habitats and to accommodate future climate change				1																		
Lakes, because a lot of runoff and pollution impact the people and organisms that rely on the lake.		1																				
Lake Vadnais											1											
All of them why I'm taking survey. My concern is VLAWMO getting involved in any waterway and ruining it for everyone. This organization is the worst.	1																					
Lakes near me. I worry about water quality, which funnels to the fish, birds, and us.!		1		1																		
Wetlands all around the VH area							1															
Lambert Creek. Vadnais Lake, Sucker Lake. Lambert Creek is in											1					1						

my yard, and I visit Vadnais and Sucker almost daily to walk my dogs.																							
Lakes because I grew up near a lake and know how important they are to a healthy environment for plants, animal life and human beings as well.		1		1																			
I love all of them. I grew up in area.	1																						
Lakes/rivers/stream s equally. Desire to be a good steward of aquatic resources (and surrounding lands) so as to enable aquatic life and other local wildlife to thrive.		1		1	1																		
My pond. many forms of wildlife use the pond.				1						1													
All.	1																						
Vadnais Lake. Use trails around lake for walking, wildlife watching.				1							1												
Birch Lake. Refer to question #3 other.													1										
The lake. People use.		1																					
Amelia, Pleasant, Tamarack, Birch. Where I live and spend time.											1		1	1					1				
White Bear Lake						1																	
Habitat				1																			
I have a deep seeded passion for all waterways. I am a former aquatic ecologist for the MNDNR. I also am very found of the trails and paths that we have in the watershed.	1		1																				
Rice Lake - it's where I live White																	1						

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

I am passionate about them all.	1																						
Vadnais and Sucker Lakes since they are close to home and we recreate around them all year. Lambert Creek (and the wetlands it is connected to) since it is in my backyard!							1				1					1							
Lake Vadnais as it is important for our clean water supply								1			1												
Lakes and Rivers as they provide the water for us.		1			1																		
Vadnais Lake and Sucker Lake											1												
All natural resources. Rivers and streams because they flow into our lakes. Lakes because water is so important as a natural resource. Parks and trails because green space enhances our areas immensely. Development and destruction of these areas is a concern. It seems development trumps natural areas.	1	1	1		1																		
Pleasant lake beach is in horrible condition due to invasive species and weeds.												1											
I work at Tamarack, so I'm most passionate about Tamarack and Fish Lake on site. Since these are at the top of the watershed, I also recognize how their health affects everything downstream.															1								

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

critical that we protect as much of our lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, parks, and trails as possible. We need to protect and improve the water, land, and ecosystems to sustain aquatic life, wildlife, and human life.																							
Westfield Park is our favorite. I would like more trails to walk or bike. Parks and playgrounds are a high priority for us; pickleball courts, continue to maintain and build			1																				1
We like to walk at Vadnais Lake all year around. Please protect this area. We are not invited to the private lakes in North Oaks. But they are invited to use our water. Let's stop all the wasteful irrigation/toxic fertilization that's damaging the watersheds. If we're living in a drought, teach people how to conserve water!!! We used to see a lot more diversity in wildlife here. Now we see less and less. We need more laws that prohibit motorized boatcraft. How about some quiet?				1							1												
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

## Question #4

*“What resources are you most passionate about and why?”* – identifying the motives for the responses received in question #4 with an evaluation of the text that followed specific waterbody or park identification. Reference to data not utilized in part 1 (specific waterbody/park/trail identification).

### Summary themes

1. Recreation, wildlife, and value of natural resources.
2. What’s close to home, visible, and interconnected.
3. Water quality, groundwater, drinking water, and water conservation.
4. Future use of water and natural resources.
5. Aquatic vegetation, climate change, and flooding.

### Full themes – in survey results document

1. The largest motivators for responses in question #4 are recreation, wildlife, and value of natural resources. Swimming, boating, and wildlife watching are commonly mentioned with specific lake uses, types of wildlife, or a voiced support for maintenance and protection of wildlife.

**Examples:** *“Used to enjoy the lakes so much more, but now many, if not most, are not swimmable due to algae, swimmer’s itch, bacteria, etc.”*

*“We recreate around them all year.” “I want them in the most natural states.”*

*“...also am very fond of the trails and paths that we have in the watershed.”*

2. Many are motivated by what’s close to home, visible, and interconnected. These are supported by notions of health, quality of life, a passion for water as a whole, dependence on water, and one area impacting another. A sense of responsibility, maintenance and community are also included in respondent reasoning.

**Examples:** *“We see it from my home every day.”*

*“It’s where I live.” “To keep people healthy and happy.”*

*“Quality of all life in our community.”*

3. Water quality, groundwater, drinking water, and water conservation. Cleanliness, health and safety, specific pollutants, and protection are commonly referenced to support these interests.

**Examples:** *“Lambert Creek has been impaired and I would like it cleaned up before it exits to Vadnais.” “I worry about water quality.”*

*“Need to improve groundwater quality for drinking”*

4. Future use of water and natural resources.

**Examples:**

*“So next generation will also have utility”*

5. Aquatic vegetation, climate change, and flooding.

**Examples:**

*“Protecting wetlands from invasive species” “Heavy weeds.”*

*“Concerns about flooding of neighborhoods with weather patterns creating more extreme extremes.” “Heartbreaking to see an important facet of MN culture deteriorate.”*

### Raw data step: Summary of raw data/qualitative analysis

Statements that articulate the messages observed in the data in a condensed form. Organized according to the number of data points extrapolated from responses given in the survey. For example, a one sentence response can contain one or multiple data points.

Survey responses on question 4: 127

Data points extrapolated from responses given in question 4: 178

The most common expressions pertain to trail use for walking and hiking (14) as well as a basic notion of recreation (13). Reference is also made to swimming both in Pleasant Lake and in general, with disappointment regarding obstacles to swimming (6). Occasional mention of boating and lake access with mixed opinions on use type (5).

**2) Theme 1: Intrinsic value of wildlife, species diversity, and general natural resources - 27**

Most respondents refer to an intrinsic value of wildlife and natural settings in their reasoning (14). Others frame support for wildlife and natural spaces out of a sense of proactive encouragement (7). Lastly, several frame support for wildlife and natural spaces in context of human forces such as development (6).

**3) Theme 2: Living nearby, proximity, and visibility – 24**

Because of living or working near certain bodies of water, and because they're most visible (21). Some state connections to community affiliations or refer to the notion of growing up near lakes or in the area (4).

**4) Theme 2: A holistic sense of water for interconnectedness, health and happiness, quality of life, reliance, and passions.- 24**

There is a strong acknowledgement of the interconnections of water, supported by passion for water as a whole (14). Responses emphasize the dependence on water and how one area impacts another (5), while calling for a sense of active stewardship, responsibly, and proper maintenance (5).

**5) Theme 3: Measurable water quality, cleanliness, protection, and health - 19**

Reasoning based on water quality derives from the notion of cleanliness, clarity, health, and concern about impaired waters (8). There are references made to specific pollutants or sources of harm to water quality (6), and some responses emphasize the notion of protection and maintenance in context of interconnected waters and systems such as parks, trails, aquatic life, and human life (3).

**6) Theme 3: Groundwater, drinking water, and conservation - 16**

The basic notion of drinking water and water supply is most heavily emphasized (7). Proactive call for improving, conserving, and protecting (5), or emphasizing drinking water cleanliness, safety, and risk (4).

**7) Theme 4: General use – 11**

Because of a value based on human and community use today and for the next generation (10). Mention of washing water (1).

**8) Theme 5: Aquatic vegetation – 8**

Concern expressed on invasive species and invasive species monitoring (5). Concerns on general aquatic weeds and lake function such as sedimentation and flowage (3).

**9) Theme 5: Climate change – 5**

Concerns on accommodating for and slowing climate change and flooding (5).

**10) Theme 5: Concerns, support, organizational role – 5**

Expression of conflict and disputes on VLAWMO organizational roles and policies or the interaction between communities (3). Expression of support on a specific project mixed with concern (1) and support for a specific project (1).

**11) Theme 5: Brainstorming and programs – 4**

Suggestions for wildlife well being, wildlife education (2). Advocacy on stopping fertilization practices (1) and recommendations to other departments outside of VLAWMO (1).

**12) Theme 5: Specific concerns - 3**

Specific issues cited such as lead fishing tackle, pet walking, and the risk of water being overlooked in the public eye (3).

**13) Theme 5: MN culture - 2**

Out of an emotional connection to Minnesota and MN culture (2).

# Question #6

*"Is there anything else you'd like us to know?"*

Responses from question 6: 43

Data points extrapolated from responses given in question 6: 55

**Subthemes from Q4 that were restated as part of responses given in Q#6:** Recreation, water quality, wildlife, water's interconnectedness, and climate change re-appeared in question 6.

## **Recreation – 4**

Advocacy for path maintenance and continuing and improving pet walking (3). Would love to see Pleasant Lake swimmable again (1).

## **Measurable water quality – 2**

Encouragement for water source protection to be a huge priority and for financial investments and research to support safe water (2).

## **Wildlife – 1**

A question on controlling buckthorn and concern how it chokes out native plants (1).

## **A holistic sense of water for interconnectedness – 1**

Clean water framed as something that benefits humans, animals, and other species (1).

## **Climate change – 1**

An expression of support for preventing home flooding in context of global warming, and interest in conveying flood details such as floodplain modeling and maps (1).

## **New themes stated in Q6:**

### **Themes:**

1. The most common response was suggestions that fit VLAWMO's focus.
2. The next most common responses were statements of organizational support.
3. Lastly, there were several statements of appreciation for the opportunity to provide feedback and concerns stated.

### **Theme 1: Suggestions on organization operations: Most fitting to VLAWMO's focus – 12**

Most input includes encouragement or inquiries that relate to existing programs or areas of focus (6). There are also encouragement or inquiries expressed regarding public and municipal agency coordination, pollutants of concern, residential involvement, and environmental justice (3). Some express encouragement around organizational communication, advocating for transparency, maintaining measurable goals, and communicating progress (2).

### **Theme 1: None/opt-out of question – 11**

A simple response of "no" or not having anything else to add (11).

### **Theme 2: Organizational support – 9**

Expressions of support focused on community contributions, past actions, improving the environment, or using and increasing funds for a bigger impact (9).

**Theme 2: Ideas and brainstorming: Peripheral to VLAWMO's focus – 8**

Topics expressed that don't relate directly to VLAWMO's area of focus include boat access, park and land management, the WBL/DNR lawsuit, signs, and traffic (8).

**Theme 3: Appreciation for survey opportunity – 4**

Expressed appreciation for the survey opportunity with occasional sentiments of love and care. Recognition of being uninformed on opportunities and challenges (4).

**Theme 3: Concerns – 3**

Concerns about mission creep, tax increases, and the organization's actions making things worse (3).



# ***VLAWMO Policy Documents***



## APPENDIX C. VLAWMO POLICY DOCUMENTS

A series of four documents make up the Appendix C portion of the Watershed Management Plan. These documents are as follows:

- Public Drainage Management Policy
- Public Drainage System Inspection Protocol
- Aquatic Plant Management Policy
- Water Management Policy - **currently under revision**

These documents are all available to view on VLAWMO's website.

**Link:** <https://www.vlawmo.org/about/2027-2036-watershed-plan/>



# ***Issue Prioritization Process***



## Appendix D: Issue Prioritization Process

### Plan Issues and Descriptions

Below is a table summarizing the issues impacting Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization (VLAWMO) resources. Issues are organized by resource categories. Issue descriptions are provided for each issue. This list of issues was developed after review and consideration of the following:

- The current VLAWMO Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan
- Existing data and agency reports
- Responses from the 60-day plan notification
- Responses from the public, TEC, and Board survey, and
- Feedback from the Initial Planning Meeting, held April 24, 2024.

One of the first steps of the planning process is to identify priority issues to focus VLAWMO implementation efforts. To inform this prioritization process, survey results, the capital improvements partner table, and responses from the 60-day plan notification were analyzed to create priority ranks for each issue.

- Survey results: The public, TEC, and Board survey asked each group to identify priority issues. The resulting priority issues from each survey were sorted from highest priority to lowest priority. Those in the top third received a rank of “1,” medium third received a “2,” and issues in the lower third a “3”.
- Capital improvements partner table: Using best professional judgement, projects in the five-year project table were reviewed to identify which issue the project most directly addressed. The sum of each issue indicated how prominently each issue was addressed by a planned priority project. Issues were sorted and ranked by prominence so those in the top third received a rank of “1,” medium third received a “2,” and issues in the lower third a “3”.
- 60-day plan notification responses: Each response letter was reviewed. Using best professional judgement, if a VLAWMO draft issue was mentioned, it was marked. The sum of each issue indicated how prominently each issue was mentioned by a 60-day response letter. Issues were sorted and ranked by prominence so those in the top third received a rank of “1,” medium third received a “2,” and issues in the lower third a “3”.

Each priority rank (Public Survey, TEC Survey, Board Survey, Partner Table, and 60-Day Response) was considered equally. The average of each priority rank is shown in the “Average Score” column. Issues were sorted and ranked by Average Score so those in the top third received a rank of “1,” medium third received a “2,” and issues in the lower third a “3”. The rank of the average is provided as the final “Average Rank.”

Resource Category	Issue	Description	Public Survey	TEC Survey	Board Survey	Partner Table	60-Day Response	Average Score	Average Rank
<b>Surface Water Quality Management</b>	Surface Water and Drinking Water Quality	Surface waterbodies are in need of protection and restoration to preserve surface drinking water sources and promote aquatic life and recreational opportunities.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Erosion of Shorelines and Streambanks	Development along shorelines, reduction of riparian buffers, and increased streamflow accelerates erosion and nutrient loading to surface waters.	N/A	N/A	1	2	2	1.67	1
	AIS Management	AIS such as rough fish and curly leaf pondweed contribute to declining water quality and can outcompete native species, threatening the ecological function of lakes.	2	2	3	3	2	2.4	3
<b>Groundwater Management</b>	Groundwater and Drinking Water Quality	Surface water / groundwater interaction and groundwater contaminants have the potential to impact groundwater quality. VLAWMO supports groundwater quality protection through partnership and technical assistance.	1	1	1	2	1	1.2	1
	Groundwater Supplies and Conservation	Groundwater supplies need to be protected from overuse and replenished through aquifer recharge. VLAWMO supports groundwater quantity protection through partnership and technical assistance.	1	2	1	2	1	1.4	1
<b>Data Collection</b>	Chloride and Emerging Contaminants	Road salt application results in the addition of chloride to roads, lakes, and streams, where it corrodes infrastructure, is toxic to roadside vegetation, and impacts aquatic life. In addition to chlorides, other emerging contaminants have been detected in surface waters may need monitoring per State requirements to protect human and aquatic health.	2	1	3	3	1	2	2
	Water Monitoring	Surface water monitoring is needed to provide an overview of current water quality and quantity conditions and trends, inform future implementation efforts, and document the impact activities have on improving VLAWMO resources.	N/A	1	2	3	1	1.75	1
	Data Gaps	Data acquisition, analysis, surveys, and reports may be needed to close data gaps and better inform action.	2	2	3	2	3	2.4	3

Resource Category	Issue	Description	Public Survey	TEC Survey	Board Survey	Partner Table	60-Day Response	Average Score	Average Rank
	Staff Professional Development and Training	In order to meet needs of the community, VLAWMO staff must have access to professional development and training opportunities, and staff capacity must be adequate to accomplish plan goals.	3	2	3	3	3	2.8	3
Outreach, Education, and Community Engagement	Community Formal Education and Communications	VLAWMO provides formal education opportunities (e.g. curriculum) and maintains current digital communication and outreach to enhance community knowledge in water quality management.	N/A	N/A	3	3	3	3	3
	Outreach and Marketing	VLAWMO staff engage the community through events (demonstration sites of projects and experiential learning) and general outreach efforts (promotion, communication, and marketing) to increase understanding and engagement in VLAWMO efforts, participation, and communication regarding VLAWMO policies.	3	1	3	1	3	2.2	2
	Collaboration and Engagement	There is a need to influence more projects that benefit water resources. VLAWMO staff provide stakeholder and partnership coordination, with collaboration on associated projects that benefit managed resources.	N/A	3	3	1	3	2.5	3
Flooding and Water Quantity	Public Drainage Systems	Public drainage systems are in need of inspection and maintenance to preserve their capacity and function and minimize downstream sediment delivery.	2	2	2	3	2	2.2	2
	Infrastructure Partnership Projects	Aging infrastructure or current infrastructure is in need of expansion for climate change effects and development. VLAWMO collaborates with partners managing infrastructure to build and repair infrastructure projects that help reduce flooding and water quantity.	3	3	3	1	1	2.2	2
	VLAWMO Facilities	To preserve VLAWMO's investment in projects and practices, VLAWMO-built facilities must be inventoried, inspected, and maintained.	N/A	2	3	3	1	2.25	2
Policy and Facilitation	Wetland Conservation Act	VLAWMO, as the local government unit (LGU) for the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA), manages wetlands per State Requirements by ensuring no net loss of wetlands in quantity, quality, and biological diversity in the watershed.	N/A	1	1	2	3	1.75	1

Resource Category	Issue	Description	Public Survey	TEC Survey	Board Survey	Partner Table	60-Day Response	Average Score	Average Rank
	Stormwater Management Standards	VLAWMO does not regulate stormwater management or erosion and sediment control, but provides advisory technical review support to its member communities that enforce associated ordinances and VLAWMO's water standards.	N/A	N/A	2	3	1	2	2
<b>Community and Ecosystem Health and Resiliency</b>	Environmental Justice	There is a need to focus on how plan issues disproportionately impact areas of low income, limited English proficiency, and people of color.	3	3	3	2	2	2.6	3
	Climate Resiliency	Climatic changes have increased the frequency of high-magnitude rainfall and runoff events, which can potentially overwhelm the capacity of existing stormwater management infrastructure. Partnership projects are needed to build resiliency in communities.	2	3	3	1	1	2	2
	Natural Features and Habitat	Within capital improvement project areas, partnership with landowners is needed to promote the protection and management of well-functioning perennial vegetation, forests, floodplains, and upland habitat to support native plant communities, pollinators, rare species, and wildlife and support community livability and resiliency.	1	2	2	1	2	1.6	1