



It's About The People: Community Perceptions of Lake Wausau

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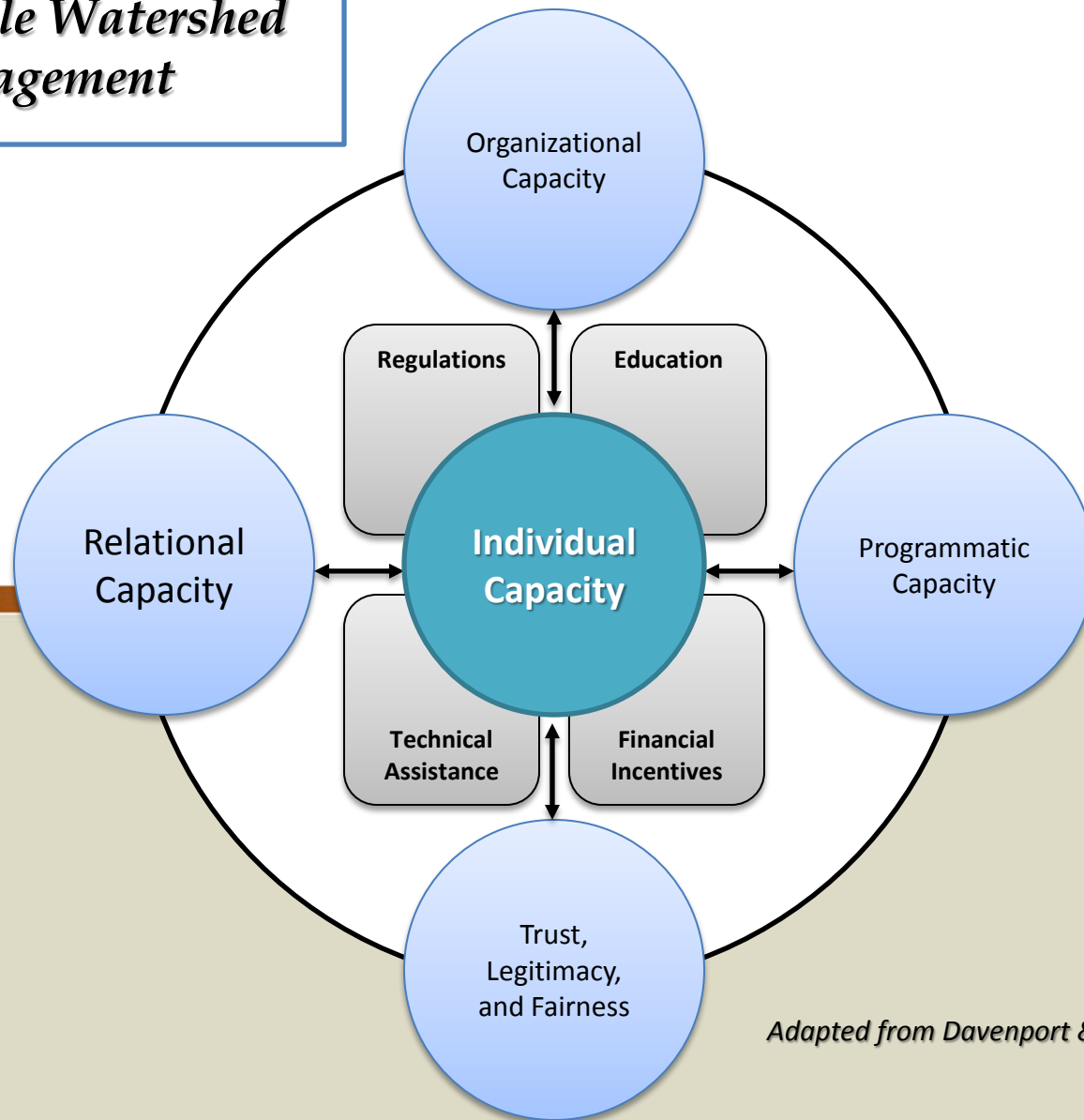
“Lake Wausau is a wonderful resource for the Wausau area that has been neglected. I applaud the lake association for their dedication to getting this done...

Just think what this could be!”

(Anonymous Survey Response)



Sustainable Watershed Management



Adapted from Davenport & Seekamp (2013)

Sustainable Watershed Management

Building relationships requires:

- Knowledge exchange through informal social networks
- Building a sense of community identity
- Common awareness & definition of problem
- Creating a collective sense of responsibility

Relational
Capacity

Individual
Capacity

Collaborative planning requires:

- Transparent dialogue and process
- Consistent, defined roles and process
- Valuing diversity of individuals, beliefs, and actions
- Intentional representation of stakeholder groups

Trust,
Legitimacy,
and Fairness

Lake Wausau Project Phase II, Task 6

Social & Economic Values Survey

Lake Wausau Community Survey



University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
College of Natural Resources

As a resident of one of the communities that surround Lake Wausau you have been randomly selected to receive a survey concerning efforts to improve the community resource of Lake Wausau. This survey is being conducted by faculty in the College of Natural Resources at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in partnership with the Lake Wausau Association and sponsoring local governments. Survey results will help these groups understand how residents in the Wausau area interact with and value Lake Wausau and the Wisconsin River. Results will inform ongoing research and activities to improve water quality in Lake Wausau. **All results will be kept confidential** and if you have any concerns about the treatment of research participants please contact the UWSP Institutional Review Board that can be reached at (715) 346-4598.

Your voluntary participation in this survey is a chance to be a part of the process of determining the future for Lake Wausau. Please take the time to share your views about this important community resource by completing and returning the survey in the enclosed postage paid envelope. If you have questions about the survey, please feel free to contact one of the members of the research using the informations provided below.

Thank you for your assistance,

Dr. Aaron Thompson
Assistant Professor
aaron.thompson@uwsp.edu
715.346.2278

Dr. Melinda Vokoun
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Dr. Kristin Floress
Assistant Professor
kristin.floress@uwsp.edu

PLEASE READ BEFORE BEGINNING THIS SURVEY:

The survey must be completed by an adult member of your household 18 years of age or older.

Please mark all answers clearly, in pen or pencil, as indicated below.

Example "A" ☐ ☐ ☒ Example "B" ☐ ☐ ☒

The Lake Wausau Association

Have you heard of the Lake Wausau Association?

Never heard of them ☐ Heard of them, but don't know what they do ☐ Heard of them, and know what they do ☐

Lake Wausau Association's (LWA) mission is "to protect, maintain, and enhance environmental and recreational values on Lake Wausau and its surroundings; to organize and conduct activities intended to maintain or improve the ecology, water quality, fishing, and recreational use of Lake Wausau." — lakewausau.org

Do you agree with the priorities that the Lake Wausau Association has put forth in their mission statement?

Strongly Disagree ☐ -3 ☐ -2 ☐ -1 ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Strongly Agree

Study Design: Set up to achieve 30% response rate

5 Wave Mailing Process:

1st Week
June
2013

Contact #1: Address
Screening Letter /
Introduction

Contact #2: Survey
Booklet

Contact #3: Reminder
Postcard

Contact #4: 2nd Survey
Booklet

3rd
Week
July
2013

Contact #5: Reminder
Postcard

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Topics Covered:

Introductory Questions
-Lake Wausau
Association
-Water Quality
Knowledge

Governance & Policy

Community
Perspectives

Economic Variables:
Tied to lake activities

Mapping: Issues,
improvement,
recommendations

Demographics

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Strongly Disagree ☐ -3 ☐ -2 ☐ -1 ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Strongly Agree

Lake Wausau Community Survey



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Sample:

Developed 'in-house' using parcel data provided by Marathon County focusing on homeowners within these communities

Total: 850 participants

Representative sample:

-160 randomly selected households from each community: Wausau, Schofield, Rothschild, & Rib Mountain

Oversample:

-210 randomly selected households from near lake neighborhoods



	Sample	N	Response Rate
Wausau	156	56	35.90%
Schofield	156	62	39.74%
Rothschild	158	68	43.31%
Rib Mountain	159	83	52.20%
Near Lake Neighborhoods	207	99	47.83%
Overall	836	358	44.31%



LWA Familiarity Results:

(-)There is a general lack of familiarity with the Lake Wausau Association – **41% of respondents had not heard of the organization.**

(+)Respondents are very supportive of the abbreviated mission statement included in the survey – **82% agreed with their priorities.**

The Lake Wausau Association

Have you heard of the Lake Wausau Association?

Never heard of them	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heard of them, but don't know what they do	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heard of them, and know what they do	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Strongly Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> -3	<input type="checkbox"/> -2	<input type="checkbox"/> -1	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Strongly Agree
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Perception of the resource:

+Respondents ranked 30 statements representing various attributes of the lake and surrounding community facilities

+Analyzed using a 'Inverted-R' factor analysis procedure (Thompson et al., 2013)

Community Perspective towards Lake Wausau

Please describe your level of agreement on the following scale for each of the statements that relate to general views of Lake Wausau; in general the questions relate to areas on, along, or around the lake and Wisconsin River.

	Strongly Disagree SD	Disagree D	Neutral N	Agree A	Strongly Agree SA
Lake Wausau vastly adds to the beauty of the community and its surroundings.	-2	-1	0	1	2
It is important for community members to take an active role in determining the future of Lake Wausau.	-2	-1	0	1	2
I choose to spend my time elsewhere because of the lack of recreation facilities on the lake.	-2	-1	0	1	2
Providing better habitat for fish and wildlife motivates me to support efforts to improve Lake Wausau.	-2	-1	0	1	2



Why are we looking at perceptions of Lake Wausau?



So let's give this a try:

Please describe your level of agreement on the following scale for each of the statements that relate to general views of Lake Wausau; **in general the questions relate to areas on, along, or around the lake and Wisconsin River.**

Statement #1: Lake Wausau adds vastly to the beauty of Wausau and its surroundings.



So let's give this a try:

Please describe your level of agreement on the following scale for each of the statements that relate to general views of Lake Wausau; **in general the questions relate to areas on, along, or around the lake and Wisconsin River.**

Statement #2: It is important for community members to take an active role in determining the future of the Lake Wausau.



So let's give this a try:

Please describe your level of agreement on the following scale for each of the statements that relate to general views of Lake Wausau; **in general the questions relate to areas on, along, or around the lake and Wisconsin River.**

Statement #7: The scenic and natural beauty of Lake Wausau contributes to our community's ability to attract new residents and employers.



So let's give this a try:

Please describe your level of agreement on the following scale for each of the statements that relate to general views of Lake Wausau; **in general the questions relate to areas on, along, or around the lake and Wisconsin River.**

Statement #8: Local funding to revitalize the lake is a great investment in our future.



Perception of the resource:

+ 'Inverted-R' process revealed 4 distinct belief systems among respondents

+ Process also identified commonalities, including that all groups:

1. Strongly agree that Lake Wausau adds to the beauty of the community (Item #1).
2. Strongly agree that community members must take an active role in the future of Lake Wausau (Item #2).
3. Agree that Lake Wausau contributes to the community's ability to attract new residents and employers (Item #7).
4. Agree that local funding to revitalize Lake Wausau is a good investment in the future (Item #8).



Then the perceptions become more complex:

Please describe your level of agreement on the following scale for each of the statements that relate to general views of Lake Wausau; **in general the questions relate to areas on, along, or around the lake and Wisconsin River.**

Statement #3: I choose to spend my time elsewhere because of the lack of recreation facilities on the lake.



Then the perceptions become more complex:

Please describe your level of agreement on the following scale for each of the statements that relate to general views of Lake Wausau; **in general the questions relate to areas on, along, or around the lake and Wisconsin River.**

Statement #23: Spending time on Lake Wausau has always been a tradition; otherwise, I would prefer to recreate on other lakes.



Then the perceptions become more complex:

Please describe your level of agreement on the following scale for each of the statements that relate to general views of Lake Wausau; **in general the questions relate to areas on, along, or around the lake and Wisconsin River.**

Statement #25: Lake Wausau has some of the best fishing in the area.



Perception of the resource:

Group 01: *At home on Lake Wausau*

Residents who hold this view **enjoy spending time on Lake Wausau**, seeing plentiful outdoor recreation options and good fishing as some of the high points of their time spent here. For many they view **recreating at Lake Wausau as part of a tradition that keeps them coming back** over and over again. They disagree with others who think the lake is dirty and getting worse and for most hold the opposite **opinion that the water is safe for recreating and they are willing to eat fish caught there**. These individuals believe that the parks on Lake Wausau represent some of the most beautiful places in the county and disagree that there is an unpleasant odor that prevents them from recreating here. When it comes to who is responsible this group **sees that both the DNR and local government have appropriately responding** to the conditions on Lake Wausau.

Percentage of
Community
Responses

Wausau: 37.0%
Schofield: 56.9%
Rothschild: 54.1%
Rib Mountain: 41.9%
Near Lake: 52.0%



Then the perceptions become more complex:

Please describe your level of agreement on the following scale for each of the statements that relate to general views of Lake Wausau; **in general the questions relate to areas on, along, or around the lake and Wisconsin River.**

Statement #30: The lake is important because it supports manufacturing in our community.



Then the perceptions become more complex:

Please describe your level of agreement on the following scale for each of the statements that relate to general views of Lake Wausau; **in general the questions relate to areas on, along, or around the lake and Wisconsin River.**

Statement #9: I like outdoor activities, but I don't recreate on the lake.



Perception of the resource:

Group 02: *Hard working Lake Wausau*

There are a couple of similarities between residents who hold this view and Group 1 as both **believe that Lake Wausau has plentiful outdoor recreation opportunities** and that the parks along the lake are some of the most beautiful places in the county. Outside of these areas individuals in group 2 are **less motivated by providing fish and wildlife habitat** than other groups and instead believe that the lake is important because of the **role it plays in supporting manufacturing within the community**. They enjoy outdoor recreation, but don't choose to spend their time on the lake. However, this slight to recreating here doesn't seem to be linked to concerns over smell or water quality issues. They are also the **least likely to support stronger regulations of activities to protect the enjoyment of the lake for all users** and are the least supportive of the idea of a tax on property owners. When it comes to local funding for the future, but support is lower than

Percentage of
Community
Responses

Wausau: 21.7%
Schofield: 10.3%
Rothschild: 16.4%
Rib Mountain: 20.2%
Near Lake: 17.3%



Then the perceptions become more complex:

Please describe your level of agreement on the following scale for each of the statements that relate to general views of Lake Wausau; **in general the questions relate to areas on, along, or around the lake and Wisconsin River.**

Statement #15: Lake Wausau is a good place for doing the types of activities I enjoy most.



Then the perceptions become more complex:

Please describe your level of agreement on the following scale for each of the statements that relate to general views of Lake Wausau; **in general the questions relate to areas on, along, or around the lake and Wisconsin River.**

**Statement #12: When recreating on the lake
my enjoyment is frequently disrupted by other
users.**



Perception of the resource:

Group 03: When recreating, it's not on Lake Wausau

Negative experiences and perceptions of the recreational aspects of Lake Wausau dominate the views of members of this group. In particular, they view the lake as lacking recreational facilities and feel that there is **too much competition (or crowding)** that makes it difficult to enjoy what is here. They view the **parks as being less safe** than members of other groups, which in combination with the other factors may explain why this group that does enjoy outdoor recreation chooses to spend their time elsewhere. Put simply they don't see the lake as a good place for doing the things they enjoy most, citing **poor fishing opportunities and frequent disruption from other users** as reasons they go to other lakes. This group seems less connected to the lake as they disagree that spending time here is a tradition or that the lake plays a role in building community between residents. They also disagree that the lake supports efforts to improve the local economy and wildlife habitat, but they **also agree that the lake is a reflection of local government problems.**

Percentage of
Community
Responses

Wausau: 17.4%
Schofield: 10.3%
Rothschild: 16.4%
Rib Mountain: 12.1%
Near Lake: 14.7%



Then the perceptions become more complex:

Please describe your level of agreement on the following scale for each of the statements that relate to general views of Lake Wausau; **in general the questions relate to areas on, along, or around the lake and Wisconsin River.**

Statement #14: The lake is dirty and seems to be getting worse.



Then the perceptions become more complex:

Please describe your level of agreement on the following scale for each of the statements that relate to general views of Lake Wausau; **in general the questions relate to areas on, along, or around the lake and Wisconsin River.**

Statement #16: The condition of the lake has gotten so bad that I only feel safe looking at the water.



Perception of the resource:

Group 04: It's dirty and the time has come to fix Lake Wausau

The defining feature of those who hold this view is a **strong belief that Lake Wausau is dirty and seems to be getting worse**. They are the only group who to **disagree that water quality is improving** and are the most likely to believe that the condition of the lake is so bad that **it is now only safe to look at the water**. This view is supported by their perception of the **lake having a strong odor** and are the **least likely to feel safe eating fish from the lake**. Similar to group 3 members of this group see a lack of recreational facilities on the lake, but are largely motivated by the need to enhance fish and wildlife habitat. They are also **the most critical of local government's response** to the condition of the lake, but among the most supportive of DNR's involvement in managing these issues.

Percentage of
Community
Responses

Wausau: 13.0%
Schofield: 15.5%
Rothschild: 6.6%
Rib Mountain: 13.5%
Near Lake: 14.7%

Lake Wausau Community Survey



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Wausau: 37.0%
Group 01: Tradition Schofield: 56.9%
Rothschild: 54.1%
Rib Mountain: 41.9%
Near Lake: 52.0%

Wausau: 21.7%
Group 02: Industry Schofield: 10.3%
Rothschild: 16.4%
Rib Mountain: 20.2%
Near Lake: 17.3%

Wausau: 17.4%
Group 03: Not on Schofield: 10.3%
Lake Wausau Rothschild: 16.4%
Rib Mountain: 12.1%
Near Lake: 14.7%

Wausau: 13.0%
Group 04: Dirty Schofield: 15.5%
Rothschild: 6.6%
Rib Mountain: 13.5%
Near Lake: 14.7%

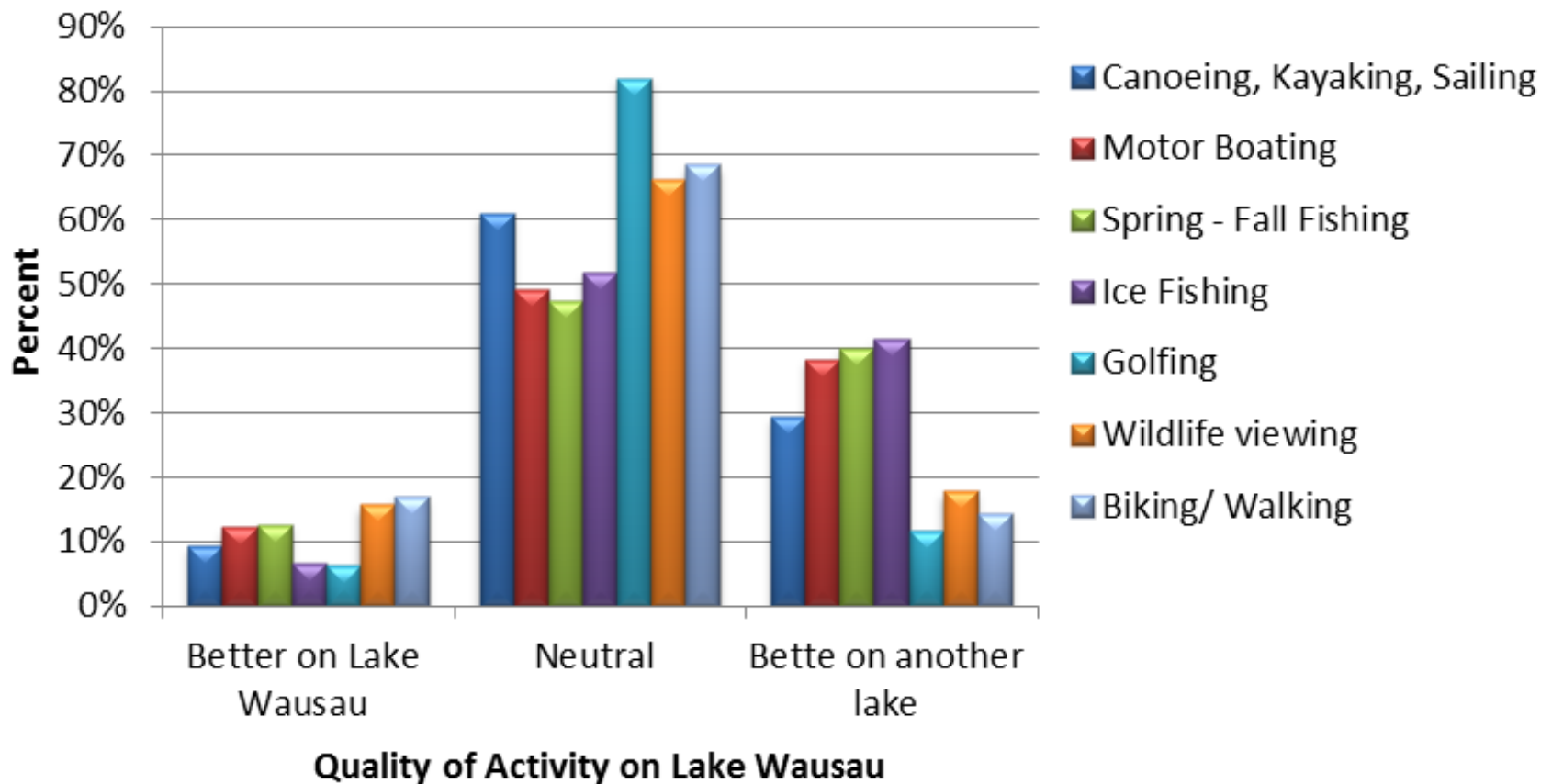
Scale: 1:25,000

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College of Natural Resources



Recreation Results:

-Generally there was less recreational activity than anticipated on the Lake, resulting in modest number for participation & expenditure in activities





MELINDA



MELINDA

Sustainable Watershed Management

Building relationships requires:

- Knowledge exchange through informal social networks
- Building a sense of community identity
- Common awareness & definition of problem
- Creating a collective sense of responsibility

Relational
Capacity

Individual
Capacity

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- Valuing diversity of individuals, beliefs, and actions
- Intentional representation of stakeholder groups

Trust,
Legitimacy,
and Fairness

AMHERST MILLPOND: Making Community Decisions



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University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
College of Natural Resources

What we know about collaboration

Better, less divisive decision can be made:

AVOID QUICK DECISIONS: a community needs adequate time to understand dams, explore options, and work toward consensus

PROCESS IS GOAL FOCUSED: a community that first decides on what values are the most important and works toward these goals can benefit from a more flexibility and a broader range of options; the alternative usually forces a community into a false choice between fixed options

DECISIONS MUST BE COMMUNITY DRIVEN: use appropriate expertise when needed, but community members must be allowed to decide what is best and how to move forward



Collaborative Process: LEARNING

Public Meetings / Field Trips:

Opportunities to gather information and collect meaningful input



Resource Teams: *Small groups tasked with answering key questions / collecting input and reporting back to the community*

LEARNING: Example Goal Development

Solitude

Someplace to go enjoy nature and the quiet for a walk

I enjoy taking my children over to the pond to look at wildlife and just enjoy the water.

Access

Silent Sports Recreation

A nice quiet fishing, row boat lake.

It has been a part of Amherst history for a long time ...

Respect History

Beautiful Views from Downtown

The scenic view ... by the dam in Amherst

Enjoy watching kids fishing below dam

Childhood Experiences

Collaborative Process: VISIONING

Can the coming changes (with or without the dam) result in a better future?



Public Visioning Sessions: *Intensive community work sessions designed to get citizens directly involved in solving complex problems*

Youth Involvement: *and it can't hurt to involve those who most intensively use the resource too!*



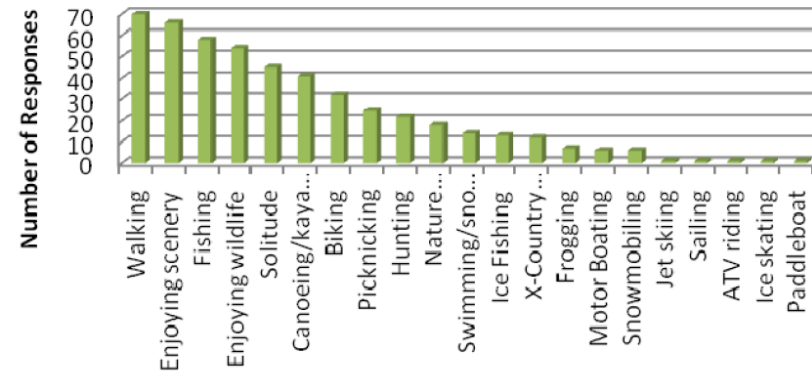
VISIONING: *Desired Future Conditions*

Can additional views of the pond / river be opened or enhanced to take advantage of the resource?

What needs to be done to enhance water-based recreation?

Is there a possible way to create a trail loop for enhanced walking trail network?

What Activities Do You Enjoy At/Near the Millpond?



Collaborative Process: GROUNDING

Consultation: *Fact finding exploring costs, impacts, and feasibility of alternative solutions*

***Visualizations created for information purposes only.*



visualization: step 2

Visualizations: *Photo simulations that provide an “educated guess” at what different options would look like and how they would function compared to existing conditions.*

Collaborative Process: DECIDING



Developing Criteria: *Use of goal-defined criteria to assess alternative land use scenarios*

Seeking Input: *Many ways to seek public feedback – emphasis needs to be on what the community as a whole will support, not simply who has the loudest voice*

-Household surveys, resource commissions (quasi-governmental decision making boards), public meetings, advisory votes

Collaborative Process: *IMPLEMENT & ADAPT*

Remember ... it's a process!



Sources:

Johnson, S.E., Graber, B. 2002. Enlisting the Social Sciences in Decisions About Dam Removal. *BioScience* 52 (8): 731-738.

Margerum, R. 2011. *Beyond Consensus: Improving Collaborative Planning and Management*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.



Mapping Local Knowledge:

Focused on three questions: **ACTIVITIES, IMPROVEMENTS, PROBLEMS**

-Good data on the mapping questions, but some respondents indicated that they just don't know the lake well enough to provide information

Lake Wausau Community Map

A1) Please indicate on the map the place you most prefer to recreate on Lake Wausau?
(Please indicate one location on the map with a ● mark)

A2) What types of activities do you do there?

B1) In the history of your use of the lake, where have you seen the most improvement?
(Please circle this area on the map)

B2) What sort of improvement have you seen there?

US-51/1-39

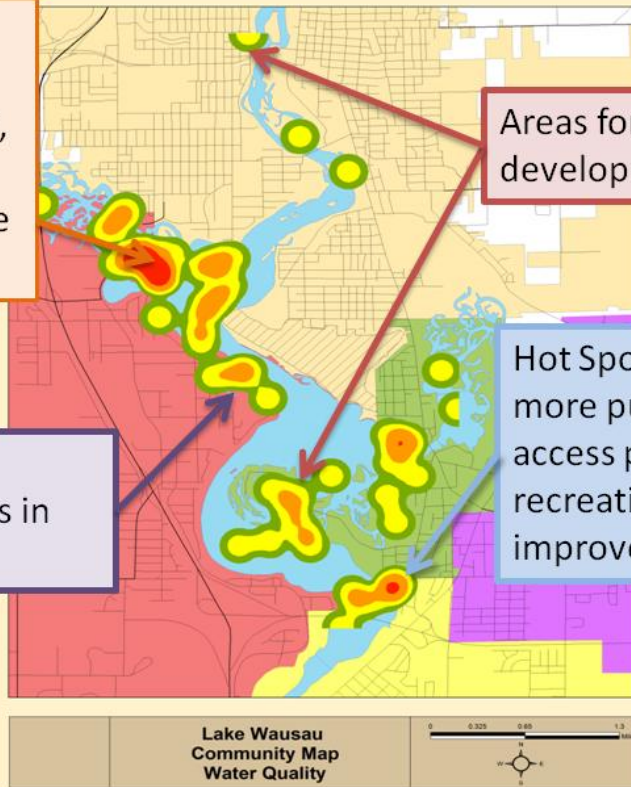


Hot Spot for vegetation improvements, water quality and areas to be developed

Areas for less development

Safer waterways in this area

Hot Spot for more public access points, recreational improvements



Results:

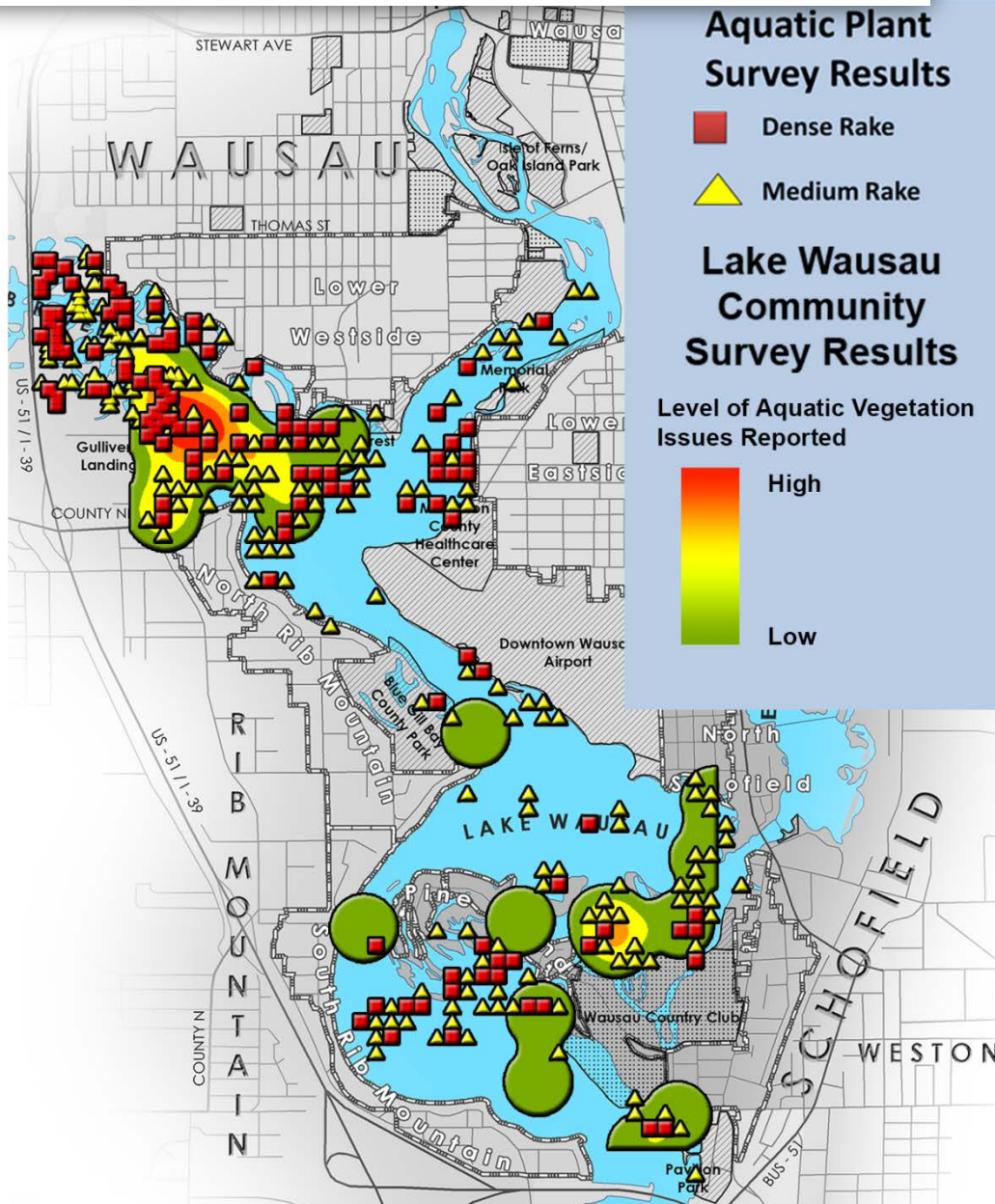
Grouped responses for improvement into themes:

- +Areas for development
- +Areas for less development
- +Public access
- +Safer waterways
- +Water quality improvement
- +Vegetation improvement

Lake Wausau Community Survey



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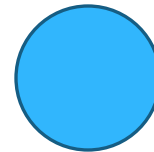
Mapping Local Knowledge Results:

Created opportunities for overlaying SOCIAL & ECOLOGICAL Data



ACTIVITY: At your table ...

A1. Indicate on the map where you prefer to recreate on Lake Wausau



A2. What types of activities do you do there?

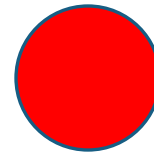




ACTIVITY: At your table ...



B1. Indicate on the map where you have seen areas of most improvement on Lake Wausau



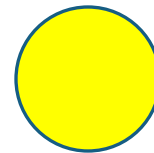
B2. What Sort of Improvements have you seen there?



ACTIVITY: At your table ...



C1) Where is the most important place you would like to see improvement on the lake?



C2) What sort of improvements would you like to see?

Scale: 1:25,000

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Thinking in Your Own Backyard Activity:

Step 1 – Defining traditions (what keeps you coming back?)

Step 2 – Engaging with lakeshore data to determine ‘protected’ activities/behaviors and those ‘open to change’

Step 3 – Solutions discussion



Governance Study & Next Steps