A Minnesota Resident Survey of Water Values

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Projects and goals

Why a survey?

What is clean water worth?

What are the public benefits of protecting sourcewater?
Survey development

- Social science-based survey
- Population sampling and distribution
  - Soil & Water Conservation Districts
- Survey topics
  - *Your Community*
  - *Concerns about Water*
  - *Protecting Water*
  - *About You*
- Structure: 8-page, 25-item mail survey
Preliminary survey findings

- Respondent profiles
- Summary statistics
- Regional analysis
Response rate = 28%
n = 1484

Respondent profiles

Race & Gender

- 66% male
- 34% female

- White
- Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Heritage
- Black or African American
- Asian
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Middle Eastern or North African
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Other (e.g., American, mixed, human)

Formal education

- Did not finish high school
- Completed high school
- Associate or vocational degree
- Some college work or completed college bachelor's degree
- Some college graduate work or completed graduate degree

Household Income

- Under $20,000
- $20,000-$74,999
- $75,000-$149,999
Response rate by region
Water knowledge

HOW FAMILIAR ARE YOU WITH WATER ISSUES IN YOUR LOCAL AREA?

- Not at all familiar: 35%
- Slightly familiar: 39%
- Moderately familiar: 14%
- Very familiar: 12%

HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE THE QUALITY OF WATER IN...

The lake, stream, or river closest to you
- Very poor: 0%
- Poor: 5%
- Fair: 10%
- Good: 25%
- Very good: 55%
- Don't know: 10%

Minnesota water bodies overall
- Very poor: 0%
- Poor: 0%
- Fair: 5%
- Good: 20%
- Very good: 75%
- Don't know: 5%
Which water value or use is most important to you?

Top Five Values and Uses:

1. Drinking water that is safe and clean
2. Water for future generations
3. Habitat for native fish and wildlife to survive
4. Minnesota not to send water pollution downstream to other states or nations
5. Beaches and lakes that are safe for swimming and playing
I am concerned about the consequences of water problems or pollution for...

- Future generations
- Aquatic life
- Recreation opportunities
- Human health
- People in my community
- Local economies
- Downstream communities from MN
- Cultural heritage in MN

Strongly agree: 4
Somewhat agree: 3
Somewhat disagree: 2
Strongly disagree: 1

Legend:
- Region 1
- Region 2
- Region 3
- Region 4
- Region 5
- Region 6
- Region 7
- Region 8
Future generations

Human health

Aquatic life

Water concerns
In your opinion, how much of a problem are the following water pollutants or issues to water in your local area?

- Aquatic invasive species
- Agricultural runoff (e.g., nutrients, fertilizers, pesticides)
- Sediment in water bodies
- Agricultural drainage (e.g., drain tiles)
- Road salt runoff (chloride)
- Water scarcity

Perceived problems
Perceived problems

Aquatic invasive species

Agricultural runoff
## Perceived problems

Analysis of Variance: Severity of Industrial discharge to streams, rivers, and lakes by region

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Other regions</th>
<th>Mean difference</th>
<th>Significance</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Central (2)</td>
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<td>Northcentral (8)</td>
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What’s ahead
Project goals

What is Clean Water Worth? Estimating return on investment for the Minnesota Clean Water Legacy Funds

- Valuation of clean water benefits
- Evaluation of the ROI of Clean Water Legacy Funds

What are the public benefits of protecting sourcewater?

- Valuation of clean water benefits
- Assessment of community capacity and equity implications of sourcewater protection

Surveys
Mapping
Focus groups

The Value of Minnesota Water: A freeway forum

CLean WATER
LAND & LEGACY AMENDMENT

ENVIRONMENT
AND NATURAL RESOURCES
TRUST FUND
Next phase of analysis

• Evaluate return on investment
  • Statistical modeling and geospatial analysis

• Engage underrepresented populations and communities at risk through onsite surveys and focus groups

• Report out on analysis findings and recommendations
Benefits of a Minnesota water values survey

- Explore multiple values and uses of water
- Guide water programs funding, policy analysis, and project evaluation
- Understand regional differences in water values and beliefs
- Set a baseline for longitudinal studies of water values and beliefs to monitor trends
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Questions?

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