

APPENDIX B

Public Forums and other Public Outreach/Involvement

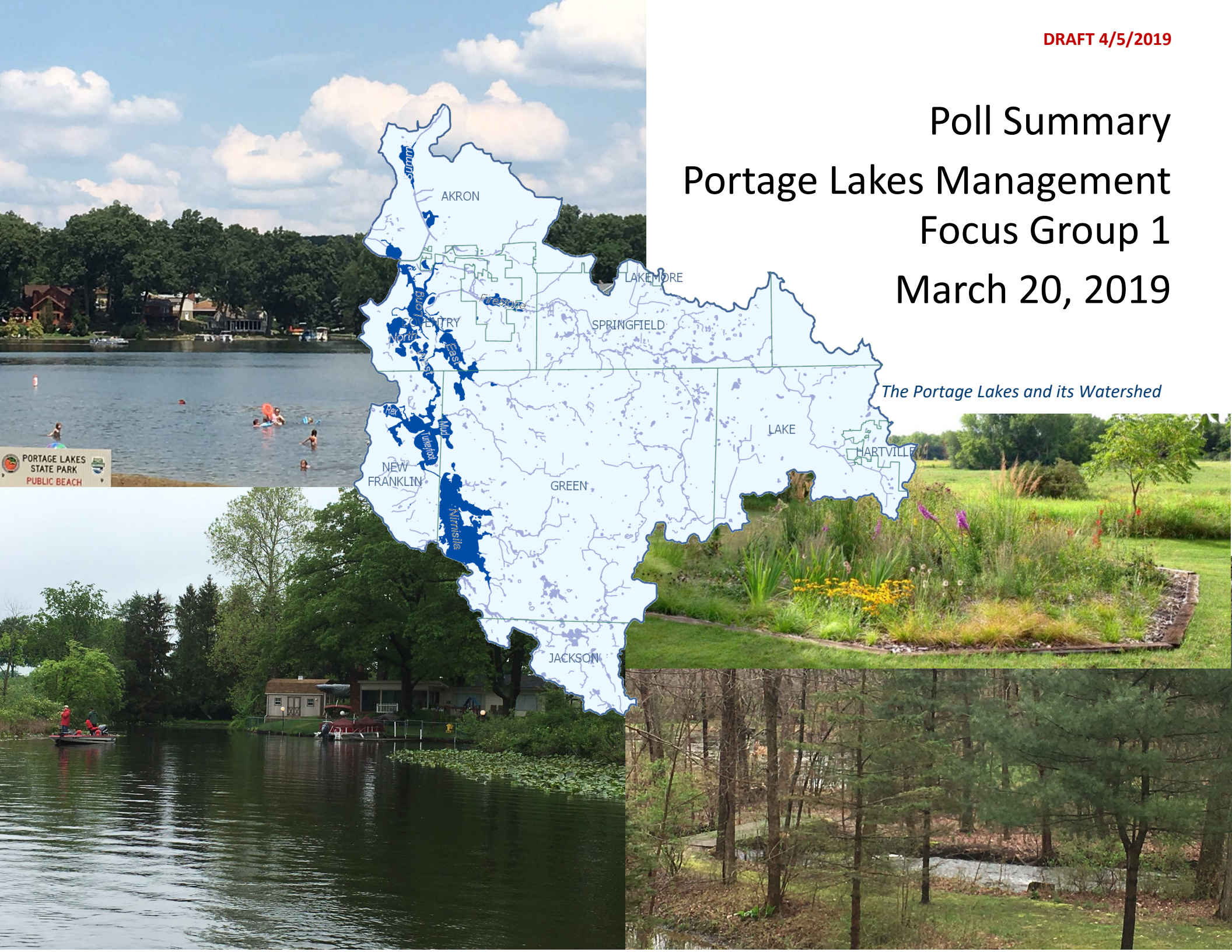
Poll Summary

Portage Lakes Management

Focus Group 1

March 20, 2019

The Portage Lakes and its Watershed





Portage Lakes Focus Group 1, March 20, 2019

The purpose of focus group is to gather information from Portage Lakes watershed residents on their knowledge of water quality and their willingness to implement best management practices to protect the lakes. As part of the meeting, participants answered poll questions about where they live, how they enjoy the lakes, their concerns about the lakes and aquatic plants, and what they think should be done to protect the Portage Lakes and the watershed that drains to it. The responses are summarized in this document.

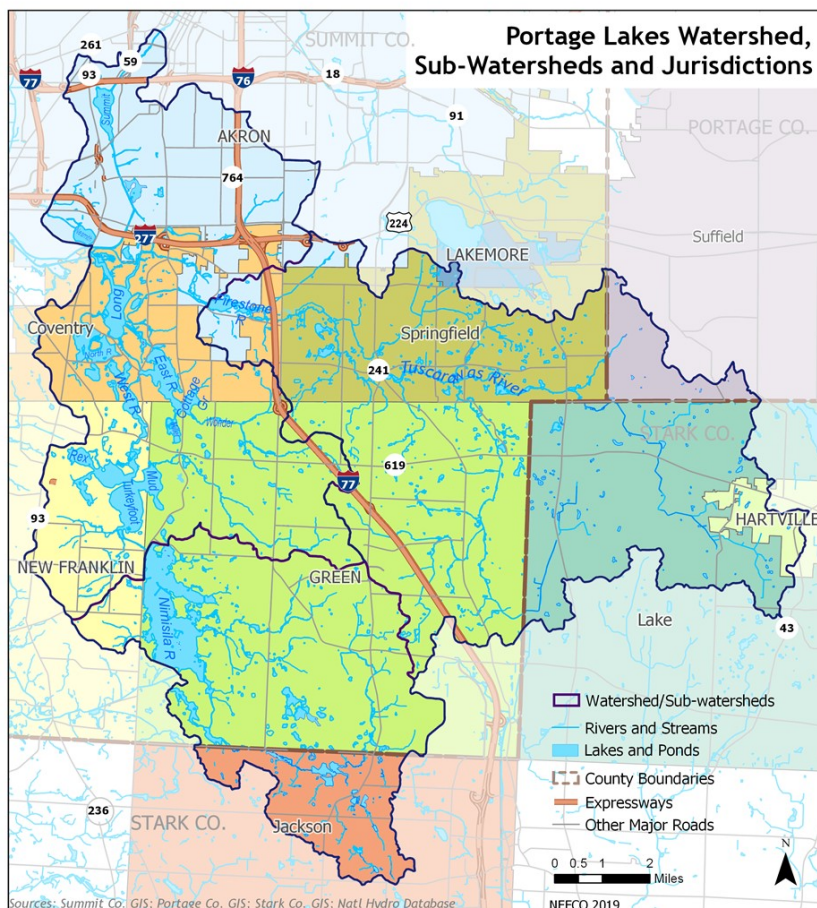
This focus group is being conducted as part of the Portage Lakes Management Study, being conducted by NEFCO for the Ohio EPA Northeast District (NEDO) to assist the Portage Lakes Advisory Council (PLAC) with a plan for aquatic vegetation management, water quality educational programming, the identification of areas of concern, and areas suitable for restoration projects.



Poll Results Summary -Portage Lakes Focus Group 1 March 20, 2019

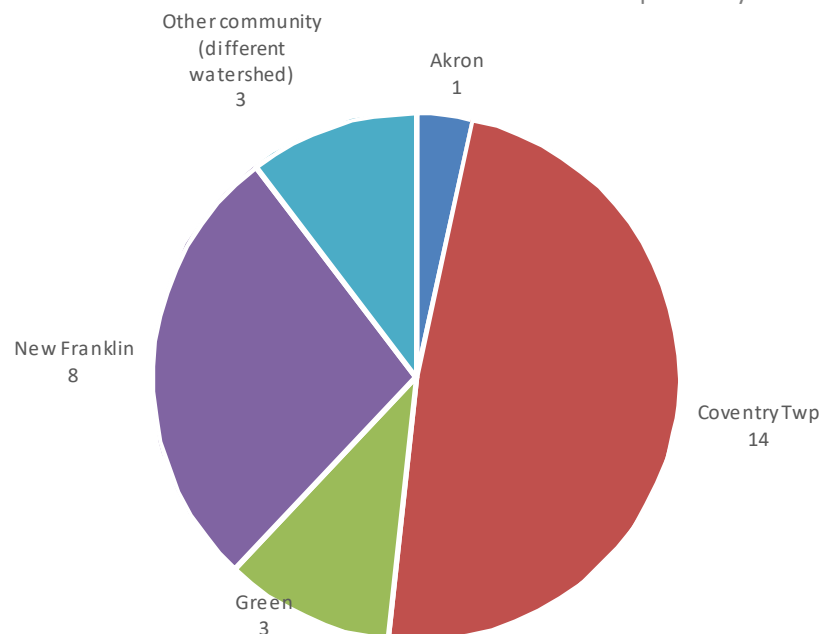
Question 2*: What Community in the Portage Lakes Watershed do you live in?

29 respondents



| | Responses | Percent |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Akron | 1 | 3 |
| Coventry Twp | 14 | 48 |
| Green | 3 | 10 |
| Hartville | 0 | 0 |
| Jackson Twp | 0 | 0 |
| Lake Twp. | 0 | 0 |
| New Franklin | 8 | 28 |
| Springfield Twp. | 0 | 0 |
| Suffield Twp. | 0 | 0 |
| Other community (different watershed) | 3 | 10 |

Responses by Community

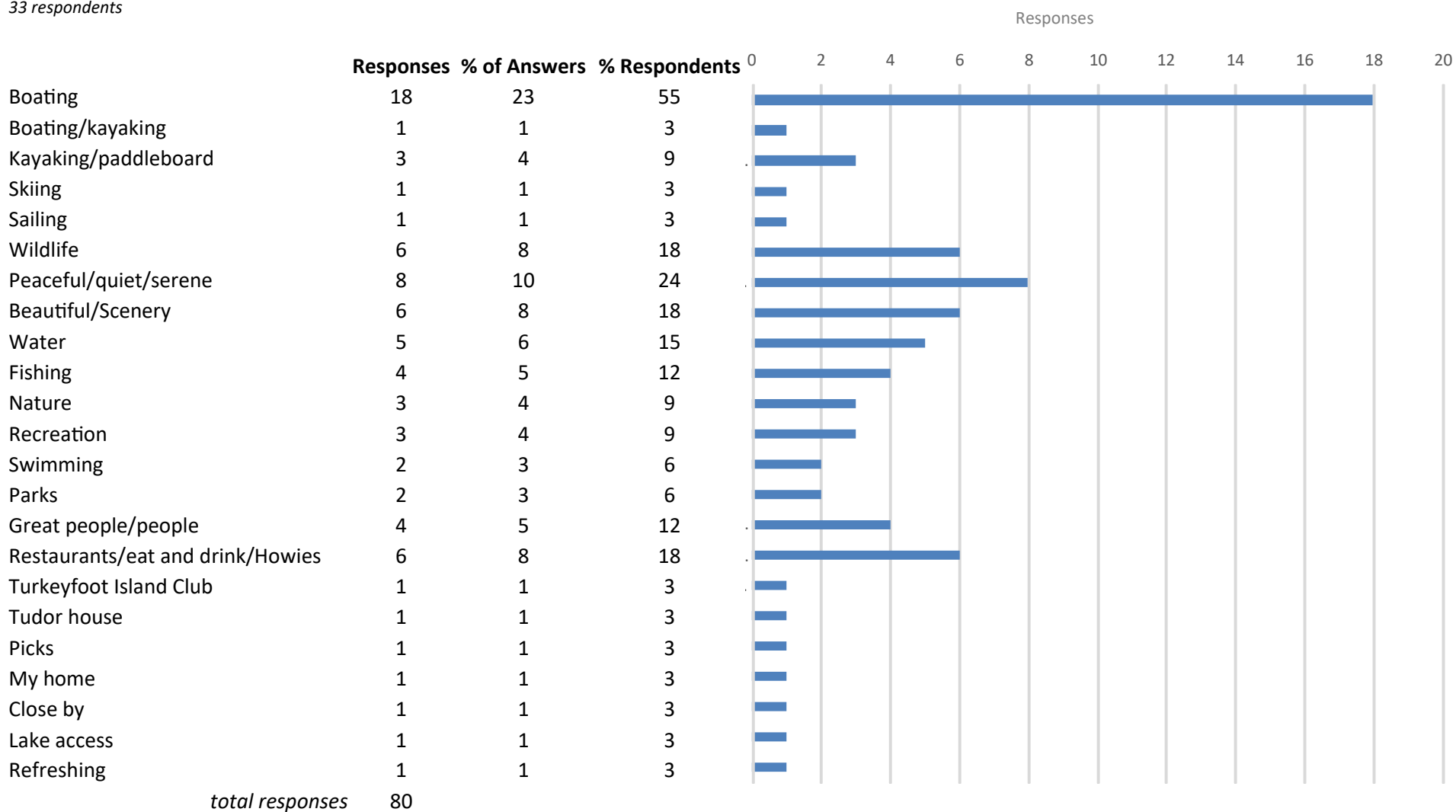


*Note: Question 1 was sign-in—responses not summarized.

Poll Results Summary -Portage Lakes Focus Group 1 March 20, 2019

Question 3: What are up to three things you love about the Portage Lakes?

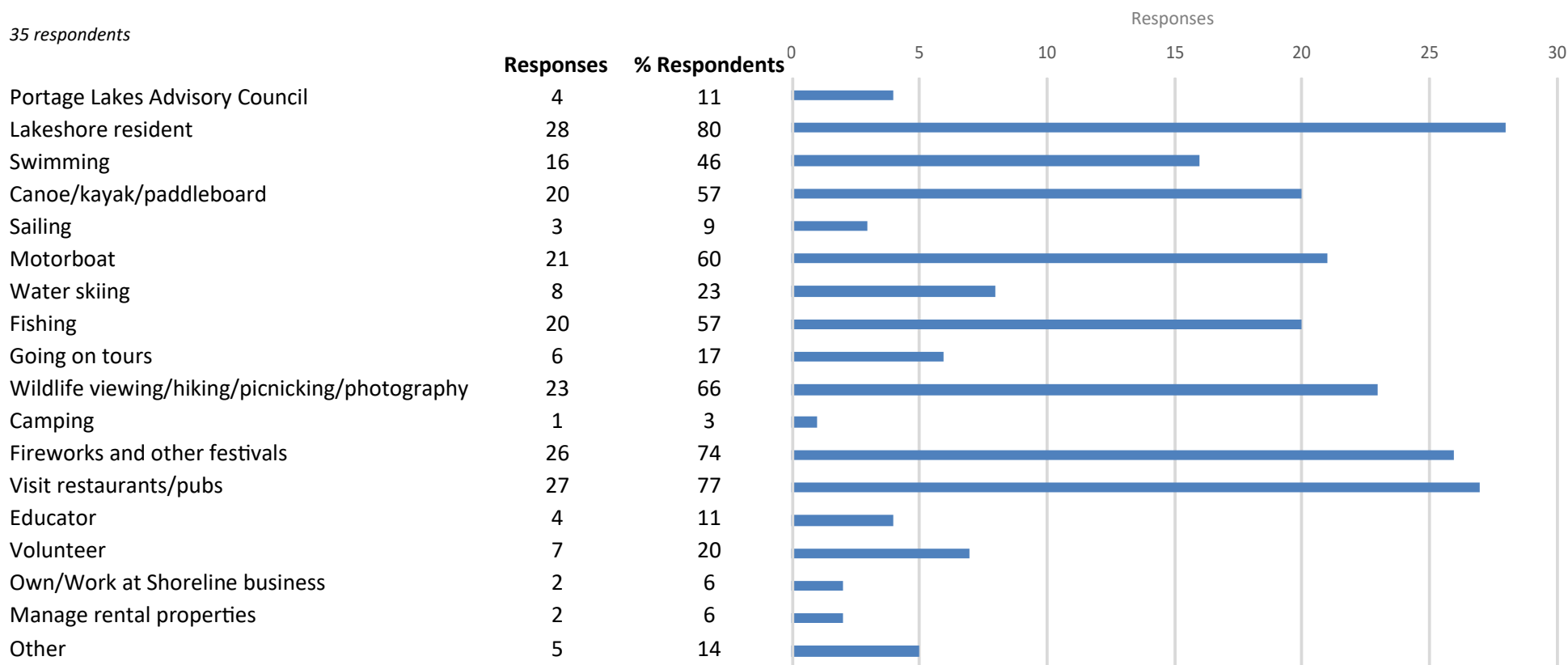
33 respondents



Poll Results Summary -Portage Lakes Focus Group 1 March 20, 2019

Question 4: What activities do you do on the lakes?

35 respondents

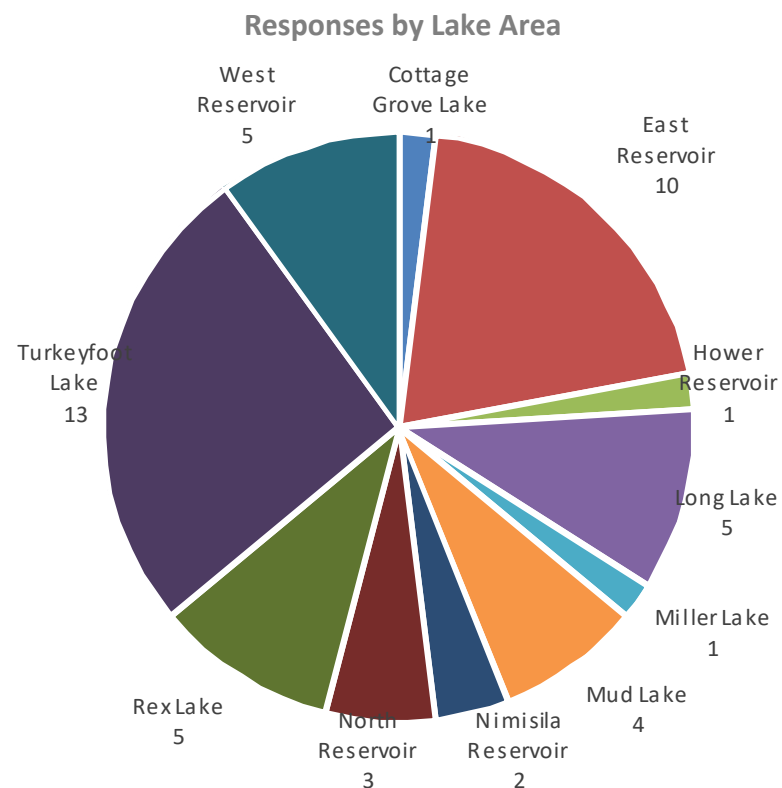


Poll Results Summary -Portage Lakes Focus Group 1 March 20, 2019

Question 5: What lake area(s) do you most identify with?

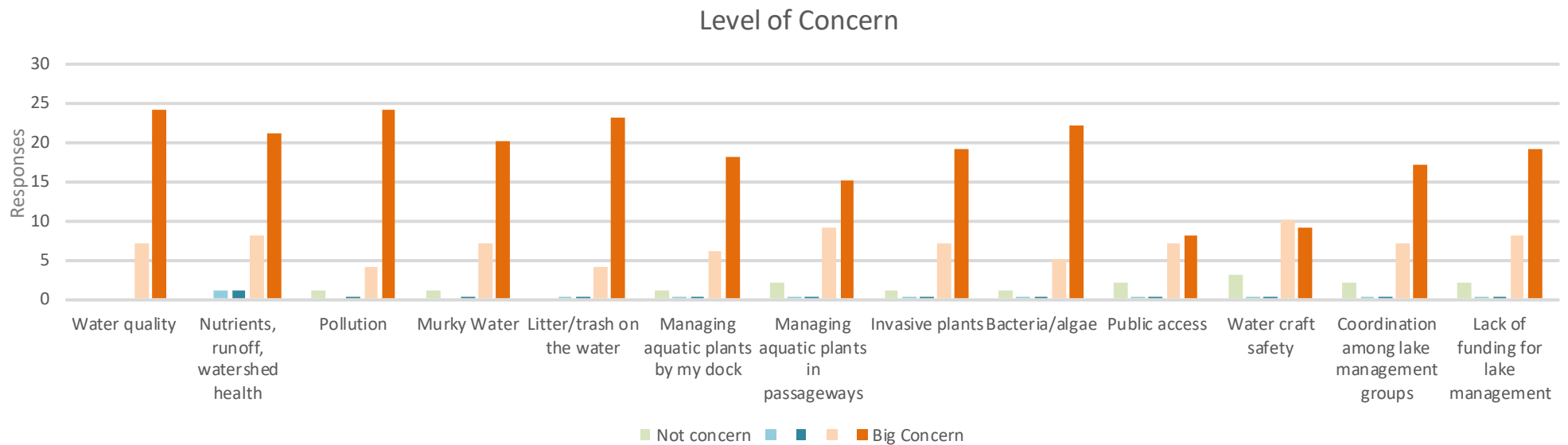
32 respondents

| | Responses | % Respondents |
|--------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Cottage Grove Lake | 1 | 3 |
| East Reservoir | 10 | 31 |
| Hower Reservoir | 1 | 3 |
| Long Lake | 5 | 16 |
| Miller Lake | 1 | 3 |
| Mud Lake | 4 | 13 |
| Nimisila Reservoir | 2 | 6 |
| North Reservoir | 3 | 9 |
| Rex Lake | 5 | 16 |
| Turkeyfoot Lake | 13 | 41 |
| West Reservoir | 5 | 16 |



Question 6: How concerned about these are you?

| 31 respondents | Not concern | | | | | Big Concern | | | | | % Respondents |
|---|-------------|----|-----|------|-------|-------------|----|-----|------|-------|---------------|
| | ★ | ★★ | ★★★ | ★★★★ | ★★★★★ | ★ | ★★ | ★★★ | ★★★★ | ★★★★★ | 4-5 stars |
| Water quality | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 24 | | | | | | 100 |
| Nutrients, runoff, watershed health | 0 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 21 | | | | | | 94 |
| Pollution | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 24 | | | | | | 90 |
| Murky Water | 1 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 20 | | | | | | 87 |
| Litter/trash on the water | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 23 | | | | | | 87 |
| Managing aquatic plants by my dock | 1 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 18 | | | | | | 77 |
| Managing aquatic plants in passageways | 2 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 15 | | | | | | 77 |
| Invasive plants | 1 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 19 | | | | | | 84 |
| Bacteria/algae | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 22 | | | | | | 87 |
| Public access | 2 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 8 | | | | | | 48 |
| Water craft safety | 3 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 9 | | | | | | 61 |
| Coordination among lake management groups | 2 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 17 | | | | | | 77 |
| Lack of funding for lake management | 2 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 19 | | | | | | 87 |

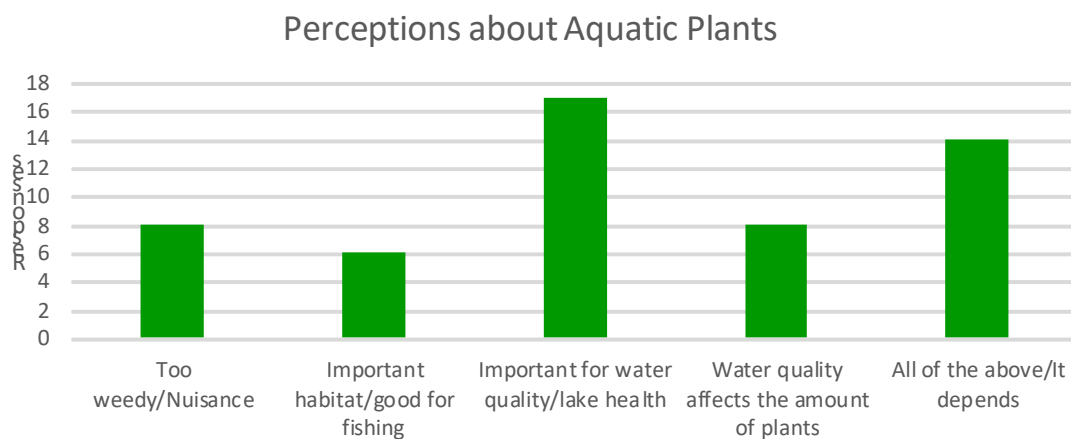


Poll Results Summary -Portage Lakes Focus Group 1 March 20, 2019

Question 7: What do you think about aquatic plants in the lakes?

32 respondents

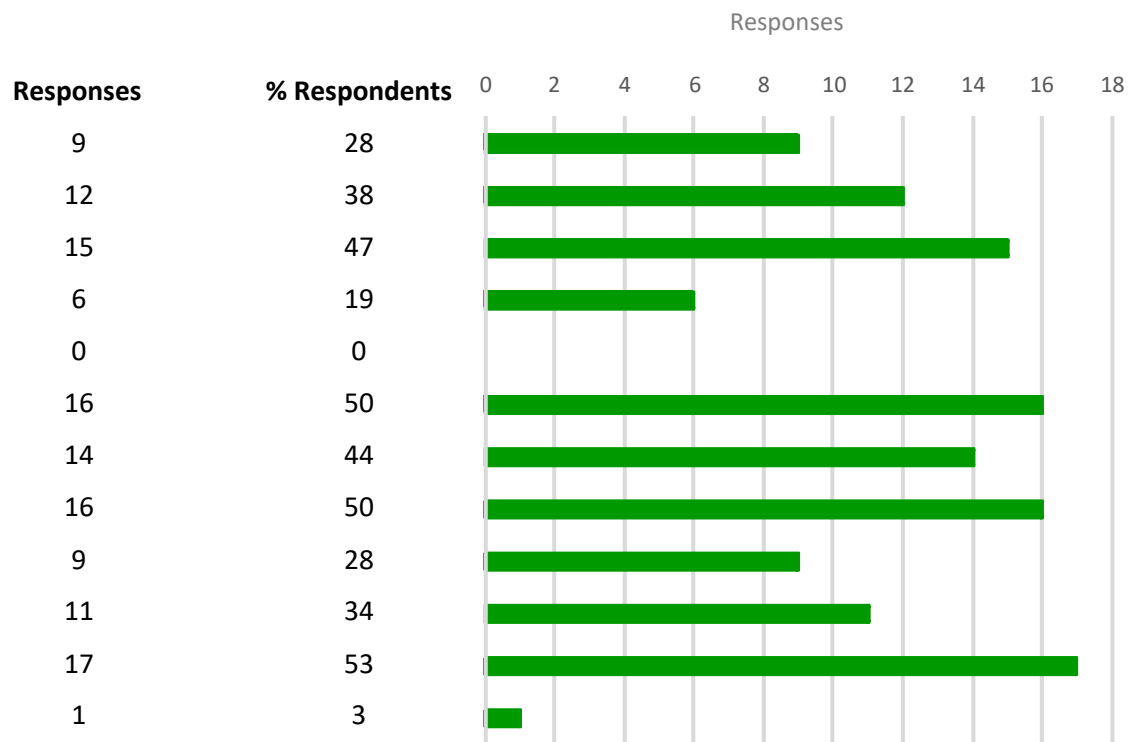
| | Responses | % Respondents |
|--|-----------|---------------|
| Too weedy/Nuisance | 8 | 25 |
| Important habitat/good for fishing | 6 | 19 |
| Important for water quality/lake health | 17 | 53 |
| Water quality affects the amount of plants | 8 | 25 |
| All of the above/It depends | 14 | 44 |



Poll Results Summary -Portage Lakes Focus Group 1 March 20, 2019

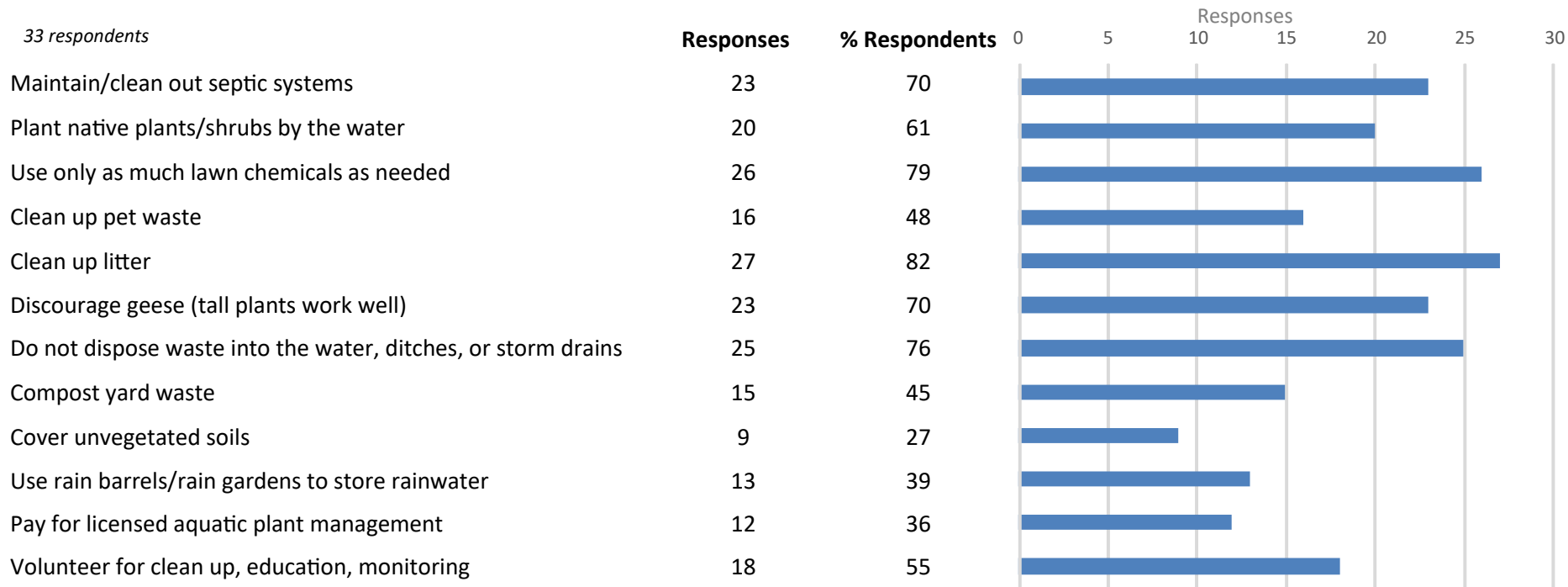
Question 8: What should we do about the aquatic plants?

32 respondents



Poll Results Summary -Portage Lakes Focus Group 1 March 20, 2019

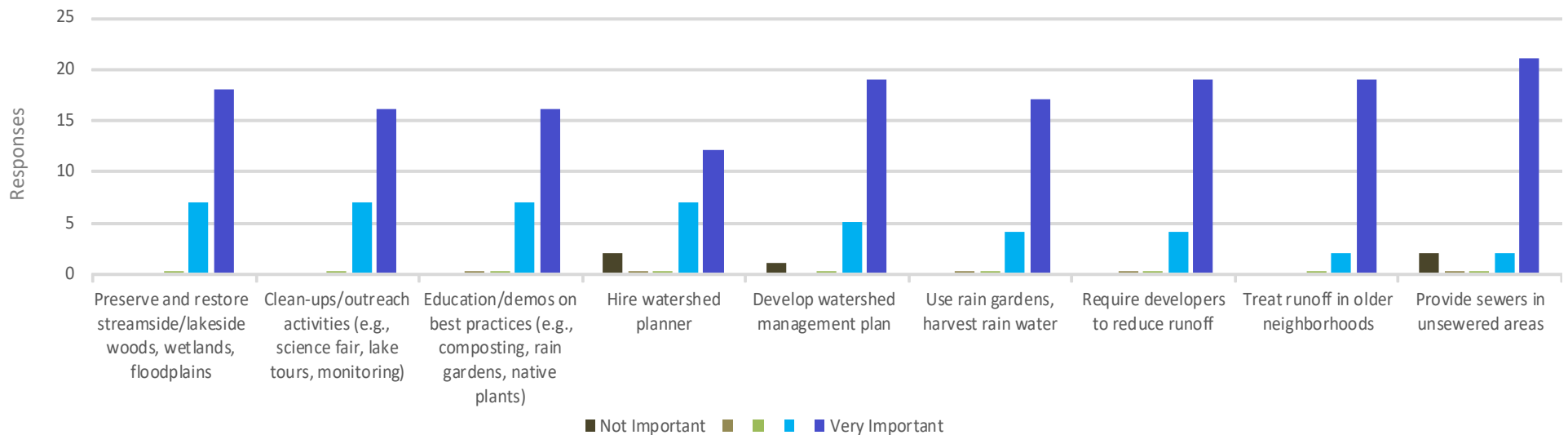
Question 9: What are you willing to do to protect and improve water quality in the Portage Lakes?



Question 10: How important are these things that communities and organizations can do to protect the Portage Lakes, its watershed, and water quality?

27 respondents

| | Not Important ★ | ★★ | ★★★ | ★★★★ | ★★★★★ Very Important | % Respondents 4-5 stars |
|---|-----------------------|----|-----|------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Preserve and restore streamside/lakeside woods, wetlands, floodplains | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 18 | 93 |
| Clean-ups/outreach activities (e.g., science fair, lake tours, monitoring) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 16 | 85 |
| Education/demos on best practices (e.g., composting, rain gardens, native plants) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 16 | 85 |
| Hire watershed planner | 2 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 12 | 70 |
| Develop watershed management plan | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 19 | 89 |
| Use rain gardens, harvest rain water | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 17 | 78 |
| Require developers to reduce runoff | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 19 | 85 |
| Treat runoff in older neighborhoods | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 19 | 78 |
| Provide sewers in unsewered areas | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 21 | 85 |

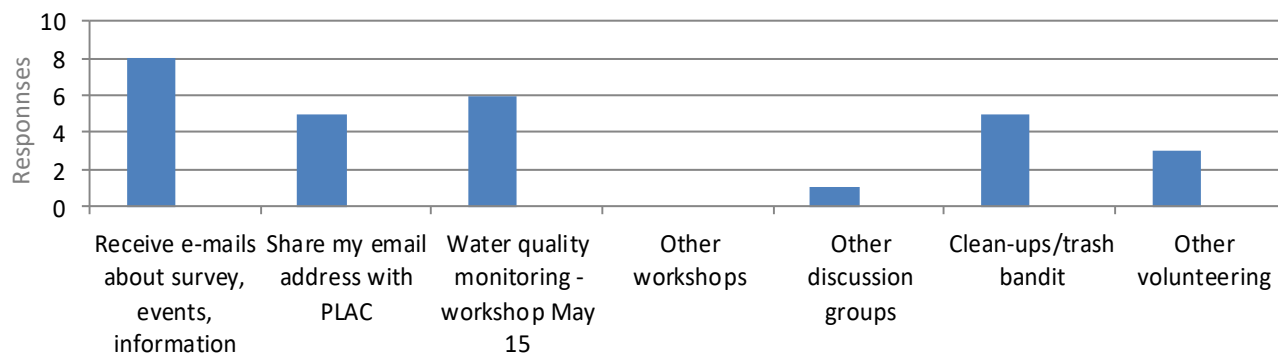


Poll Results Summary -Portage Lakes Focus Group 1 March 20, 2019

Question 11: How would you like to be involved in managing the Portage Lakes?

28 respondents

| | Responses | % Respondents |
|---|-----------|---------------|
| Receive e-mails about survey, events, information | 8 | 29 |
| Share my email address with PLAC | 5 | 18 |
| Water quality monitoring - workshop May 15 | 6 | 21 |
| Other workshops | 0 | 0 |
| Other discussion groups | 1 | 4 |
| Clean-ups/trash bandit | 5 | 18 |
| Other volunteering | 3 | 11 |



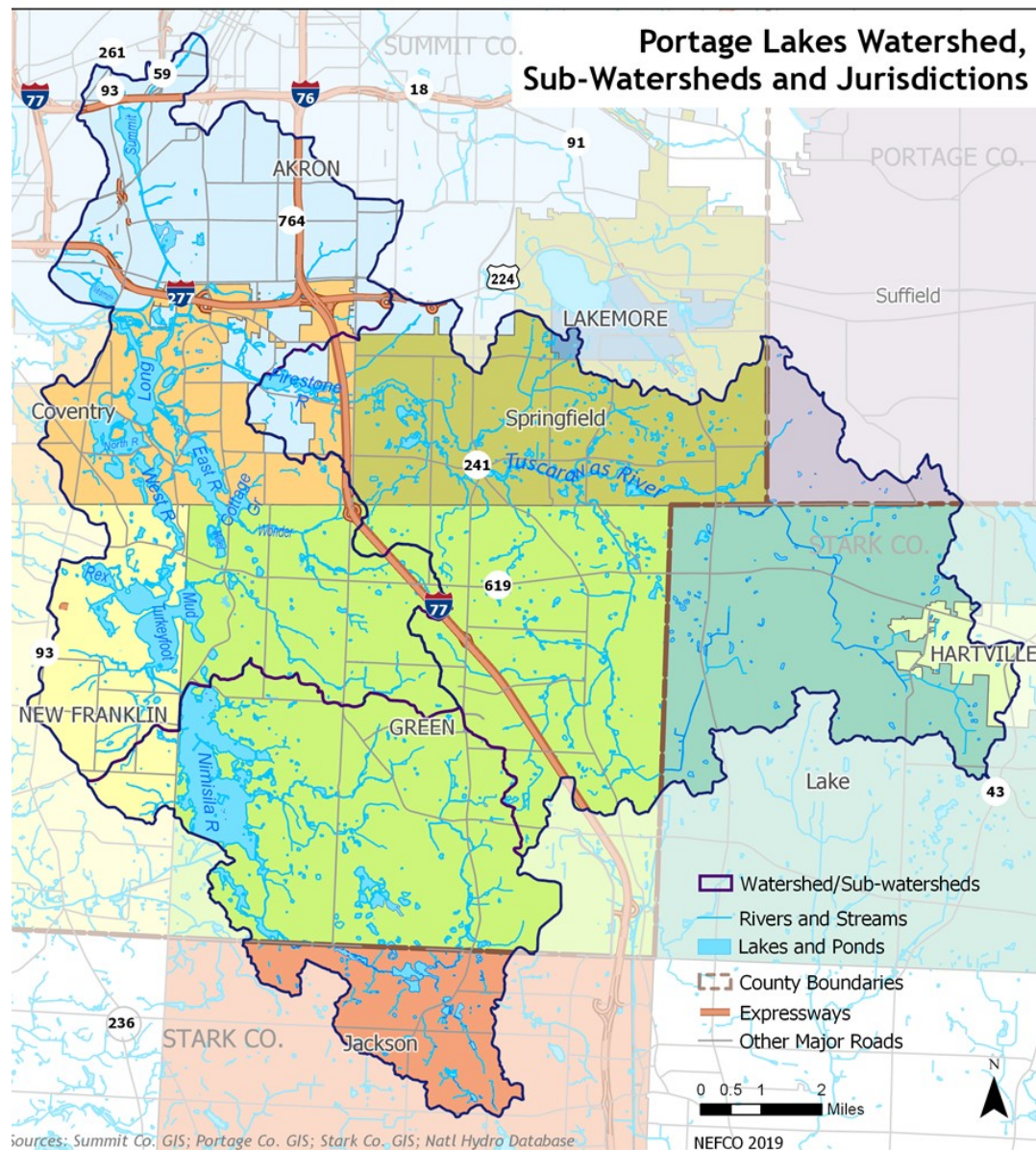
Discussion Questions (cont'd)

| Topic | Question/Comment |
|--------------------|--|
| Plan | What is the purpose of this group? Gathering data? |
| Trash | What about plastics pollution |
| Geese | What about Ohio DNR culling the Canada Goose population? What can we do about "goose poop!" in our yards and on our sand beaches? |
| Preservation/BMPs | Can we get right of way for constructed wetlands or BMPs? |
| Septic systems | What about elimination of septic systems? |
| Stormwater | Is a plan in place for current discharge stormwater outfalls, and do we have an accurate current map? Who addresses road runoff? |
| Funding/management | Why can't the state charge a \$5.00 launching fee to support maintenance of lakes area? Why doesn't the state pay for weed control? |

Discussion Questions

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Ecology/plants | <p>What are the native plants in our area?</p> <p>Who can I get to remove seaweed around docks (without chemicals)?</p> <p>Is aqua doc an acceptable company to hire for seaweed control? (2 of these questions)</p> <p>Are there less expensive companies?</p> <p>We have a new invasive seaweed—looks like eel grass...when it's cut by props or weed cutters it floats...causing shoreline accumulation of dead weeds—a problem for many homeowners. What can be done to safely eradicate these weeds?</p> |
| Invasive/nuisance species | <p>What about zebra mussels—good or bad?</p> <p>Nuisance cormorants (2 questions about cormorants) and Canadian geese and mussels</p> |
| Water quality/clarity/ channels | <p>How does the lakes' water quality affect the quality of our well water?</p> <p>Is it true that as the water lakes and streams flow north from Turkeyfoot toward West Reservoir, the</p> <p>Removal of dead trees that have fallen into the water</p> <p>Why is water clarity so different between Hower Lake and North Reservoir? Visibility in Hower Lake is sometimes 25+ feet, while right on the other side of State Mill Rd., visibility is less than 2 feet.</p> <p>Why is the water murky along the iron channel and clear elsewhere? Worse water quality?</p> |
| Shoreline | <p>What is an ideal shoreline for residences and how to navigate regulations to get to that point?</p> <p>Where will dredging be this year?</p> <p>What suggestions do you have for the thousand of feet of seawall and lakescaping?</p> <p>Nimisila— what is the rationale for removed trees around the reservoir?—roots should maintain shore-</p> |

Thank you for your interest in taking care of the Portage Lakes and its watershed.



**Portage Lakes Management Study
Recreation Business Focus Group Agenda**

| Green Community Hall 1795 Steese Rd., Green May 1, 2019 2 pm – 4 pm | |
|--|--|
| Time | |
| 2:00 pm | Welcome, Purpose of meeting |
| 2:05 pm | State of the Lakes |
| 2:30 pm | Portage Lakers Focus Group Recap |
| 2:45 pm | Review vision/goals for Balancing Recreation/Business with Water Quality |
| 3:15 pm | Discussion of potential development strategies |
| 3:45 pm | Next Steps |

Note: There were no attendees.

Portage Lakes Management Study
Decision Makers Focus Group Agenda

| Green Community Hall 1795 Steese Rd., Green May 1, 2019 2 pm – 4 pm | |
|--|---|
| Time | |
| 2:00 pm | Welcome, Purpose of meeting |
| 2:05 pm | State of the Lakes |
| 2:30 pm | Portage Lakers & Recreation/Business Focus Groups Recap |
| 2:45 pm | Review vision/goals for Portage Lakes |
| 3:15 pm | Discussion of NPS-IS Projects |
| 3:45 pm | Next Steps |

Portage Lakes Management Study
Focus Group 3 – Decision-Makers May 2, 2019 - Notes

Slide Presentation Highlights

- Natural features of the watershed are important to protect and restore, as they protect the lakes (e.g., floodplains, wetlands, riparian vegetation)
- Lakes as important recreational and economic resource: Within an hour drive time of the lake are 106,000 people.
- Lake water quality improving with sewer systems, 4 stroke engines
- Plants important part of natural systems and fisheries – if no aquatic plants, algae (potentially harmful) will consume nutrients
- Runoff increases nutrient loading, cultural eutrophication (aging of lakes)
- From Focus Group 1 – Residents' perceptions:
 - value boating, scenery
 - Plants important part of ecosystem
 - Residents interested in BMPs, water quality, plant management
- Goals from 3 years ago include
 - Protect water quality
 - Maintain access, aesthetics
 - Protect valuable habitat
 - Increase native species
- Goals of aquatic vegetation harvesting
 - Healthy fishery needs aquatic plants, plants important part of ecosystem
 - Maintain access for boat docks, iron channel, passageways
- Avoid wanton use of aquatic herbicides – permits are required; private boat docks are not isolated from rest of water
- Portage Lakes need a good management plan.

Discussion

1. Question about enforcement of use of pesticides

Discussion points:

- Enforcement of pesticide use
- Education about good practices and benefits of working together more effective. Ohio DNR can write tickets, and misuse of pesticides is a violation of Clean Water Act, but citations of individuals unlikely.
- Residents and visitors need to understand that the water in the lakes is connected – when the public beach is closed due to bacteria, the untested waters by private homes may also be affected.
- It is important to get information out – what are the best ways to do that? Lake ecology, connectedness of lakes, plants vs algae, areas to protect/leave alone

2. **Monitoring programs** get data and get people out on the water

Monitoring training workshop 6:30 Old State Park pavilion

Concerns with CLAM monitoring program:

- data, reports not readily available
- Not in-depth testing

Discussion points:

- The CLAM protocol is standardized and simple to use.
- Bill Z. will talk to OLMS staff to get data. Portage Lakes can keep their own data.
- Paul N has been doing more comprehensive monitoring for nutrients, e-coli
- PLAC is willing to pay for some of the testing.
- Wastewater treatment providers (e.g., Summit Co. SSSS) are willing to help with testing, monitoring
- Euclid Creek has a good monitoring program maintained by Tri-C – the watershed partners maintain the database and allow people to check out Secchi disks, meters
- Bill Z running a monitoring training using CLAM protocol. More sessions are possible.
- Data can be useful – data from previous testing used in making case for Springfield 91.

3. **Where are the illicit stormwater discharges?**

A: The communities are required to map them – the data is out there.

4. **NPS-IS 9 element plans**

The plans involve creating base maps of resources, identifying critical areas, specifying projects. Other parties can add critical areas or projects after an NPS-IS 9 element plan is adopted. NPS-IS plans are necessary for communities to apply for Section 319 funding for projects.

Community representatives expressed strong interest in NPS-IS plans, have projects ready to go, when can they get done, why is this process taking so long?

This is the end of the 3rd year of the lakes management study. Each year has a different focus – 1st year – watershed; 2nd year lake reconnaissance; 3rd year education, public forums. The intent has been to write the plan and include NPS-IS plans as part of the 4th year, starting in 7/2019.

NEFCO can help communities out as part of work program, with funding through EPA, but not necessarily at the same speed as consulting firms. Bill Z notes this is a good focus for NEFCO and PLAC. The schedule for completion and funding will depend on the resources that NEFCO has.

5. Other resource protection approaches

Bill Z. NPS-IS is important, but there are other sources of funding for preservation/restoration projects. Portage Lakes is a state park with natural lakes. Ohio EPA has used WRRSP to pay for restoration, protecting high quality wetlands.

Discussion about Wonder Lake as a restoration project

6. Watershed coordinator

It is really important to have a watershed coordinator to work among different parties, orchestrate efforts.

SWCD is working on an NPS-IS for Yellow Creek and looking to hire a watershed coordinator for Yellow Creek. SWCD could branch out. They are getting funding from some of the communities/stormwater funds. Bath has bought into the Yellow Creek watershed coordinator idea.

Funding can be through SWCD/Ohio DNR or other sources – other watershed groups are using creative funding strategies.

7. Mud Lake NPS

Mud Lake is filling in faster, a cattle farm used to be a major source of sediment. So, one question is how much sediment is coming from upstream of Mud Lake. Is it NPS or agriculture or more stormwater?

- That could be a critical area, part of the NPS-IS development.

8. Failing septic systems

Stream going to Cottage Grove – failing septic systems – more testing?

- Greater degrees of community engagement helps justify Ohio EPA work in this area.
- As failing septic systems are improving, there is less focus on water quality – more focus on boating, plants.

There are some pockets of a few unsewered septic system areas. W. side of Manchester is unsewered. High costs to address isolated septic systems, road crossings. Failing septic systems are still a problem.

- DEFA funding is driven by the 208 plan and county.

9. Next steps: volunteer monitoring, identify what needs to be in plan.

PLACEHOLDER - OTHER OUTREACH