

Rainy Headwaters- Vermilion Watershed Public Kickoff Meeting Report - 2022

PUBLIC KICKOFF MEETING REPORT



Three Rainy River Headwaters-Vermilion River public kickoff meetings were held in August 2022. The events were held in Orr on August 11, at Seagull Lake on August 16, and in Ely on August 18. The goal was to reach people across the expansive watershed by offering the kickoff meeting in multiple locations. The purpose was to gather diverse viewpoints on watershed priorities and values. As well as to understand the issues, concerns and opportunities of watershed residents and stakeholders. Information was gathered by having meeting participants complete three activities focused on watershed topics.

Seven topic areas were identified by the Steering Committee. These included:

- Lakes
- Rivers / Streams
- Wetlands
- Forests
- Agriculture
- Groundwater
- Stormwater



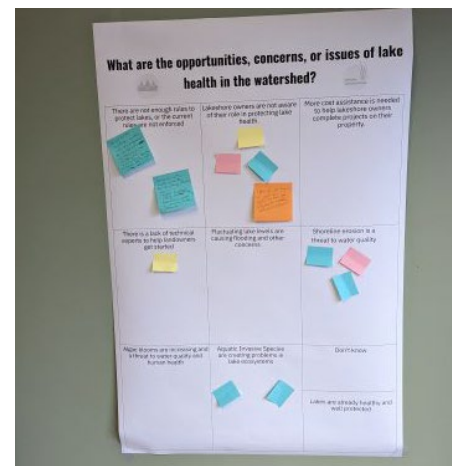
The events were advertised using print and social media ad campaigns. In addition, Steering Committee members advertised the events using their contact lists and connections. For those who could not attend the events in person, an online survey was created and shared. The survey ran for one month. In addition, a paper survey was available at the event for people not willing to participate in a group activity.

A total of 31 people participated in the events (7 in Orr, 4 at Seagull Lake, and 20 in Ely). In addition, 21 people completed the online survey.

Kickoff Meeting Activities

Identifying Issues, Concerns and Opportunities

A list of watershed issues, concerns and opportunities was compiled by the Steering Committee for each of the seven topics. The list was used to create voting posters. Participants from each event used stickers to vote if they prioritized an issue. They were able to vote for as many or as few as they wished. They used sticky notes to add issues, concerns and opportunities that they felt were missing. A complete list is at the end of this report.



Rainy Headwaters- Vermilion Watershed Public Kickoff Meeting Report - 2022

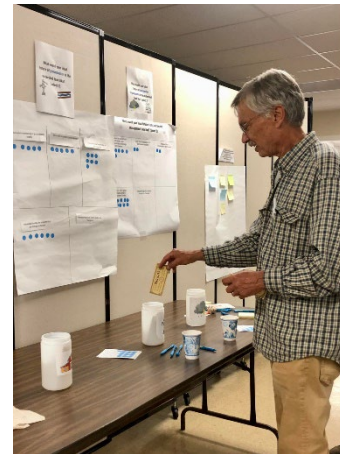
Identifying Desired Future Conditions



A list of potential future outcomes for the watershed was compiled by the Steering Committee for each of the seven topics. This list was also used to create voting posters. Participants from each event used stickers to vote if they prioritized the future condition. They were only allowed to vote for two future outcomes per topic area. A complete list of future conditions is at the end of this report.

Prioritizing Watershed Topics

Event participants were given four \$100,000 bills at the beginning of the event. They were asked to view each of the seven topics and think about how they would spend this money to protect and restore natural resources in the watershed in the next 10 years. Then they were asked to place their money in the topic area(s) most important to them. Money could be spent all on one topic or spread over four.



Other Information

Using posters, we asked participants to share additional information related to:

- Where do you most associate within the watershed? Place a pin on a map to designate.
- Are there any topics/resources we didn't cover?
- If you could magically improve one water resource in the watershed today, which problem would you fix?
- Considering the current rate of land use change in the watershed, what do you think the watershed will look like in 50 years?
- What would you like the watershed to look like in 50 years?

Online Survey

The online survey mimicked the in-person event as much as possible. The same list of issue statements was listed for each topic, and participants were asked to rank the four highest priority topics.

Some additional questions were asked that were not recorded in the in-person meetings:

- In just 4-5 words, when you think of the Rainy River Headwater-Vermilion River watershed, what comes to mind?
- For each of the 7 topic areas: In a sentence or two, what do you think could be done to improve water quality in relation to (lakes, streams, forests, etc). This information will be used later as we look for potential implementation activities.

Results



Rainy Headwaters- Vermilion Watershed Public Kickoff Meeting Report - 2022



Where were participants from or most identified within the watershed?

As expected, meeting attendees were mostly from near the meeting location they attended. Online survey participants identified across the watershed planning area. Participants indicated they most identified with the following locations in the planning area:

- Orr
- Ely
- Tower
- Winton
- Babbitt
- Fall Lake Township
- Eagles Nest Township
- Vermilion River
- Ely Area Lakes
- Pelican Lake
- Sandpoint Lake
- Kabetogama Lake
- Gull Lake/Seagull River
- Rainy River
- White Iron Lake
- Round Lake
- Knife River
- BWCA

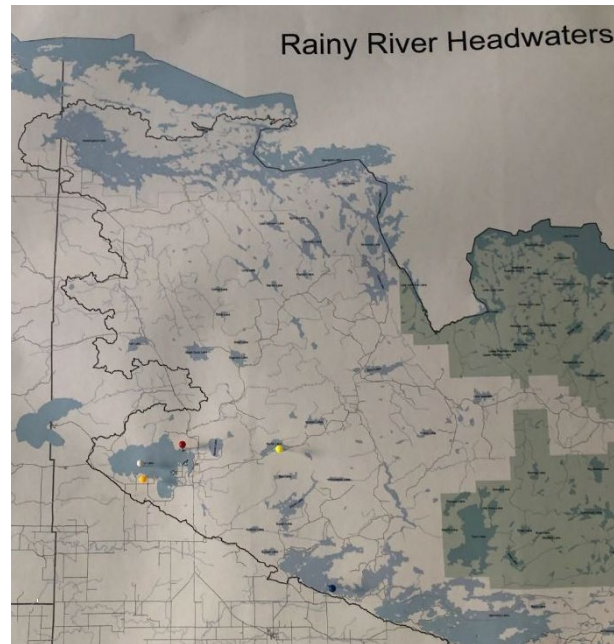
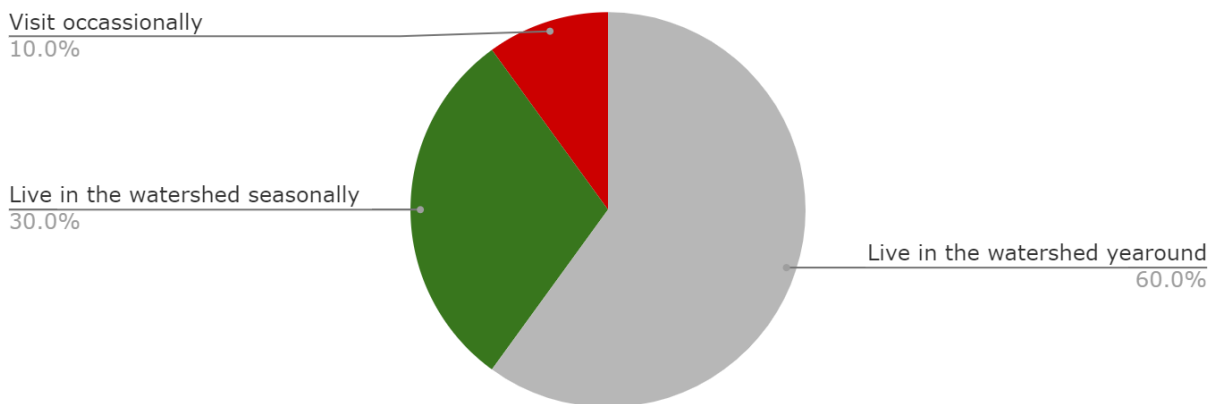


Figure 1: Online survey responses to watershed residence

Online Survey Responses



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Who Attended?

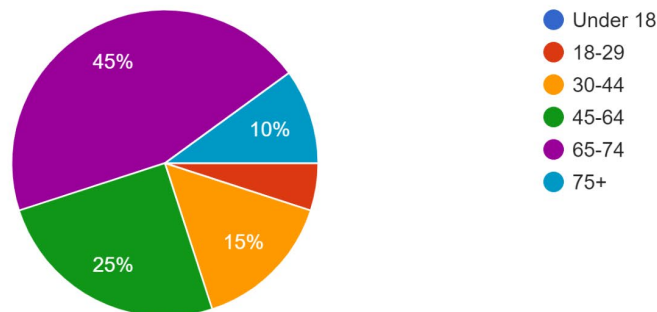
Most visitors to the in-person meetings either lived within or near the watershed planning meeting location. While we did not have attendees self-report, most attendees appeared to be above retirement age and White. Several attendees were involved in local lake associations, townships, or working adjacent to water planning efforts.

Through the online survey, we asked participants to report on their demographics. Again, most participants were above 65 with only one respondent under 30. The respondents were also largely educated with 50% having a master's degree or above and no respondent reported having less than a 2-year degree. No one identified as anything other than White. While the watershed population is largely White, it should be noted that the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa has reservation land within the watershed. This population does not appear to be represented in this survey.

Figure 2: Online survey demographic responses

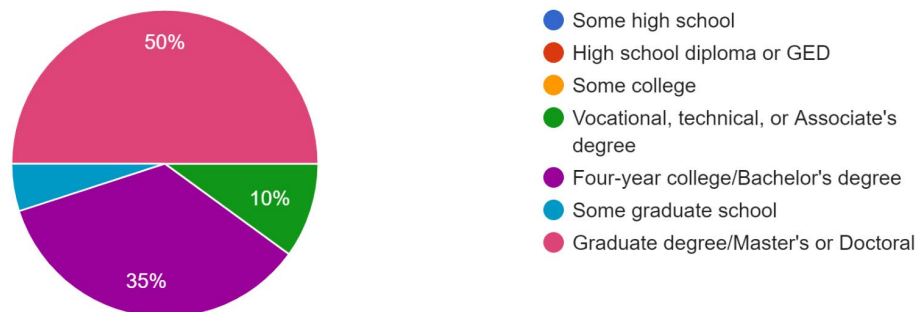
What age group do you represent?

20 responses



What is the highest level of education you have completed?

20 responses

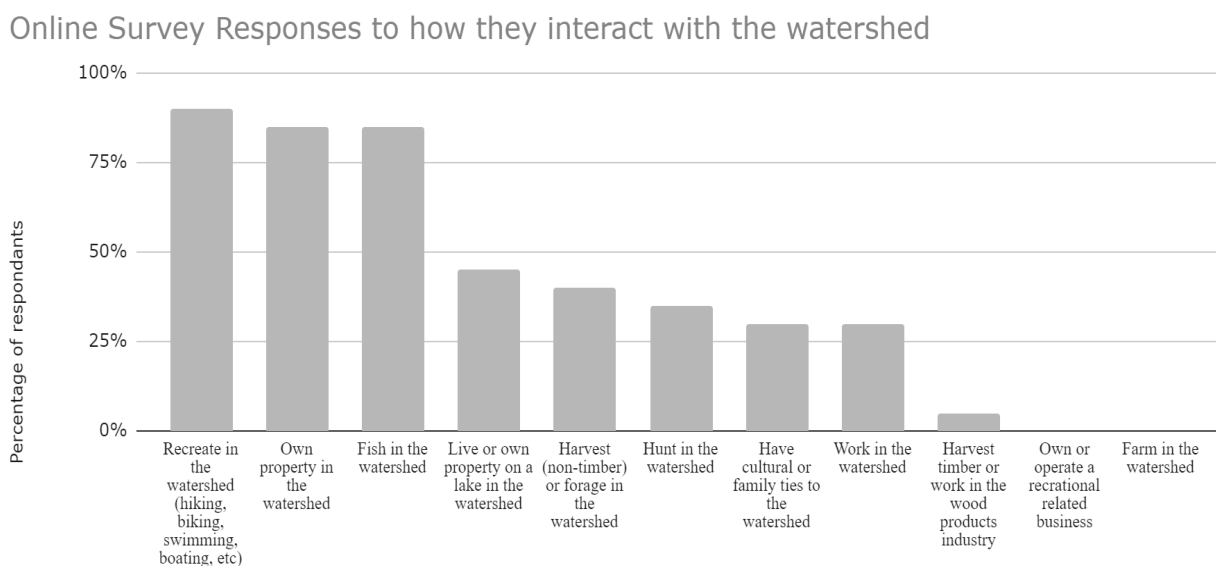


Rainy Headwaters- Vermilion Watershed Public Kickoff Meeting Report - 2022



The majority (over 75%) of online respondents recreate, own property, and fish in the watershed. Between a quarter and half of online respondents work, have cultural/family ties, hunt, forage/harvest (non-timber), and live/own property on a lake in the watershed. There is a noticeable lack of respondents who farm or operate a reaction-related business.

Figure 3: Online survey responses to watershed interactions



Top Issue Statements

The top three (or 4 if tied) ranked issue statements were collected for each topic.

Lakes

- Lakeshore owners and lake users are not aware of their role in protecting lake health
- There are not enough rules to protect lakes, or the current rules are not enforced
- Algae blooms are increasing and a threat to water quality and human health
- Aquatic invasive species are creating problems in lake ecosystems

Rivers / Streams

- People don't know how to protect or restore streams/rivers
- Upland management next to riparian habitat is affecting streams health
- Pollutants such as bacteria, nutrients, sediment, chloride are entering streams

Wetlands

- People do not understand the importance/value of wetlands
- More funding is needed to restore/protect wetlands
- More research/studies are needed to understand where wetlands should be restored



Rainy Headwaters- Vermilion Watershed Public Kickoff Meeting Report - 2022



Forests

- Forest management should adapt to changing climate
- Landowners are unaware of programs that help manage and protect their forests
- More funding is needed to cost share forest health activities/forest management plans

Agricultural Practices

- Agricultural producers are worried about regulations
- I don't know
- There is not enough cost share money available to assist with conservation goals

Groundwater

- People are unaware of groundwater risks/concerns
- More testing/monitoring is needed to track groundwater
- There is not enough funding to help landowners protect groundwater

Stormwater

- Landowners and municipalities need help managing stormwater
- Landowners and municipalities are unaware of stormwater issues
- Flooding is damaging public and private infrastructure

Each of the topic areas had at least one top ranked issue suggesting a lack of awareness or knowledge by stakeholder or the public about the issue and opportunities. Stormwater, Groundwater, and Agricultural Practices were the topics with more uncertainty of the issues with Agricultural Practices having "Don't know" as the second highest ranked issue/concern/opportunity for the topic.

Top Future Condition

The top two ranked future condition statements were collected for each topic.

Lakes

- All lakeshore owners are good stewards of their lake
- Lake waters are clear; there are limited algae blooms

Rivers / Streams

- Increased local knowledge of stream value
- Headwater, high-quality streams are protected

Wetlands

- Increased local knowledge of the value of wetlands
- Wetlands are restored/protected where they will best protect lakes and streams

Forests

- A diverse forest with different ages and species of trees
- Forest landowners are actively managing their forest to keep it healthy



Rainy Headwaters- Vermilion Watershed Public Kickoff Meeting Report - 2022



Agricultural Practices

- Reduced livestock access to lakes and streams
- Increased local knowledge of agricultural best management practices

Groundwater

- Increased local knowledge of groundwater
- Increased funding for projects that protect groundwater

Stormwater

- Assistance is available to landowners and municipalities to manage stormwater
- There is more green infrastructure in developed areas

The majority of desired future condition topics included a desire for increased knowledge about or assistance with the topic. Stewardship was a focus for the lakes and forests topic in addition to a desire for good condition resources.

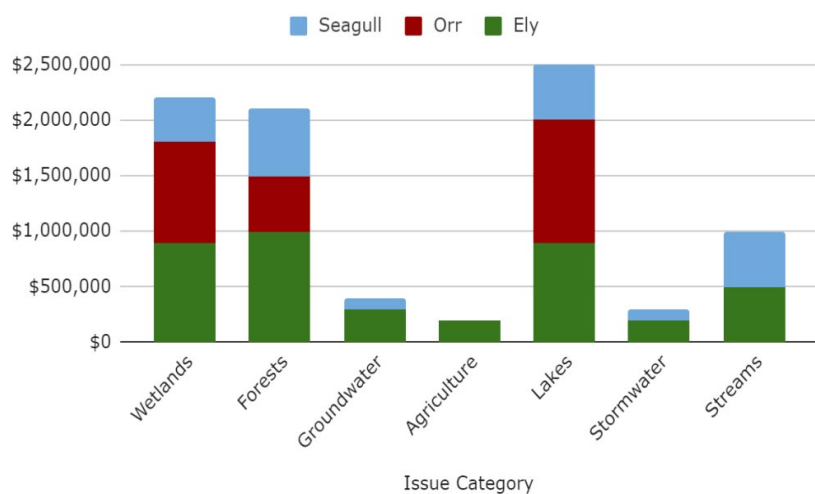
Prioritization Activity

The prioritization activity saw some differences between events. At the Orr meeting, Lakes had the highest ranking followed by Wetlands and then Forests. In Ely, Forests ranked as the highest topic, with Lakes and Wetland tying for second. At Seagull Lake, Forests also ranked highest, with Lakes and Streams in second place. Agriculture, Stormwater, and Groundwater ranked lowest at all meetings, which also happened to be the highest rank for “don’t know” when it came to the issues and concerns. Combined with the online survey, Lakes, Forests, and Wetland are ranked as highest priority areas.

Online Rankings

1. Lakes
2. Forests
3. Wetlands
4. Streams
5. Groundwater
6. Stormwater
7. Agriculture

In Person Meeting Prioritization through spending



Rainy Headwaters- Vermilion Watershed Public Kickoff Meeting Report - 2022



Considering the current rate of land use change in the watershed, what do you think Rainy River Headwaters/Vermilion River Watershed will look like in 50 years?



What would you like the watershed to look like in 50 years?



As shown in the word clouds above, most respondents share a future with some degradation of water quality if current land use change continues at the current pace. However, the second question shows a desire for more protection or sustaining the water quality experienced today.



Rainy Headwaters- Vermilion Watershed Public Kickoff Meeting Report - 2022

What is your biggest concern related to your experiences related to the Rainy River Headwater/Vermilion River Watershed (DOES NOT HAVE TO BE WATER-RELATED)



“What is your biggest concern related to your experiences with the watershed that doesn’t have to be water-related?” was asked to try and see if there were any pressing issues that may supersede concerns about water quality. Most answers did relate to water quality but also to complex issues like relationships with policymakers, mining, and fire management.

Are there any topics/resources we didn’t cover in this survey?

- No (2)
- Tourist Education
- Get the Lead Out of all fishing tackle
- Tourism/Recreation
- Septic
- Risk to the watershed due to sulfide mining
- Humans and pollution
- Tour survey is skewed to a presumption that people need to be told what to do, that people are ignorant of issues. The survey doesn’t seem to include ways to address issues property owners are aware of but do not have the resources to tackle.
- Climate change impacts (2)



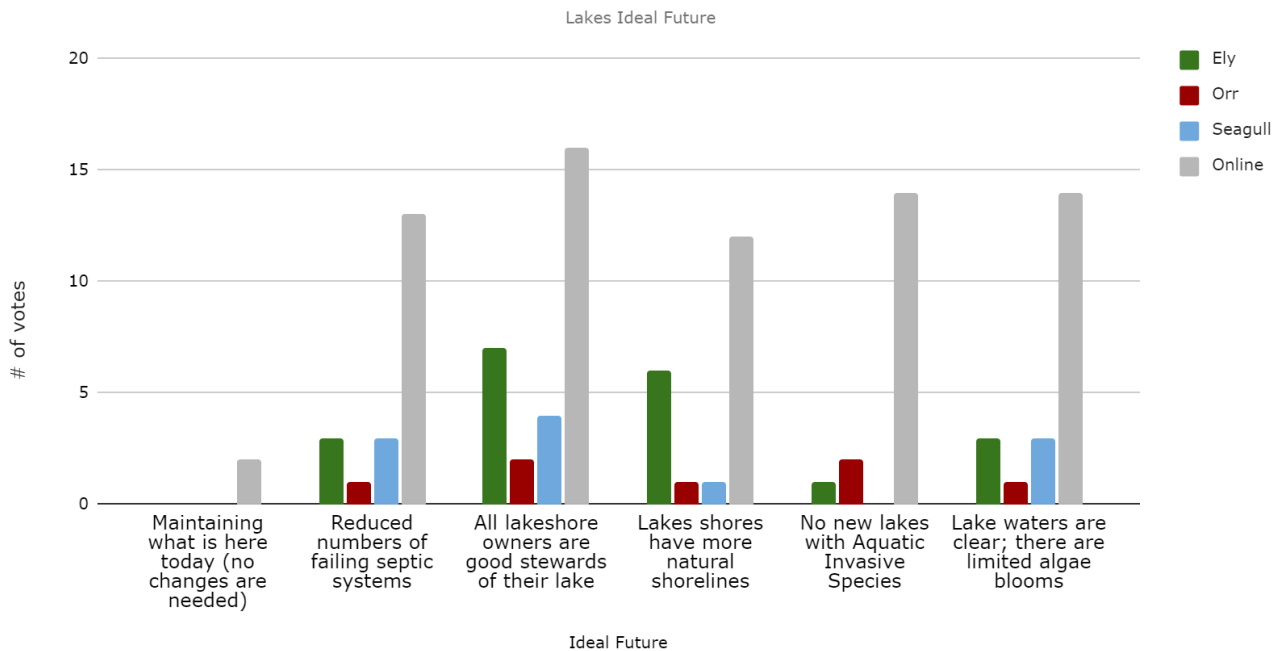
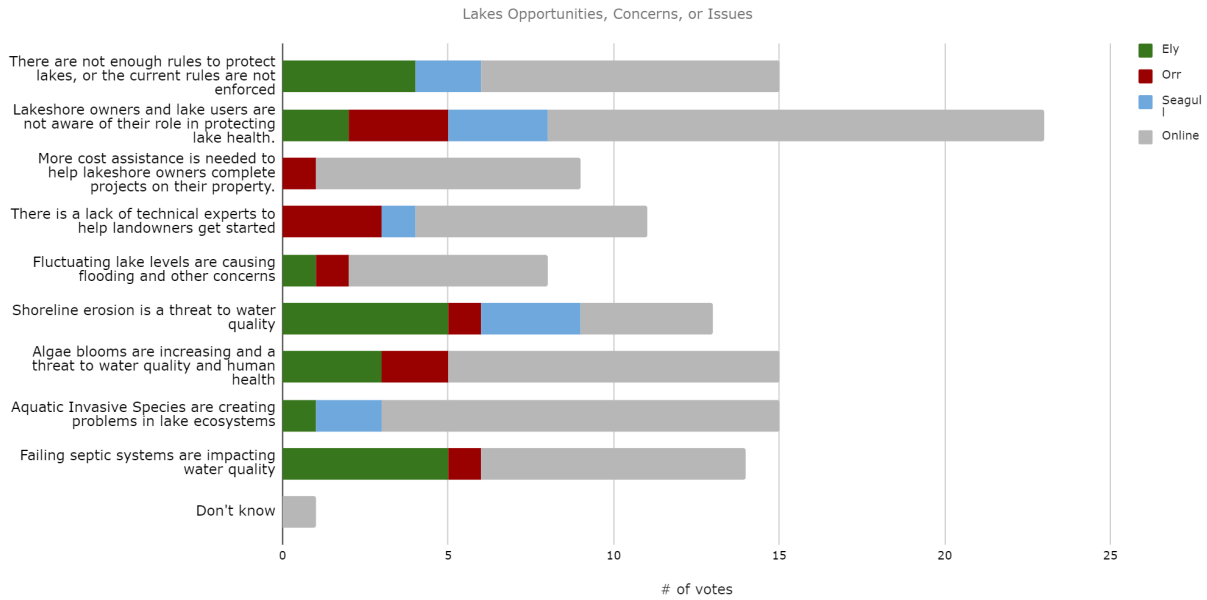
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Appendix

A compilation of issue statement voting questions, future condition voting questions, and the additional questions are listed below.

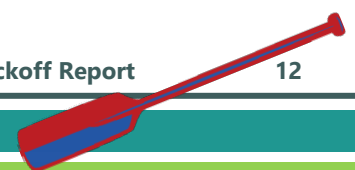
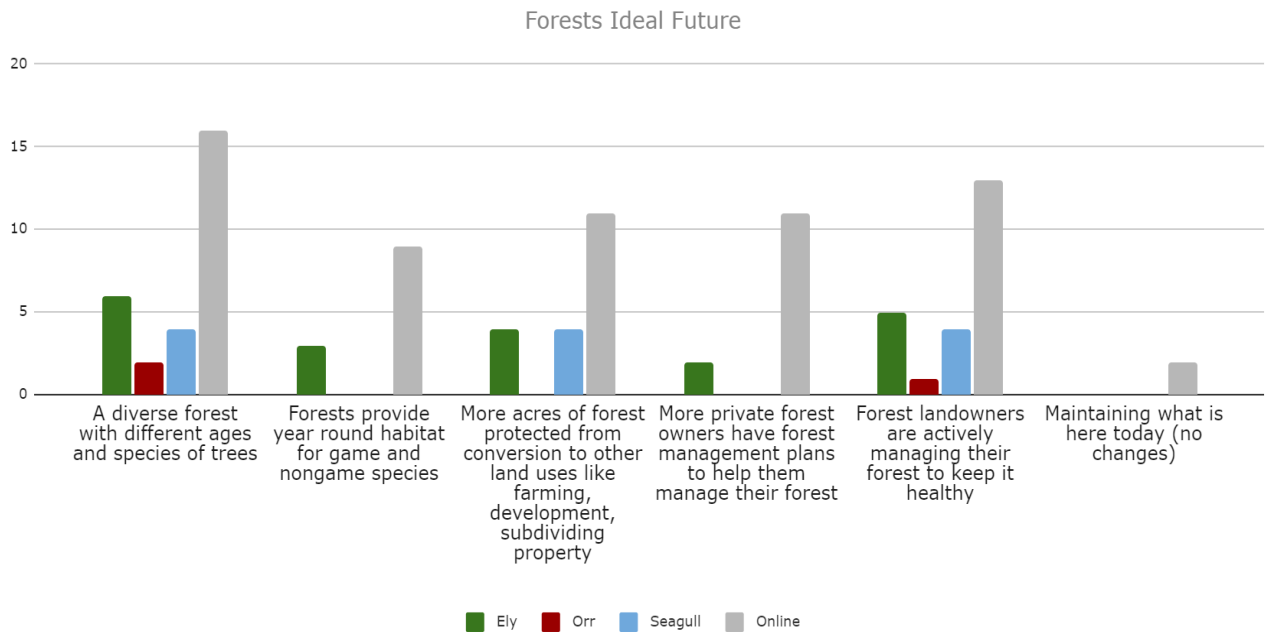
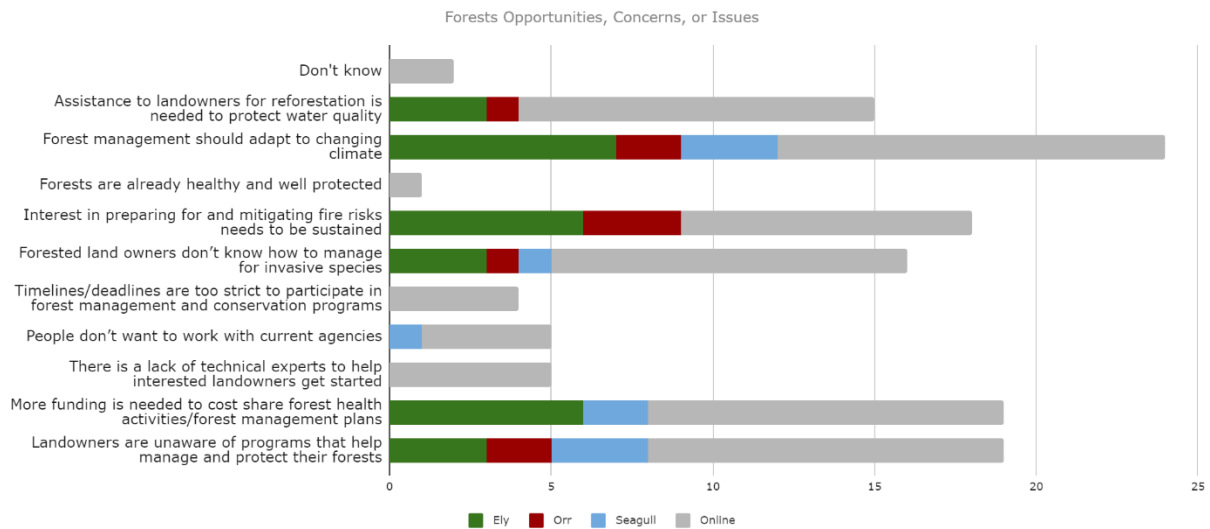
LAKES



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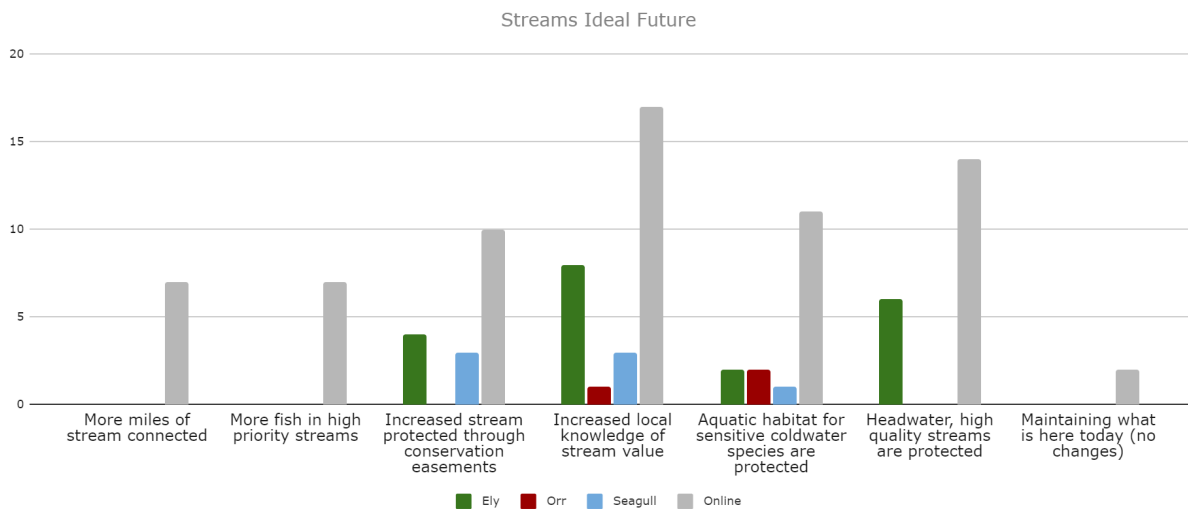
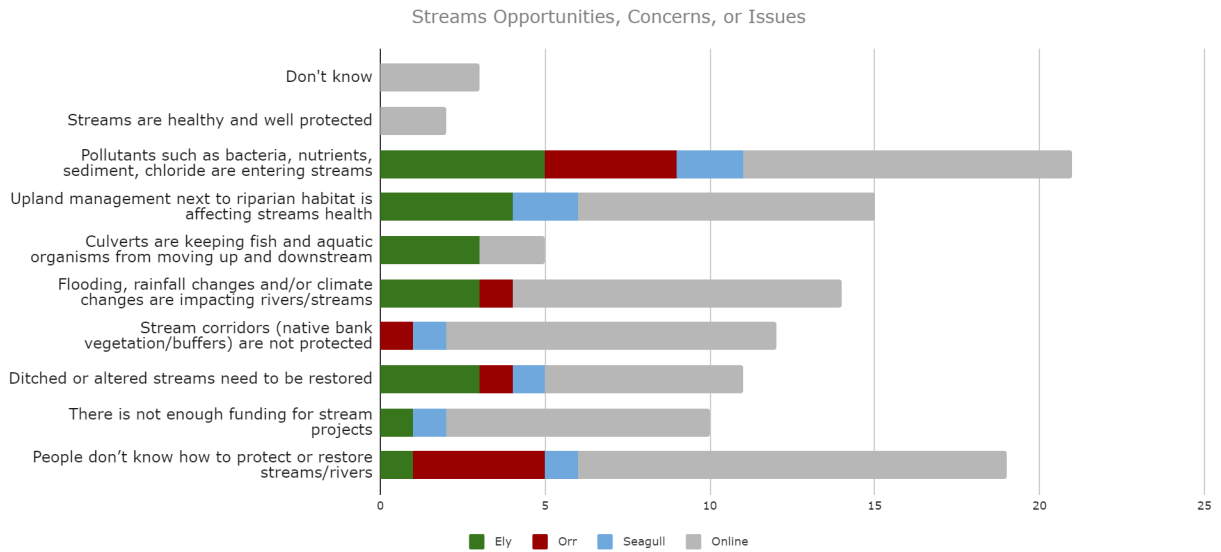


FORESTS





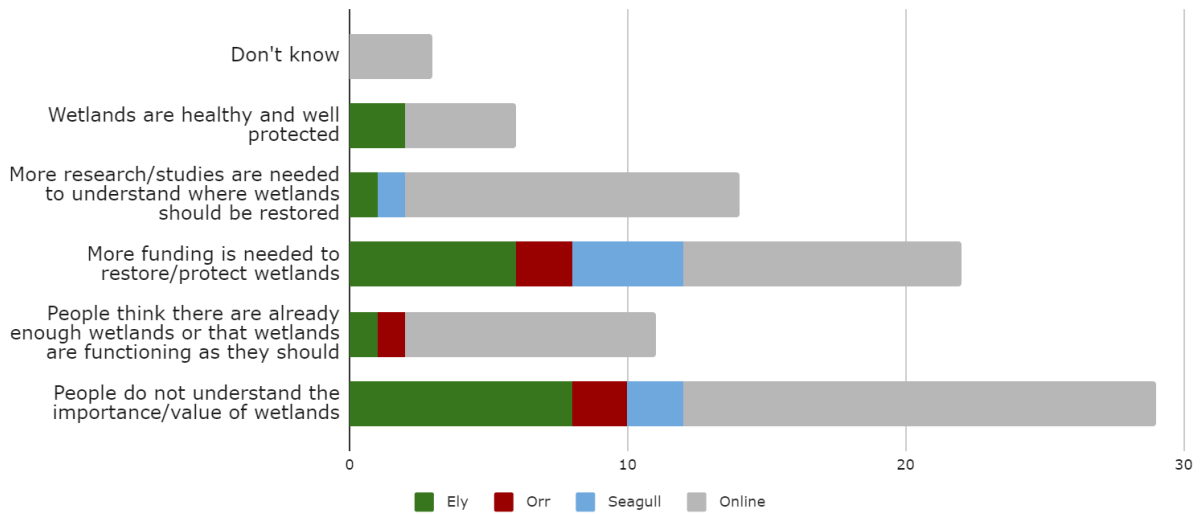
RIVERS/STREAMS



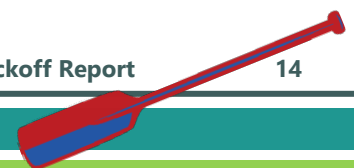
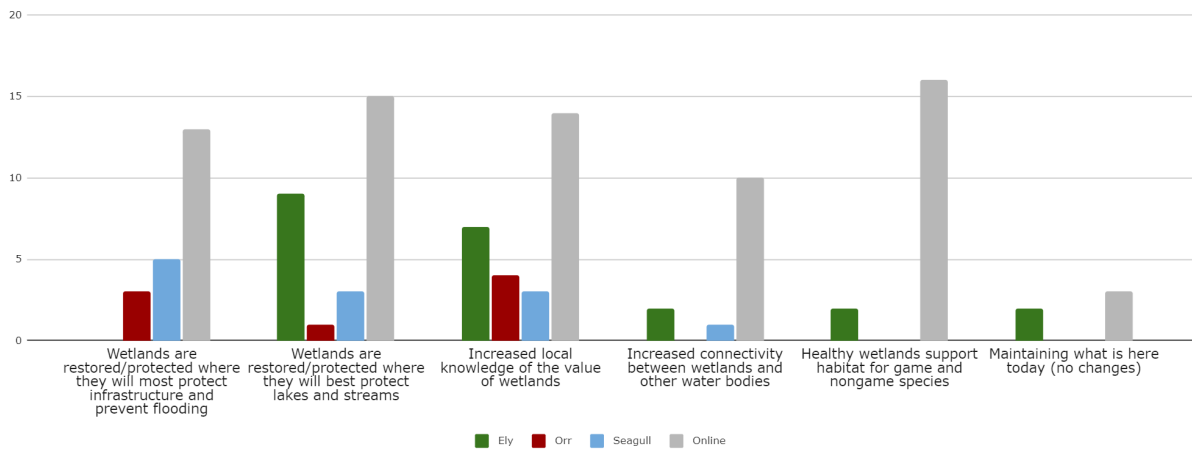


WETLANDS

Wetlands Opportunities, Concerns, or Issues



Wetlands Ideal Future

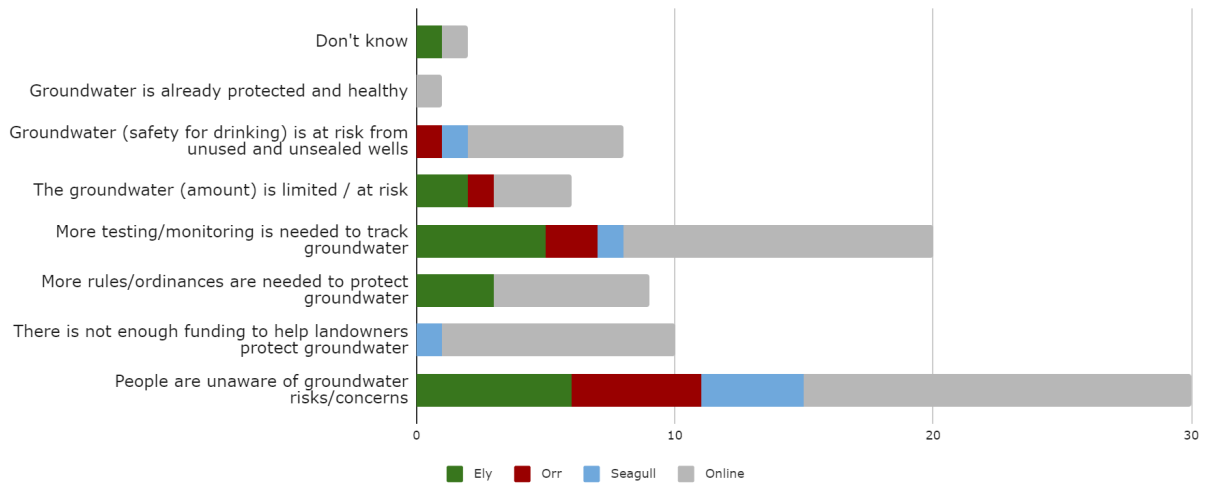


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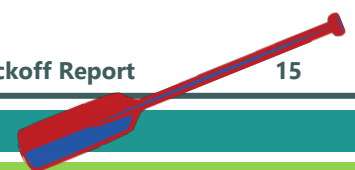
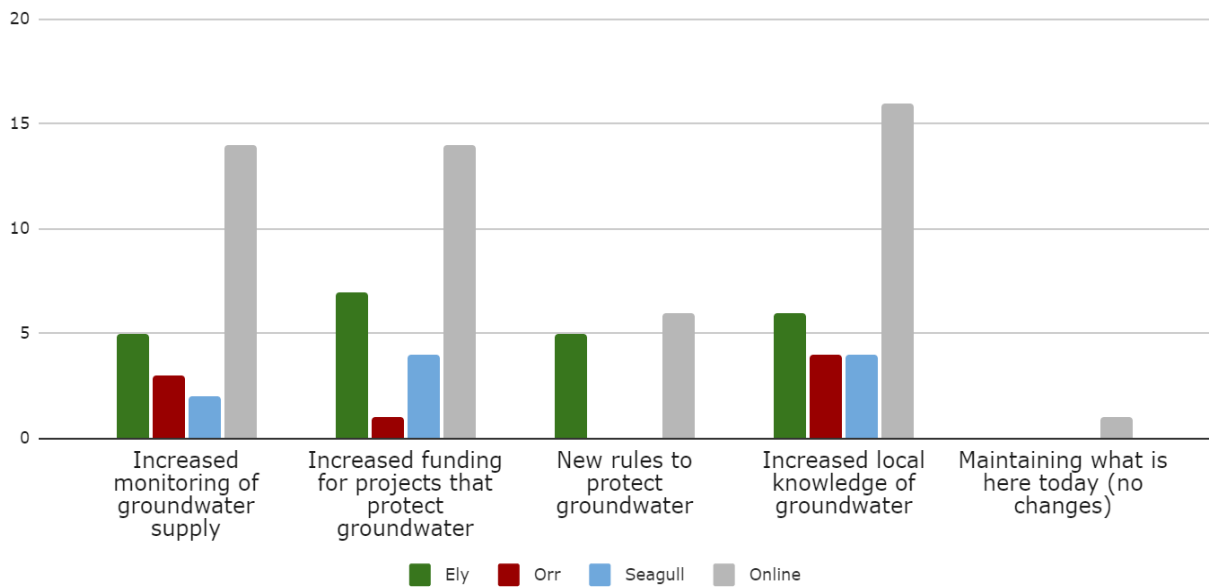


GROUNDWATER

Groundwater Opportunities, Concerns, or Issues



Groundwater Ideal Future

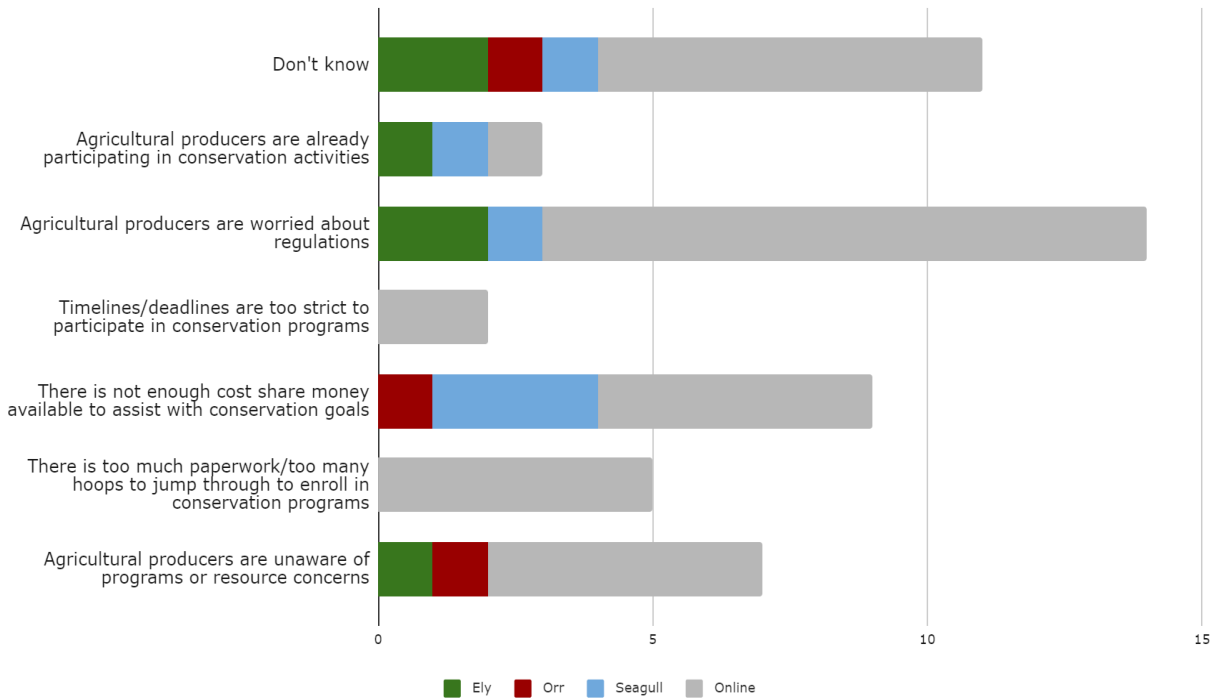


Rainy Headwaters- Vermilion Watershed Public Kickoff Meeting Report - 2022

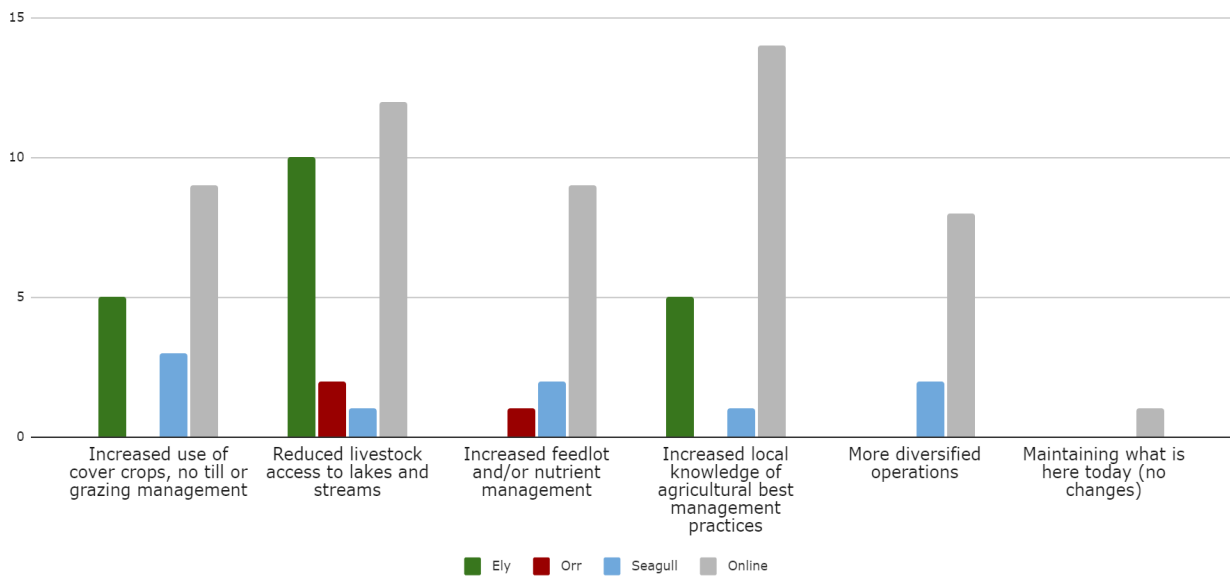


AGRICULTURE

Agriculture Opportunities, Concerns, or Issues



Agriculture Ideal Future

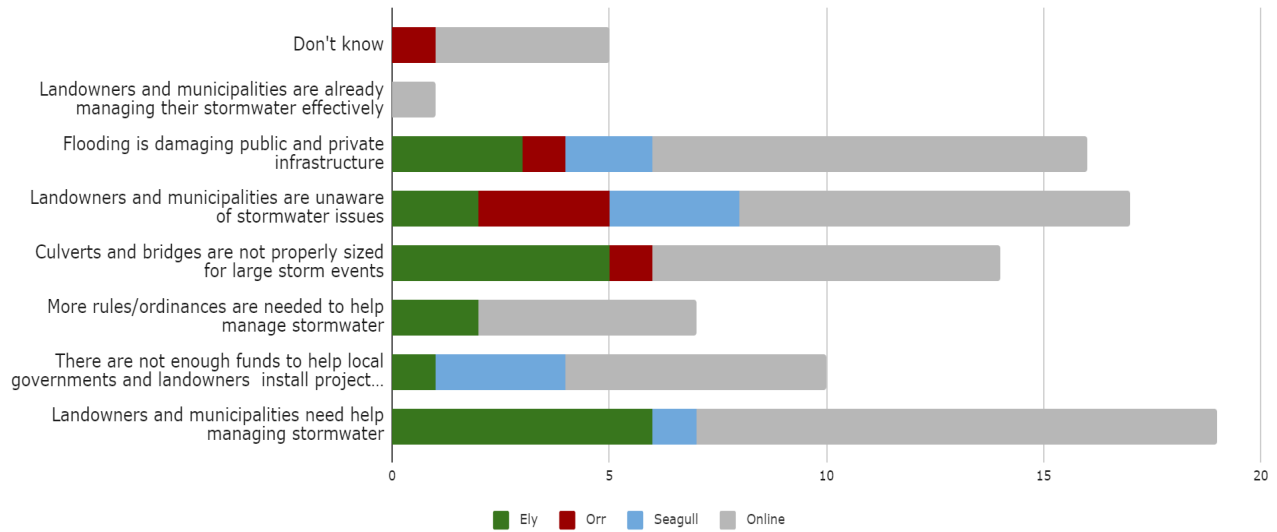


Rainy Headwaters- Vermilion Watershed Public Kickoff Meeting Report - 2022

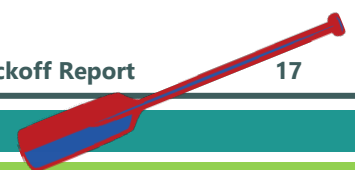
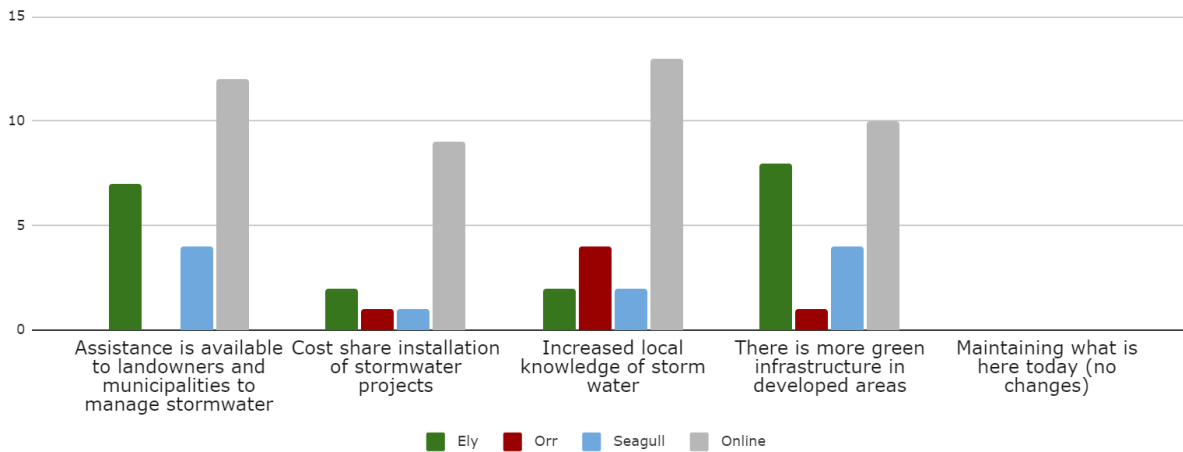


STORMWATER

Stormwater Opportunities, Concerns, or Issues



Stormwater Ideal Future



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Additional Issues/Concerns provided by meeting attendees and survey respondents

- Lakes: Need more enforcement of "Get the Lead Out"
- Lakes: Impact of industrial activities
- Lakes: How do we begin to address septic systems not designed to handle pharmaceuticals (2)
- Lakes: Concern with water quality for drinking use
- Lakes: excessive motor use stirring bottom sediments
- Lakes: Need better surface water use management to co-exist motor and non-motorized activities. Both recreation value and safety concerns
- Forests: More involvement with USFS forest management
- Forests: Need to know issues first and then how to protect
- Forests: Tools and support in managing invasives species (including things like cow parsnip in open lands)
- Forests: Early detection and removal of buckthorn
- Forests: We need a way to employ prescribed burns across the area- both public and private lands
- Streams: Property owners adjacent to streams and river should be supported in best practices to maintain them
- Wetlands: More wetlands need to preserved and protected
- Wetlands: Practices to encourage and support good wetland management. Protect wetlands from abuse from ATVs. Educate people on how wetlands can be enjoyed
- Wetlands: Built projects win out
- Wetlands: Too eager to trade wetland credits
- Agriculture: Farmers should be encouraged to idle lands in sensitive areas
- Agriculture: Connect local communities with farmers that use regenerative agriculture to protect water quality
- Groundwater: More accessible resources for testing wells
- Groundwater: The City of Ely needs assistance to design and install energy efficient (solar) wastewater treatment facilities.

Additional Ideal Futures provided by meeting attendees and survey respondents

- Lakes: Maintain what is here, be good stewards as is possible and practical
- Forests: Forest management plan & assistance opportunities for smaller properties (<10 acres)
- Forests: More information about current forest conditions and what needs to be done to improve. Why are there so many dead trees??
- Forests: More fire as a management tool
- Streams: Don't presume property owners don't know what to do; support good practices
- Streams: Identify areas with diversity and/or environmental pressures needing protection



Rainy Headwaters- Vermilion Watershed Public Kickoff Meeting Report - 2022



- Streams: Focus on areas with highest chance for protection success as waters warm with climate change
- Streams: Aquatic Habitat
- Wetlands: Prohibit mining and developers from destroying wetlands. Do not accept mitigation agreements.
- Agriculture: Learning from farmers what would help them most- there may not be one solution for all areas depending on what watershed components are on or adjacent to their properties

IN A SENTENCE OR TWO, WHAT DO YOU THINK COULD BE DONE TO PROTECT OR IMPROVE LAKE WATER QUALITY?

MORE EDUCATION & RESOURCES FOR PROPERTY OWNERS ON PROPER LAND & LAKE MANAGEMENT. BETTER ENFORCEMENT OF THE EXISTING RULES AS WELL AS BETTER UNDERSTANDING BY COUNTY LEADERS ON EXISTING RULES AND NEED FOR REGULATIONS.

EDUCATE EACH PROPERTY OWNER ON KEEPING WATER CLEAN BUT ALSO ALLOWING ACCESS, SWIMMING, AND BOATING. ENCOURAGE VOLUNTEER COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING.

MORE NATURAL RESOURCE STAFF HELPING AT EACH LAKE & LAKE ASSOCIATION

STRONGER STANDARDS FOR WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION

STUDY WATER QUALITY AND CONTAMINANTS; IDENTIFY ISSUES; PROPOSE SOLUTIONS OR MEASURES TO REDUCE ISSUES

BEING AWARE AND CAREFUL

SUPPORT WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS

BETTER MONITORING OF SNOWPACK & RAINFALL THROUGHOUT THIS WATERSHED TO MITIGATE FLOODING. ASSIST PROPERTY OWNERS DEVELOP STABLE, PROTECTED DOCK SYSTEMS THAT MEET CURRENT AND POTENTIAL NEEDS. ADDRESS SEPTIC ISSUES AS THEY BECOME KNOWN IN A WAY THAT SUPPORTS BOTH YEAR-ROUND AND SEASONAL RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES.

BETTER CONTROL OF LEVELS IN IFALLS, ELIMINATE MAN MADE CHOKES

TEACH US WHAT TO DO ON OUR PROPERTIES, HOW TO BE GOOD STEWARDS, ENCOURAGE AND REWARD GOOD STEWARDSHIP IN SOME WAY

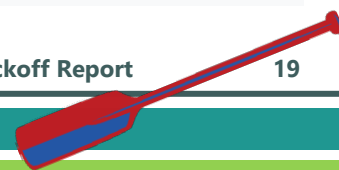
ENFORCEMENT AND EDUCATION

INTENSE INFORMATION CAMPAIGN FOLLOWED BY INPUT FROM INFORMED CITIZENS AND THEN AN ACTION PROGRAM BASED ON THIS INPUT WITH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN AREAS WHERE ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY, E.G. PROFESSIONALLY EVALUATING SEPTIC SYSTEMS WITH REMEDIATION GRANTS FOR LOW INCOME PROPERTY OWNERS.

MANDATE FOUR-CYCLE OUTBOARD MOTORS AND PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO BOATERS WHO LIVE HERE.

NO COPPER NICKEL MINING.

PERMANENTLY BAN SULFIDE MINING IN THE WATERSHED.



Rainy Headwaters- Vermilion Watershed Public Kickoff Meeting Report - 2022

GIVEN CLIMATE CHANGE, THE LAKES WILL CHANGE. OUR FOCUS WILL HAVE TO SHIFT FROM PRESERVATION TO MANAGING FOR RESILIENCY.



MORE LAWS TO PROTECT QUALITY; MORE EFFECTIVE ENFORCEMENT OF EXISTING REGULATIONS; NO MINING

IN A SENTENCE OR TWO, WHAT DO YOU THINK COULD BE DONE TO PROTECT RAINY RIVER HEADWATERS/VERMILION RIVER WATERSHED FORESTS?

AVOIDANCE OF FOREST FRAGMENTATION DUE TO SELLING PUBLIC PROPERTIES (EG TAX FORFEITED) OR MORE STRATEGIC APPROACH TO LAND SALES. NOT ALL PROPERTY SHOULD BE PASSED INTO PRIVATE OWNERSHIP JUST TO INCREASE THE TAX BASE. THE WATERSHED IS A UNIQUE AREA AND VALUE SHOULD BE PLACED ON THE AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC PROPERTIES FOR USE AND ENJOYMENT OF RESIDENTS AND VISITORS ALIKE.

EDUCATE LANDOWNERS CLOSEST TO RIVERS AND LAKES HOW TO KEEP RUNOFF OF WATER UNDER CONTROL. KEEP POLLUTANTS CONTAINED AND EDUCATE HOW TO LESSEN THEM.

MORE NATURAL RESOURCE STAFF & FUNDING TO HELP PROTECT FORESTS & EDUCATE PEOPLE.

RESTORATION OF FIRE TO THE LANDSCAPE

REALLY UNSURE - DON'T KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT EXISTING ISSUES

AWARENESS

LISTEN TO A BROAD RANGE OF PROPERTY OWNERS, LARGE AND SMALL. ENCOURAGE PLANS FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO ALLOW FOR FARMING, DEVELOPMENT AND ENJOYMENT IN WAYS THAT LET FORESTS FLOURISH FOR ALL TO ENJOY.

PREVENTING FOREST FIRES BY HARVESTING TIMBER IN THE WATERSHED WHEN IT'S MATURE

HOPEFULLY BOTH

INCENTIVIZE PRIVATE LAND OWNERS TO FORM LOCAL COOPERATIVES VIA SUSTAINED MONETARY AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

MORE ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION.

PROTECT AND CONSERVE OLD GROWTH FORESTS FOR ANIMAL/BIRD SPECIES HABITAT. REGULATE FOR SUSTAINABLE LOGGING. REFOREST WITH CLIMATE ADAPTIVE TREE SPECIES. PROTECT FORESTED RIPARIAN AREAS.

PRESCRIBED BURNS FOR ECOLOGICAL BENEFITS.

COUNTY COULD WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF MN EXTENSION AND LAND OWNERS TO EDUCATE AND ENGAGE CITIZENS.

MORE EDUCATION

MORE EDUCATION OF ALL LANDOWNERS BOTH PRIVATE AND COMMERCIAL



Rainy Headwaters- Vermilion Watershed Public Kickoff Meeting Report - 2022



IN A SENTENCE OR TWO, WHAT DO YOU THINK COULD BE DONE TO PROTECT OR IMPROVE FISH HABITAT?

EDUCATION ON STREAM VALUE AND HOW ADJACENT LAND USES CAN EFFECT STREAMS AND FISH HABITATS.
ELIMINATE AS MUCH EROSION AS POSSIBLE TO KEEP SOIL AND FORESTS HEALTHY. EDUCATE THE LANDOWNERS HOW TO USE BUT NOT ABUSE THEIR LAND. CONTAIN OR LESSEN POLLUTANTS.
MORE NATURAL RESOURCE STAFF & FUNDING IS NEEDED TO HELP EDUCATE PEOPLE
STRONGER STANDARDS FOR WATER QUALITY, LIMITED INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY, FOREST HEALTH
REDUCE SOURCES OF CONTAMINATED RUNOFF INTO STREAMS. IMPROVE AWARENESS OF THE WATERSHED'S STREAMS - LOCATION, ANIMALS/FISH, VALUE TO ENVIRONMENT
CLEAN WATER
WORK WITH PROPERTY OWNERS TO SUPPORT GOOD PRACTICES ALREADY IN USE, AND ENCOURAGE BETTER PRACTICES WHERE APPROPRIATE
NATURAL DAMNS AT PIKE RIVER AND WINTON
I AM NOT AN EXPERT BUT WANT ALL PEOPLE INVOLVED IN PROTECTING OUR WATERS , PEOPLE, ANIMALS AND FISH. KNOWLEDGE IS POWER AND I BELIEVE YOUR PEOPLE HAVE THAT TO SHARE.
MORE INFORMATION!
MORE EDUCATION FOR FISHERMEN AND WOMEN
STOP TRAPPING BEAVERS.

IN A SENTENCE OR TWO, WHAT DO YOU THINK COULD BE DONE TO PROTECT OR IMPROVE WETLANDS?

INCREASED KNOWLEDGE OF THE IMPORTANT ROLE WETLANDS PLAY ON THE UNIQUE WATERSHEDS IN OUR AREA. WETLANDS COULD BE CONSIDERED VALUABLE RESOURCES TO ECOSYSTEMS & NOT AS HEAVILY VIEWED FOR THE MONETARY VALUE ASSOCIATED WITH SUCH THINGS AS WETLAND BANKS OR WETLAND MITIGATION IN OTHER AREAS OUTSIDE WATERSHED BOUNDARIES.
MORE MONITORING SITES TO GAUGE WETLAND QUALITY AND A PROCESS TO REPAIR WHEN FEASIBLE. DO NOT DECREASE TOTAL WETLAND AREA.
MORE NATURAL RESOURCE STAFF & FUNDING IS NEEDED TO EDUCATE PEOPLE SO POSITIVE CHANGE HAPPENS.
NO WETLAND DESTRUCTION ALLOWED
PUBLIC EDUCATION ON HOW WETLANDS FUNCTION AND THEIR VALUE TO OTHER WATERSHED RESOURCES; MAP OF THE MOST IMPORTANT WETLANDS IN THE WATERSHED?
PROTECTION
EDUCATE AND SUPPORT WAYS PEOPLE CAN ACCESS AND ENJOY WETLANDS APPROPRIATELY, SO THEY ARE NOT JUST SEEN AS WASTED AREAS.
NOTHING, MAINTAIN
SORRY TO BE REPETITIVE BUT ENFORCEMENT AND EDUCATION AND FUNDING ARE WHAT COMES TO MIND
MORE INFORMATION!
MORE EDUCATION ABOUT WETLANDS
PERMANENT PROTECTION AGAINST SULFIDE MINING IN THE WATERSHED
HIGHER GOVERNMENTAL REGULATIONS TO PROTECT WETLANDS.
DON'T FILL THEM IN FOR CONSTRUCTION



Rainy Headwaters- Vermilion Watershed Public Kickoff Meeting Report - 2022



IN A SENTENCE OR TWO, WHAT DO YOU THINK COULD BE DONE TO PROTECT WATER QUALITY WITH AGRICULTURE?

SUPPORT GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES IN USE, LISTEN TO FARMERS ABOUT THEIR NEEDS AND CONCERNS.

NOTHING

FEED LOT DAMAGE NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED AND BUSINESS NEEDS TO BE WORKED WITH TO REACH A SHARED WIN WIN GOAL FOR ALL

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CURRENT SITUATION AND POTENTIAL IMPACT OF MAKING CHANGES.

MORE EDUCATION

KEEP CATTLE AWAY FROM STREAMS AND LAKES. TWO-STAGE DITCHES TO REDUCE EROSION AND BUFFERS BETWEEN AG LAND AND WATER.

NO TILL MANAGEMENT.

EDUCATION

IN A SENTENCE OR TWO, WHAT DO YOU THINK COULD BE DONE TO PROTECT OR IMPROVE GROUNDWATER QUALITY?

MORE EDUCATION AND FUNDING FOR LAND OWNERS. INCREASED ENFORCEMENT OF REGULATIONS FOR LARGE INDUSTRIES THAT MAY IMPACT GROUNDWATER CAPACITY AND QUALITY.

INCREASE WELL WATER QUALITY TESTING AND EDUCATE WELL OWNERS ON PROTECTING THE WATER.

MORE GROUNDWATER STAFF & FUNDING IS NEEDED TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC

STRONGER RULES TO PROTECT GROUNDWATER

WATERSHED - WIDE SAMPLING TO DETERMINE A BASELINE OF EXISTING ISSUES OR CONCERNS; DETERMINE ACTION STEPS FROM THOSE RESULTS?

ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING

INCREASED ABILITY FOR PROPERTY OWNERS TO GET WATER TESTED MORE CONVENIENTLY

BUILD INDUSTRY AND BRING MORE MONEY TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO INFRASTRUCTURE

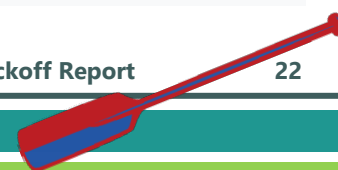
ENFORCEMENT AT THE TOWNSHIP LEVELS WOULD BE A GOOD START WITH PENALTIES FOR NON COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW. THIS SHOULD GO ALL THE WAY UP!

MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS TO MONITOR AND IMPROVE (WHERE NEEDED) PRIVATE WELLS.

MORE EDUCATION ABOUT GROUND WATER.

INCREASE CITIZEN AWARENESS. COST-SHARE WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ON TREATMENT FACILITIES.

MORE EDUCATION ON GROUND WATER.



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IN A SENTENCE OR TWO, WHAT DO YOU THINK COULD BE DONE TO PROTECT OR IMPROVE WATER QUALITY WHEN IT COMES TO STORMWATER?

MONITOR AREAS PRONE TO FLOODING AND FIX WHERE FEASIBLE BUT ALWAYS EDUCATE LANDOWNERS
MORE STORMWATER STAFF & FUNDING IS NEEDED TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC & MAKE CHANGES
LESS IMPERVIOUS SURFACE

INSUFFICIENT KNOWLEDGE TO FORMULATE A RESPONSE.

ALL IS WELL

HELPING PROPERTY OWNERS UNDERSTAND THEIR IMPACT ON NEIGHBORING PROPERTY - HOW THEIR
CHANGES IN STORM WATER FLOW CAN IMPACT OTHERS

ENGINEER REPORTS THAT GET SOME NOTICE

MORE INFORMATION

MORE EDUCATION

INCREASE CULVERTS AND DRAINAGE AREA, ALSO IMPROVING WETLANDS ALLEVIATES THIS PROBLEM.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

What is your biggest concern related to your experiences related to the Rainy River Headwater/Vermilion River Watershed (DOES NOT HAVE TO BE WATER RELATED)

Lack of understanding of watershed issues by policy makers.

Large weather or fire events

Too many uninformed people causing more damage in our watershed.

Sulfide mining (2)

sulfide-ore copper mining (2)

Aquatic Invasive Species (2)

Government overreach

Poor lake level management

Causing undue burdens to property owners because of perceived concerns by visitors. Educating people who do not live in the watershed about their impact while helping them understand that things like invasive species are ALSO spread by wildlife, waterfowl and more. Concerned about increased ATV use and the erosion that can be caused by these vehicles.

People buying shoreline and building cabins

That the people who live on the water, have business on or related to the water, use the waters for recreation, etc. care about now and future generations use of these lovely waters.

Pollution and invasive species in water and forests.

fire management. we were lucky this summer but the time is coming when Greenwood fire like events will be harder and harder to dodge

Copper nickel mining potential for damaging watershed

Proposed sulfide mining (2)

Wildfire danger due to excessive fuel loads in our forests - logging is not the solution because it increases smaller more fire prone forest types.



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My biggest concern for the area is seasonal home owners who do not stay in their homes lengths at a time and are not connected with the community. They have a large stake and ability to help with a variety of problems but will not be involved due to their accessibility.

Toxic mining!

Sulfide mining- the real elephant in the room

Maintaining and improving water quality

Maintaining assessing and improving water quality where needed

If you could magically improve one water resource in the watershed today, which problem would you fix?

- Better management and protection of lake and stream shorelines/ Lake Pollution
- Pelican Lake
- Wetland restoration/ Wetlands (3)/ The removal of wetlands
- Water quality degradation by industrial activities/ Permanent ban on sulfide mining
- Water quality- lakes then rivers/streams then wetlands
- Aquatic Invasive Species (2)
- Rivers / River-less flooding
- Groundwater (2)
- Mitigating flooding
- Restore forests using prescribed burns
- Water entering Vermilion, too much sulfate from mining
- Buckthorn removal and early detection
- Keeping livestock and feedlots a good distance from waterways
- Ensure all wastewater treatment systems are built correctly and are maintained to meet all contaminants regulated
- Better wastewater treatment by cabins/homes

Considering the current rate of land use change in the watershed, what do you think Rainy River Headwaters/Vermilion River Watershed will look like in 50 years?

Decreased protection of valuable water resources or status quo.

Slowly decline in quality

If too many people destroy watershed instead of protect it or restore it, things will get bad.

more residential impact

Sudbury Ont

Not drastically different than today

More developed than today

More users will be enjoying the watershed, which will hopefully make more resources available to manage it. Property owners will be good stewards. Government will work to support private landowners in their stewardship efforts.

Lake minnetonka

Improving each year with financial support from federal and private contributions.

Degraded by invasive species and water pollution.



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More diverse forest, more protected waterways
Decreased biodiversity and pollution from sulfide mining
Oak savanas

I think there will be a lot more large seasonal homes that get used once or twice a summer. This will have more used land but not people present and ready for managing their land. I see a lot more extreme droughts and floods occurring, and the need to adapt to those "problems"

If mining is allowed, the future is doomed.

Too much concrete in the world

Depends on mining

Decreased biodiversity due to climate change and invasives

Warmer water temps, unsafe drinking water in some BWCA lakes. Hopefully same # homes - BWCA protection

Hopefully it changes less than other areas with climate change given our less structured (concrete) environment.

Expect vegetation and wildlife changes

What would you like the watershed to look like in 50 years?

Increased protection

Stay the same or slightly improve

I would like much more watershed, streams, rivers, lakes, forests, wetlands protected.

ecologically healthy

Improved water and forest conditions for human and wildlife use. Hopefully, only a limited amount of further development

No change

A similar blend of developed and wilderness areas as we have today

Developed without significant negative impact

A thriving mix of woods, meadows, peat bogs, streams, rivers and lakes that have some developed areas and undeveloped areas. Where people are thoughtful about their impact on the watershed

Rainy lake shoreline currently

Better and more understood in order to be cared for by all people.

Better plant, tree and wildlife diversity and health. Protection of water quality.

Pristine water, careful management of resources.

Permanently protected from sulfide mining and protections/regulations that maintain the current water quality.

Clean water with oak svanas

In 50 years I would love this watershed to have great protection and a community that wants to do the best for the watershed and not just their property.

As pristine as possible. Drink straight from the lakes

