

Appendix B

Documented Public Input

MEMO TO: FILE
DATE: OCTOBER 20, 2009
RE: INFORMAL SURVEY RESULTS FROM CRA BIENNIAL MEETING

METHOD: A small piece of paper with a single question on the front side and an optional name and association checklist on the back-side was placed at 120 seats at CRA's Biennial Meeting on October 28, 2009. A total of 25 people completed the form with a serious response and 2 additional obvious "joke" responses were received and are not included in this summary. 5 people completed the optional side without giving an answer to the question. 2 of these people are known to have responded to the SurveyMonkey long survey. The other 3 people plus the 18 people who completed the question and completed the optional side with an email address were added to the SurveyMonkey.com data base and sent a short version of the original SurveyMonkey.com survey. Several other people were present who did not complete a survey form but who were known to complete the electronic version. The paper responses are summarized in this memo.

QUESTION: What is the biggest threat to the natural resources of Northwest Lower Michigan?

RESPONSES: The responses have been paraphrased and some people listed more than one item.

THREAT GIVEN	# WHO GAVE THIS
Invasive or Non-native Species	11
Lack of a recognized Invasive Species (treatment) Plan	1
People/humans	4
Uncontrolled/over development/Habitat fragmentation Sprawl/large to small parcels of land	6
Great Lakes shipping / Ballast water discharge	2
Water withdraw for commercial sales	2
Water quality and ecosystem damage and sediment	1
Fish Disease	1
Public apathy toward natural resource preservation	1
Loss of DNR funding	1
Precarious health of farming industry (especially cherries)	1
Conflicting and overly complicated regulations for landowners	1

Submitted by:
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Area RC&D Coordinator

Survey Monkey Results Public Input and Comments Summary

The SurveyMonkey.com survey was one of several methods used to obtain public input on the development of Conservation Resource Alliance's (CRA) Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area Plan 2010-2015 Update. The Area Plan and public input are requirements of the USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) and the National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils (NARC&DC). CRA was formed in 1968 as Michigan's first RC&D Council.

A total of 127 people responded to at least some of the questions on the long form version and 9 people responded to the questions on the short form version with an additional 2 people returning paper forms of the short version. This resulted in 138 responses from the public. Fifty hard copy versions were picked up from various meetings, multiple copies were sent at the request of three people and 232 long versions and 21 short version electronic invitations were sent out for a total of 308 invitations. Two reminders were sent to non-responders of the long version survey invitation, which generated a few more responses each time. The overall response rate was 44.8% from the combined targeted survey audience.

The contact list for the long version survey was developed from County and municipal websites and the USDA-NRCS RC&D's Coordinator's contact list rather than being restricted to Conservation Resource Alliance's (CRA's) working contact lists. Although there was some overlap between CRA's working contact lists and the Coordinator's list, especially for agency personnel, the intent was to reach new audiences who might contribute a fresh perspective about CRA and about the needs of the RC&D Area. The electronic contact list for the short survey was generated from people who attended CRA's Biennial meeting (10/28/2009) and who left their contact information on the table-top survey. People who received the long-version survey were not sent the short-version survey.

The main difference between the long and short survey forms was the number of opportunities provided for added comments. The short version had a single opportunity at the end of the questions. The long version included a comment opportunity after most questions. The results of the non-comment questions from the long and short electronic versions and the paper versions are combined for purposes of this summary. The combined number of responses for a specific question and/or line of a question is given as (n=).

Many comments received have been paraphrased and entered into lists of "Threats", "Needs", "Solutions" and/or "Opportunities". An attempt was made in this document to reduce duplication in the lists; ideas often appeared in the responses to more than one question so if it is listed in one list, it was most likely not included every time it was provided.

Residency and Familiarity

Ninety-two of the people who answered the question (n=124) have either a primary or secondary residency located on property within CRA's 13-county service area. Several others live in one of

the neighboring counties. The vast majority claimed to be permanent rather than seasonal residents of the area (126 permanent to 7 seasonal ; n=133).

When asked about the length of time spent in Northern Lower Michigan in a typical year (n=130) 61.5% responded that they live in the area full time (9 to 12 months); 33.1 % visit for one month or less each year and the remaining 5.4% live in the area between one and nine months. The question did not ask which months were spent in the area.

Brand Recognition

No organization or program received 100% “yes” responses as being known to the responders prior to taking the survey. As might be expected, State and Federal agencies had the highest recognition scores. A few people may have answered yes to everything: This is suggested by the 12.9% (n=116) of the people who responded “Yes” to recognizing the single fictitious organization in the list. The fictitious organization had a name that contained a number of key words that tend to be found in legitimately named organizations. The made-up organization name was “Googled” prior to its inclusion in the survey and did not appear on the Google search. A total of 135 answered some part of the brand recognition question; the response count per line in the question ranged from n=116 to n=135. The results below are percentages based on the number of people who answered each entry. It was not assumed that a skipped answer was a “no” answer although most likely it was a negative response.

Figures 1-4 illustrate the percent of responders who answered yes to having been previously aware of CRA in relation to the percent of responders who were previously aware of selected Federal and State Agencies; National Non-Profit Organizations (NPO’s); Statewide NPO’s or Associations; and Regional NPO’s operating within the CRA RC&D Area:

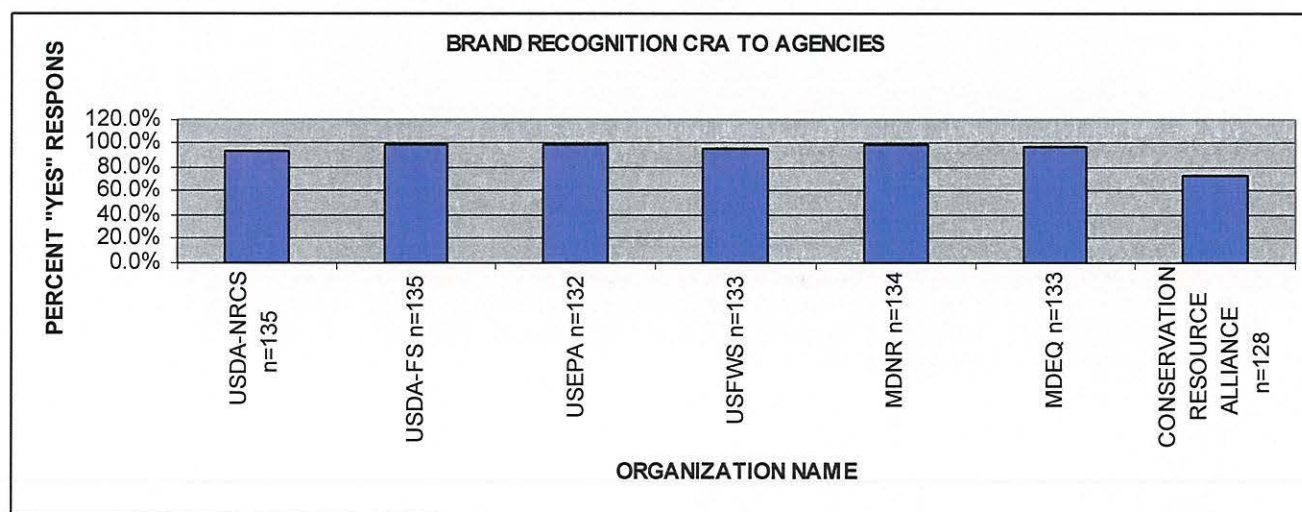


Figure 1. Comparison of Brand Recognition of Conservation Resource Alliance to selected Federal and State resource agencies: USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); USDA-Forest Service (FS); US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA); US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ).

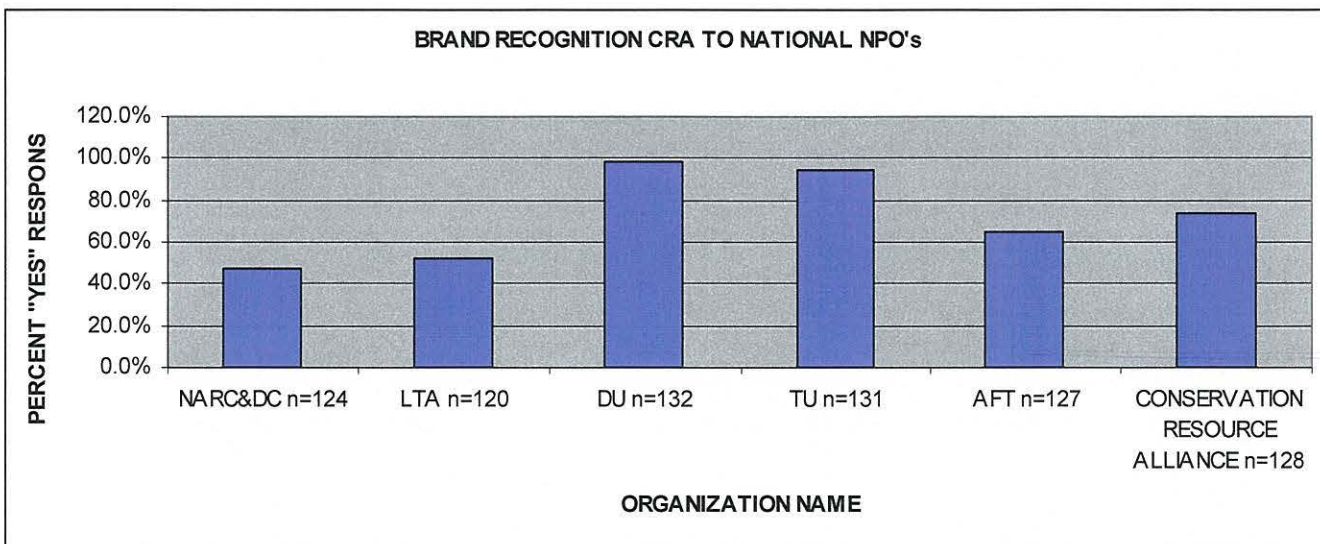


Figure 2. Comparison of Brand Recognition of Conservation Resource Alliance to selected National Organizations: National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils (NARC&DC); Land Trust Alliance (LTA); Ducks Unlimited (DU); Trout Unlimited (TU); American Farmland Trust (AFT).

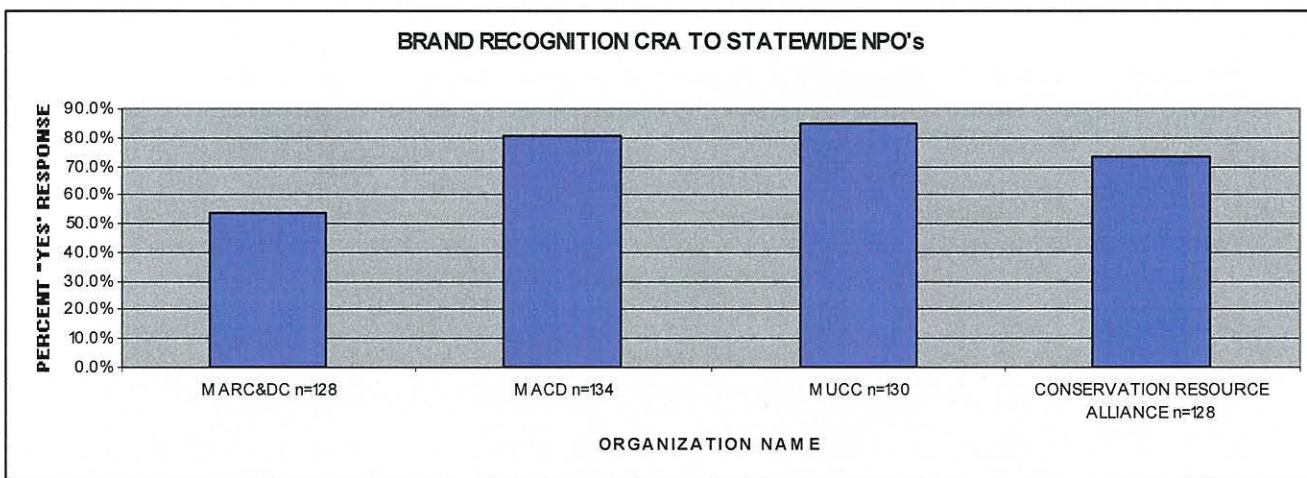


Figure 3. Comparison of Brand Recognition of Conservation Resource Alliance to selected Michigan Statewide Organizations: Michigan Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils (MARC&DC); Michigan Association of Conservation Districts (MACD); and Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC).

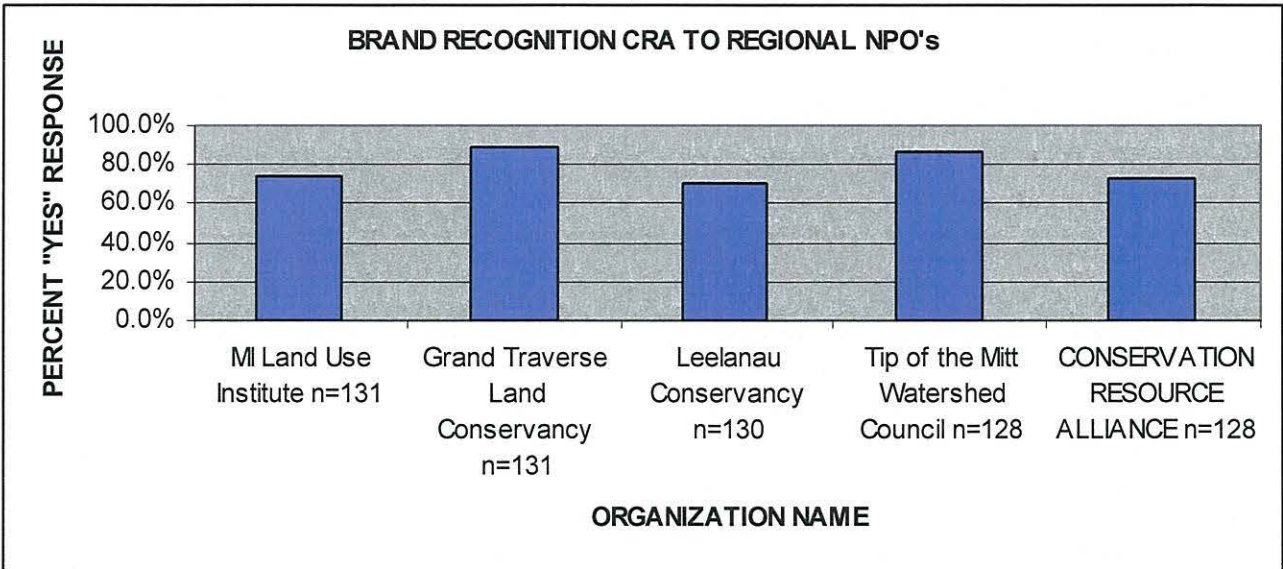


Figure 4. Comparison of Brand Recognition of Conservation Resource Alliance to selected Regional NPO's that operate within CRA's RC&D Area and often partner or cooperate with CRA on specific projects.

Conservation Resource Alliance developed two umbrella programs, River Care and Wild Link, which are used to help fund-raise and disperse funds for on-the-ground work. The USDA-NRCS and the US Fish and Wildlife Service also use a program approach for delivering Federal Funds to the local level. The Federal programs are national programs available in every state. Figure 5 shows the percent of positive responses of people who had heard of these programs prior to taking the survey.

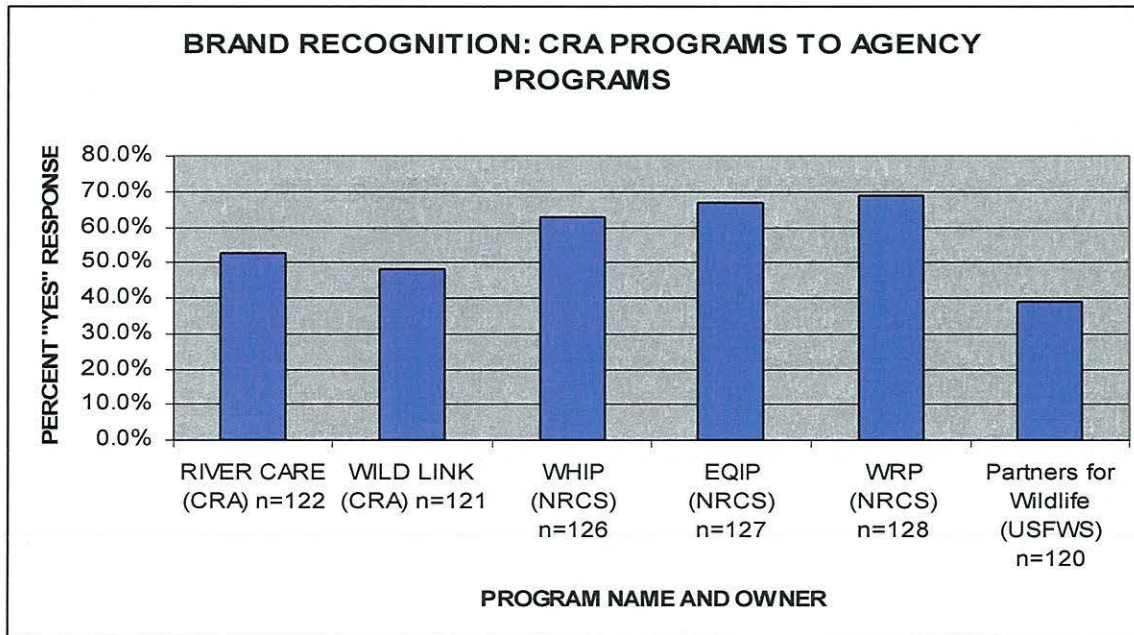


Figure 5. Comparison of Brand Recognition of Conservation Resource Alliance Programs (River Care and Wild Link) to Federal Agency Programs (WHIP= Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program; EQIP= Environmental Quality Incentive Program; WRP= Wetland Reserve Program; and Partners for Wildlife).

Where Water Quality and/or Habitat Work Is Needed

Survey takers were asked to rate their general perception of the need for restoration work in twenty-one waterways located in CRA's RC&D Area. A high percentage of people answering the question chose the "I do not know" option for many of the watersheds. This may suggest a need for more waterbody-specific education as might be concluded from a few of the written comments. However, it may also indicate that people tend to spend most of their time in only a few of the waters and these are the ones where they felt qualified to offer an opinion. The question did not present any qualifying criteria or measure for people to rate the waterways against. Even with the limitations of the question, the higher percentage of responses for the "some work is needed" over the "very much work is needed" appears to support an overall perception that Northern Lower Michigan Waters are in relatively good shape. The fewest people answered "I do not know" for the Grand Traverse Bay and the Lake Michigan Shoreline. More than half of the responders felt that some work was needed and another quarter of the responders felt that very much work was needed on these waterways.

Table 1 shows the summary results of all responses for the question:

Table 1. The perception of need for restoration effort in selected water bodies located in Conservation Resource Alliance's 13-county area shown in percent of responses to the question.				
Water Body Name	Very much work is needed	Some work is needed	No work is needed	I do not know
Grand Traverse Bay (n=105)	24.9%	52.4%	2.9%	20%
Lake Michigan Shoreline (n=106)	27.4%	56.6%	2.8%	15.9%
Carp River (n=104)	3.8%	23.1%	1.9%	71.2%
Maple River (n=103)	7.8%	22.3%	1.9%	68.0%
Bear River (n=102)	5.9%	26.5%	1.0%	66.7%
Boyne River (n=102)	5.9%	26.5%	1.0%	66.7%
Lake Charlevoix (n=104)	5.8%	42.3%	4.9%	48.1%
Jordan River (n=103)	4.9%	47.6%	4.9%	42.7%
Chain of Lakes (n=103)	4.9%	40.8%	1.9%	52.4%
Lake Leelanau (n=102)	4.9%	32.4%	0.9%	61.8%
Long Lake (n=102)	6.9%	26.5%	2.9%	63.7%
Boardman River (n=103)	24.3%	35.9%	1.0%	38.8%
Platte River (n=103)	10.7%	41.7%	1.9%	45.6%
Betsie River (n=101)	9.9%	39.6%	0.9%	49.5%
Manistee River (n=102)	18.6%	50.0%	2.9%	28.4%
Pine River (n=103)	12.6%	35.9%	1.0%	49.5%
Little Manistee River (n=103)	8.7%	35.9%	1.9%	53.4%
Bear Creek (n=101)	5.9%	28.7%	2.0%	63.4%
Big Sable River (n=102)	8.8%	23.5%	2.0%	66.7%
Pere Marquette River (n=104)	9.6%	31.7%	1.9%	57.7%
Baldwin River (n=98)	10.2%	19.4%	1.0%	69.4%

Table 2 shows the same data adjusted to remove the "I do not know" category and is based on the assumption that the people who responded had some internal criteria that they used to rate the need for work. There was no question requesting responders to rank the waterways relative to each other, nor was there a question in this survey that asked which water body needed the most

work. One conclusion from the results is that there remains a perception of need for CRA to be working on projects in all the watersheds where they are currently working.

Table 2. The perception of need for restoration effort in selected water bodies located in Conservation Resource Alliance's 13-county area shown in percent of responses to the question of responders that did not say "I do not know".

Water Body Name	Very much work is needed	Some work is needed	No work is needed
Grand Traverse Bay (n=84)	31.0%	65.5%	3.6%
Lake Michigan Shoreline (n=90)	32.2%	66.7%	3.3%
Carp River (n=30)	13.3%	86.7%	6.7%
Maple River (n=33)	24.2%	69.7%	6.1%
Bear River (n=34)	17.6%	79.4%	2.9%
Boyne River (n=34)	17.6%	79.4%	2.9%
Lake Charlevoix (n=54)	11.1%	81.5%	4.8%
Jordan River (n=59)	8.5%	83.1%	8.5%
Chain of Lakes (n=49)	10.2%	85.7%	4.1%
Lake Leelanau (n=39)	12.8%	84.6%	2.6%
Long Lake (n=37)	18.9%	73.0%	8.1%
Boardman River (n=63)	39.7%	58.7%	1.6%
Platte River (n=56)	19.6%	76.8%	3.6%
Betsie River (n=51)	19.6%	78.4%	2.0%
Manistee River (n=73)	26.0%	69.9%	4.1%
Pine River (n=52)	25.0%	71.1%	3.8%
Little Manistee River (n=48)	18.8%	77.1%	4.2%
Bear Creek (n=37)	16.2%	78.4%	5.4%
Big Sable River (n=34)	26.5%	70.6%	5.9%
Pere Marquette River (n=44)	22.7%	75.0%	4.5%
Baldwin River (n=30)	33.3%	63.3%	3.3%

There were twenty written comments received for this question. A couple comments addressed difficulties with the question itself and a lack of definition for terms like "restoration" and "improvements". One comment questioned why Torch Lake was not on the list. Most of the comments referred to the responder's personal lack of qualifications or specific knowledge of the waterways and were given as explanation for the responder's choices. A few comments contained statements about specific threats to the water. These can be used as public input for the "Threats or Needs" analysis of the Area Plan:

THREATS:

1. Septic and lawn issues
2. Dams and restricted fish passage
3. Lack of a process for distinguishing between rivers that are recovering on their own and should be left alone and those that have an unnatural sedimentation problem that can be addressed with BMPs.
4. Lack of protection and preservation of aquatic habitats.
5. Runoff and stand traps in trout streams issues
6. (Lack of) River manners for users
7. Equal users access issues

A related question on the long-version of the survey asked for information about any specific problems on a Northwest Lower Michigan waterway or water-related work that needs to be accomplished. Twenty-two comments provided enough information to restrict the problem or issue description to a Northwest Lower Michigan water which is needed for purposes of CRA's Area Plan Update. Ten of the comments were either too vague to be helpful, addressed waterways not in CRA's Area, or just said "no" they didn't know of any specific problems. The comments are paraphrased and summarized below as public perceived needs and threats of the water resources:

NEEDS:

1. Support of volunteer group efforts that remove trash from rivers and shorelines.
2. There are seven undersized culverts in the Upper Manistee River (Mecum Road?)
3. Provide incentives to increase separation between cattle production and natural waterways.
4. More woody debris needed in Pine River below M-37
5. Wendy's Loop between Dobson's Bridge and M-37 needs repair and overuse restrictions
6. Work to eliminate invasive plant and fish species on Grand Traverse Bay.
7. Preservation of the 100-year old High Roll Away in Wexford County (from trees and vegetation)
8. Culvert replacement on Iron Ore Creek on Beaver Island.
9. Baseline biological and hydrological survey work on waterways.
10. Boardman Dams removal (upper three) and modify lower dam to control fish passage.
11. Address algae blooms in Lake Michigan.
12. Removal of dam at Lake Dubonnet on the headwaters of Platte river in Grand Traverse County.
13. Stabilization of two large stream bank erosion sites on the Pere Marquette River west of Scottville Road.
14. Road stream crossing on Dennis Creek above Hamlin Lake bayou and control of sediment above the bridge.

THREATS (in addition to the list above):

1. Crooked Lake in Emmett County receiving farm and lawn fertilizer runoff
2. Sand in the Maple River
3. Pere Marquette River Lamprey spawning grounds are moving upstream due to the size of the rock used to stabilize the stream banks in association with some of the road stream crossing improvements.
4. Erosion at Coster Road-Manistee River crossing and the nearby access site in Kalkaska County.
5. Algae-covered beaches on Mission Peninsula
6. Leland Harbor dredging
7. Bay Harbor leachate

Work Activities:

Two of the survey questions were related to the type of work activities CRA typically does with volunteers and partners during the course of a water or terrestrial habitat restoration project. The items listed were examples of work that CRA does and not intended to be all-inclusive. An additional question was a request for responders to suggest other needed work activities that were not listed in the other two questions. Relatively fewer responders choose the “I do not know” option for these questions. In general it appears that most of the tangible work activities performed by CRA are perceived by the public to be “important”. None of the activities ranked above 13.5% as “not needed”, with the highest not needed percentages received for: Installing and cleaning sand traps; conducting water temperature studies; adding fish habitat structures; and improving public access. The highest percentage scores for work perceived as “most important” were received by: Controlling sediment and re-vegetating stream banks; repairing crushed culverts; removing exotic plant species; and restoring historic wetlands. The two work item questions that asked responders to rate the importance of the activity are combined and the results are shown in Table 3:

ACTIVITY	Is most important %	Is kind of important %	Is not needed %	I do not know %
Repairing stream bank erosion (n=105)	54.3	41.0	2.9	1.9
Controlling sediment from unpaved roadways (n=106)	67.9	27.4	2.3	1.9
Replacing under-sized culverts (n=105)	57.1	35.2	2.9	5.7
Repairing broken/crushed culverts (n=105)	67.6	28.6	0.9	2.9
Re-vegetating stream banks (n=106)	67.9	24.5	2.8	4.7
Removing small dams (n=105)	42.9	39.0	7.6	10.5
Improving public access to water (n=105)	36.2	47.6	10.5	5.7
Removing exotic plant species (n=105) ^{RC}	64.8	31.4	1.9	2.9
Conducting Water Temperature Studies (n=103)	29.1	51.5	11.7	7.8
Conducting Water Quality Studies (n=103)	39.8	54.4	2.9	2.9
Adding fish habitat structures to waters (n=104)	33.7	48.1	10.6	7.7
Installing and cleaning sand traps (n=104)	35.6	35.6	13.5	14.4
Conducting Fish Population Studies (n=105)	32.4	52.4	6.7	8.6
Infrastructure improvements (n=100)	41.0	37.0	5.0	16.0
Writing Land Management Plans for landowners (n=107)	58.9	29.9	3.7	7.5
Planting trees and shrubs (n=106)	51.9	35.8	4.7	7.5
Removing exotic plant species (n=105) ^{WL}	66.7	28.6	0.9	4.8
Constructing brush piles or other types of wildlife cover (n=105)	24.8	54.3	9.5	11.4
Conducting controlled burns (n=106)	33.0	49.1	6.6	14.2
Planting native plants (n=105)	55.2	38.1	2.9	4.8
Restoring historic wetlands (n=105)	65.7	26.7	3.8	3.8
Providing introductions to resource agency personnel (n=104)	48.6	37.5	4.8	8.7
^{RC} Result is from the question targeted at River Care specific activities.				
^{WL} Result is from the question targeted at Wild Link specific activities.				

There were twenty comments received on the River Care target question and fourteen comments received on the Wild Link target question. Some responders alluded to the need for activities being site-specific or project (goal) specific and some addressed a need for pre-determining and prioritizing erosion control work based on “natural versus anthropogenic” causes of the problem. Others recognized and stated the inter-relatedness of the activities given in the questions. There were comments that indicated that enough studies were done or were done by others and still others that suggested the value of evaluating a problem before taking action as well as monitoring work that was previously done for effectiveness. There was a comment that stated it the question sounded like a “make work” question and another that expressed there are “too many chiefs” and not enough agencies cooperating with one another. There was a comment that stated additional public access is not needed and another one that did not support adding fish structures to waters because they were not natural. There were suggestions for fewer individual property management plans; developing plug-in templates; and developing a landscape scale management plan; and there were reminders that Conservation Easements and Zoning were appropriate tools to use in restoration work. The comments received for the questions above along with the responses to the question about suggestions for other wildlife habitat work that may be needed on private or public land in Northwest Lower Michigan that could be paraphrased and added to *CRA’s RC&D Area Plan 2010-2015 Update Needs* are listed below:

NEEDS:

1. Better information about sand trap size, placement, effectiveness (see MDNR current investigation when results are available)
2. Better communication and coordination among disparate entities
3. Better tools for measuring costs and benefits of work
4. Increase preservation efforts through Conservation Easements and Land Use Ordinances (Wild Link Corridors)
5. Better documentation and reporting of coupling restoration work and biological communities’ response(s)
6. Increased general public’s education and understanding about what a property management plan is and how they are used.
7. Better education about and increased communication of the connection between the value of land preservation and the overall economic health of the region
8. Reduce deer populations where they are over browsing native vegetation
9. Landscape planning to include multiple habitat types (i.e. include open space and grasslands; landscape mosaic) in Wild Link Corridor (Master) Plan
10. Coordinate programs to encourage neighbor-to-neighbor or unified habitat management
11. Evaluate if there is a decline in American Woodcock populations and if there is a habitat-change relationship that can be remedied.
12. Evaluate need for and/or more implementation of Early Successional Timber Management
13. Increase public awareness of function and importance of woody debris on the terrestrial landscape.

THREATS:

1. Increased interest in the use of “tops” and woody debris for biomass energy production (or various types)
2. Continued decline of pre-settlement habitats (Warm season grass prairies and barrens)

Community Service and Benefits:

The nature of CRA’s work includes coordination with the community at large and is effective because of the project integrated services that are provided during the process of developing and implementing projects. CRA does not advertise these services or consider them to be primary focus areas. A three-part question on the long-version form of the survey asked how many of the services the responder were aware of; to provide their perception as to whether the quality of the service was “Good”, “Fair”, “Poor” or “I don’t know”; there was also a comment section to allow responders and opportunity to give a reason for their answers. This may have been a poorly designed question because the comment part of this question did not in actuality function to provide specific reasons for the responder’s reason for their answer. There were only ten comments provided for the question and five of those comments were statements that the responders were not that familiar with CRA as an organization. These people most likely responded as not knowing about the services provided and for selecting the “I don’t know” option. One additional comment indicated the survey taker did not respond to the question because he/she felt it was poorly presented. There were people on the survey invitation list who were expected to have knowledge of the natural resources and/or economic situation of Northwest Lower Michigan but who may not have knowledge of CRA. One of the comments was a thank-you for providing information about CRA that was not previously known to the survey-taker. One comment presented the opinion that these are more internal operating functions than services to the community. This person also stated that he/she did not attempt to rate the relative quality of the services (or in this case, *functions*). This is a perceptive comment that addresses an inherent difficulty of finding universal language and terminology that can be understood by business people, government people, and the general public. It is difficult to obtain transparency without a universal understanding of the terms to be used for reporting. Table 4 shows the percentage of responses received for each service:

Table 4. Public knowledge of and rating of selected community services provided by Conservation Resource Alliance.					
SERVICE	YES: Aware of the service %	GOOD %	FAIR %	POOR %	I DON'T KNOW %
Project-specific fundraising (n=81)	67.9	65.7	10.0	0.0	24.3
Grant management (n=93)	73.5	62.0	7.0	1.4	29.6
Job creation (n=80)	43.8	35.5	16.1	1.6	46.8
Job retention (n=79)	35.4	33.9	9.7	1.6	54.8
Project development (n=82)	80.5	75.4	13.0	1.4	10.1
Public meeting facilitation (n=81)	54.3	50.0	19.7	0.0	30.3
Public media events (n= 81)	63.8	50.0	25.8	1.5	22.7
Youth events (n=78)	50.0	47.6	14.3	0.0	38.1
Education and training opportunities (n=80)	70.0	67.2	9.0	0.0	23.9
Volunteer work parties (n=80)	72.5	63.8	13.0	0.0	23.2
Project Management (n=81)	80.2	66.7	15.3	0.0	18.1

Natural resources surveys (n=79)	67.1	53.7	22.4	1.5	22.4
Helping other organizations meet their missions (n=79)	63.3	56.1	12.1	1.5	30.3
Project promotional activities (n=77)	62.3	38.2	16.2	1.5	44.1

This question was presented differently in the electronic and paper short-version formats than it was in the long-version electronic survey. The responders' pool was much smaller and the results are presented in Table 5:

Table 5. Public knowledge perception of the need for selected community services provided by Conservation Resource Alliance.				
SERVICE (N=10 for all)	Is very Important %	Is nice, but not crucial %	Is not needed %	I DON'T KNOW %
Project-specific fundraising	80	10	0	10
Grant management	80	10	0	10
Job creation	70	20	0	10
Job retention	70	10	0	20
Project development	90	0	0	10
Public meeting facilitation	80	10	0	10
Public media events	70	20	0	10
Youth events	70	20	0	10
Education and training opportunities	70	20	0	10
Volunteer work parties	80	10	0	10
Project Management	90	0	0	10
Natural resources surveys	60	30	0	10
Helping other organizations meet their missions	30	60	0	10
Project promotional activities	60	30	0	10

Additional Natural Resource Concerns:

There were two SurveyMonkey questions that asked for opinions about Natural Resource Concerns that are not currently a primary focus of Conservation Resource Alliance's on-the-ground work. The intent of these questions was to assess how survey takers felt about the issue and if they felt these were areas that CRA should consider for future projects. The percentage of survey-takers who felt that the specific issues were "not important" was relatively low. The relatively high percentage of responders who felt that certain items were "not within CRA's mission" may suggest either a lack of public understanding about the interconnectivity and interdependence of natural resource systems or possibly a lack of familiarity with CRA's mission or even an overly narrow interpretation of the mission. The relatively large percentage of responders expressing the need for caution and the relatively large percent of responders choosing a quick expansion into exotic species control was not a surprise. Caution makes good business sense and species and/or habitat management work is already in the CRA toolbox. The "I do not know" option was not given for this question. The results of the first question are presented in Table 6:

Table 6. Additional Natural Resource Concerns and are they appropriate areas for CRA’s consideration for future projects?				
NATURAL RESOUORCE CONCERN OR ISSUE	CRA should expand into this arena as quickly as possible. %	CRA should cautiously explore various options for entering this arena. %	CRA should not consider working on this issue because it is not consistent with CRA’s mission. %	CRA should not consider working on this because the issue is not important. %
Home Energy Conservation (n=89)	11.2	41.6	47.2	0
Farm Energy Conservation (n=89)	13.5	46.1	40.4	0
Alternative Transportation Issues (n=90)	10.0	38.9	51.1	2.2
Alternative Energy Issues (n=89)	21.3	44.9	33.7	0
Air Quality Issues (n=89)	16.9	49.4	32.6	1.1
Climate Change Issues (n=89)	16.9	52.8	29.2	3.4
Increase Evaluation of Past Projects (n=87)	34.5	55.2	4.6	5.7
Large Dam Removals or Restorations (n=90)	43.3	46.7	7.8	2.2
Water Withdrawal Issues (n=91)	38.5	50.5	9.9	1.1
Invasive Plant Species Control (n=91)	63.7	31.9	4.4	0
Exotic Aquatic Species Control (n=91)	61.5	34.1	4.4	0

There were 11 written comments and 16 written comments given to the second question that asked for a brief description about any other Natural Resource Concern or issue that CRA should address and how they might help. It is further noted that the line item for “large dam removals or restorations” might have been more effective if the question had been written as two separate line items. One of the paper surveys had “removals” crossed out which indicated the responder supported large dam restorations but not large dam removals. Five written comments said “no/none” in response to their being other Natural Resource Issues or Concerns that CRA should be involved with. The comments are paraphrased and listed below separated first as recommendations for the “CRA Business” and then as “Threats”, “Needs” and “Opportunities” to address a Natural Resource need sometime in the future:

CRA Business Recommendations:

1. Stay focused; avoid mission creep
2. Make what is working, work better
3. Partner with others and don’t dilute other’s capacity to do (peripheral) work
4. Ensure CRA’s capacity
5. Clearer definition of organization “lines” might help reduce the perception of too much “cross over” of work.
6. Focus on water; others deal with Air Quality; Climate Change and Energy

THREATS:

1. Bovine TB is a threat to cattle production in the region.

2. Utilization of Biomass (as an energy source)
3. Weak connections with non-conservation groups and leaders

NEEDS:

1. Increased Public Education and Communication
2. More coordination and cooperation to deal with (regional) land use issues
3. Sustainable approach to long-term protection
4. Develop relationships with non-conservation interests

OPPORTUNITIES:

1. Build partnerships between Agriculture, Tourism, and Environmental Communities for mutual benefit of the region's economy.
2. Cross participation at events
3. Expand more into lake and wetland restoration efforts
4. Help local units of Government with infrastructure issues

Partners and Relationships:

There were two questions that pertained to CRA's partnerships and relationships. The intent of the question was to educate survey-takers about the kinds of organizations CRA works with by giving a list that was typical from past years but not exhaustive of all partners. It was also an opportunity for survey-takers to suggest other groups that did not appear on the list and who might be relationships that CRA should explore. A relatively low percentage of survey-takers choose the "I do not know" option or felt a relationship was "not needed". Over all it appears that the public perception is that most relationships are very important and very few relationships are "not needed. There were 18 written comments received for the question with the list, another 18 comments from the question that asked for other partner suggestions and one additional suggestion of a partner that was given in the comments for the WildLink habitat question was moved to this section. The general comments reinforced the percentages shown by stating such things as "relationships and networking are critical because an informed group will work with you".

Table 7 is a summary of the responses:

Table 7. Survey-takers perception of the value of selected partners of Conservation Resource Alliance.				
RELATIONSHIP WITH:	Is very Important	Is nice, but not crucial	Is not needed	I do not know
	%	%	%	%
Private Foundations (n=106)	82.1	12.3	0	5.7
USDA Forest Service (n=106)	80.2	15.1	0	4.7
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (n=104)	85.6	9.6	0	4.8
USDA Rural Development (n=106)	54.7	29.2	.9	15.1
US Fish & Wildlife Service (n=105)	83.8	11.4	0	4.8
US Environmental Protection Agency (n=106)	68.9	25.5	2.8	4.7
Tribes (n=106)	75.5	18.9	0	5.7
MI Department of Natural Resources (n=105)	86.7	8.6	0	4.8

MI Department of Environmental Quality (n=105)	82.9	11.4	.9	4.8
Individual Donors (n=104)	74.0	19.2	0	6.7
Watershed Management Committees (n=105)	75.2	20.0	0	5.7
Conservation Districts (n=104)	78.8	15.4	0	5.8
Resource Conservation & Development Councils (n=105)	70.5	19.0	.9	9.5
County Road Commissions (n=105)	77.1	17.1	.9	4.8
County Commissioners (n=105)	61.9	32.4	0	5.7
Township Officials (n=104)	57.7	34.6	1.9	5.8
Print Media (n=104)	51.9	41.3	0	6.7
Radio/TV Media (n=105)	54.3	38.1	.9	6.7
Land Conservancies (n=105)	72.4	20.9	0	6.7
Trout Unlimited Chapters (n=105)	60.0	33.3	.9	5.7
MI United Conservation Clubs (n=105)	58.1	34.3	1.9	5.7
MI Association of RC&D Councils (n=105)	59.0	26.7	.9	13.3
National Association of RC&D Councils (n=105)	42.9	39.0	1.9	17.1
Universities (n=105)	40.0	49.5	2.9	7.6
Local Schools (n=104)	48.1	41.3	1.9	8.6
Local Businesses (n=105)	58.1	31.4	1.9	8.6
Chambers of Commerce (n=103)	42.0	43.7	5.8	8.7

Partner suggestions that were provided by survey-takers are listed below; some of the organizations are already partners of CRA:

1. Kay Charter- Saving Birds Through Habitat in Omena (for plantings for wildlife)
2. NWMCOG to conduct research as to the economic value of keeping lakes clean
3. The Governor
4. County Drain Commissions (Wetland Restoration)
5. Local Fire Departments (Controlled Burns)
6. Marc Scholette, TV7&4 (has zoology degree; does segments on nature and habitat)
7. Community Foundations (if not included in Private Foundation list)
8. Michigan Department of Agriculture
9. Rotary
10. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts; Churches; School Groups; Youth Programs; Senior Centers; Service groups and clubs; County Extension Services;
11. Downtown Development Authorities
12. Parks Departments
13. Audubon
14. Watershed Council of Grand Traverse Bay
15. Whitetails Unlimited; Wild Turkey; Grouse; Groups
16. Camp Grayling National Guard (Large landowner)
17. Michigan Chapters of Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation

Quality of Life:

There were four questions on the electronic long-format survey that attempted to assess survey-takers feelings about Northwest Lower Michigan and to determine what threats may exist to the over all quality of life as perceived by those taking the survey. There was no short answer option for these questions, the responses were comments generated by the survey-takers.

QUESTION: *What do you enjoy most about Northwest Lower Michigan?*

There were 96 responses (n= 97- 1 “test”) and 28 survey-takers skipped the question. Many answers were similar. The concepts are paraphrased and listed below:

1. Open Space
 - a. large Blocks of State and Federal Land
 - b. scenic views/beauty
2. Lake Michigan; Grand Traverse Bay; Great Lakes Shoreline; Dunes
3. Clean Water: Rivers, streams, inland lakes
4. Forests: Wildlife
5. Outdoor Recreation
 - a. Fishing: Salmon; Trout;
 - b. Hunting
 - c. Canoeing and boating
 - d. Hiking
 - e. Nature; Passive recreation
6. Fruit and Vegetable Growers
7. Low numbers of people/population
8. Culture
 - a. Historic architecture
 - b. Unique shopping opportunities
 - c. Entertainment/Casinos
 - d. Cherry Festival
 - e. Music and art opportunities
9. “Bigger-town” Amenities
 - a. Healthcare
 - b. Universities
 - c. Open-minded people
11. Diversity
 - a. Biological
 - b. Changing Seasons
 - c. Things to do
 - d. Scenery

QUESTION: *What do you enjoy least about Northwest Lower Michigan?*

There were 88 responses (n= 89 - 1 “test”) and 36 survey-takers skipped the question. Many answers were similar. Four people said “nothing” or “nothing that could be controlled”. This was in addition to the comments that specifically mentioned weather related issues. The other concepts are paraphrased and listed below:

1. Weather
 - a. Winter: Cold, Long, lack of sun/gray
 - b. Summer: Too many people
2. Traffic
 - a. Congestion
 - b. Development

- c. Limited access to mass transit
- d. Too many people for existing road network
- e. Need to drive everywhere
- 3. Sprawl and Development
 - a. Poor urban planning
 - b. Increased urbanization (for all communities)
 - c. Increased population
 - d. Bringing “downstate” (attitudes) to the area
 - e. Loss of scenic views
 - f. Fragmentation
 - i. Habitat
 - ii. Farmland
 - g. Loss of waterfront to private development
 - h. Degrading water quality
 - i. Unregulated growth
 - j. Over development and poor development of water frontage
- 5. Economy
 - a. Need to leave area for work/lack of good paying (local) jobs
 - b. Taxes; benefits go to southeast part of state
 - c. High cost of goods and housing
 - d. Big divide between wealthy seasonal residents and year-round working class
 - e. Limited access to green industry w/ high paying jobs
 - f. Lack of funding to get projects completed
- 6. Political Discord
 - a. Lack of leadership –local, county, state, Federal- to plan for the future
 - b. Lack of progressive thinking and stewardship from local decision makers
 - c. Overly empowered and poorly trained local units of government (personnel)
 - d. Poor land use planning coordination between local units of government
 - e. Politicians and bureaucrats who care only for personal power bases to the detriment of the resources they govern in trust for the rest of us
- 7. People
 - a. Too many
 - b. Uneducated about care of natural resources
 - c. Lack of regard for quality natural resources
 - d. Selfish landowners that care only about property rights and limited zoning
 - e. People who think they know everything and won’t listen to alternative (ideas)
- 8. Other
 - a. Motorized 4-wheelers and snowmobiles (roar of)
 - b. Long drive from Lansing
 - c. Stinky algae covered beaches on the Mission Peninsula
 - d. Redundant and wasteful social services and school districts
 - e. Increase of part-time residents with vast quantities of wealth
 - f. Uncontrolled erosion from construction sites.

QUESTION: *What are the greatest natural resource concerns (or biggest problems) that face Northwest Lower Michigan?*

There were 97 responses (n= 98 - 1 “test”) and 27 survey-takers skipped the question. One response said ‘none’. Multiple responders identified similar problems or concerns. Comments are paraphrased and grouped below:

1. Development and Sprawl
 - a. Increased development pressure
 - b. Encourage brownfield reuse over greenfield development
 - c. Poor landuse planning
 - d. Broken property tax system
 - e. Urban sprawl
2. Population Growth
3. Lack of Land Use Planning and Appropriate Zoning
 - a. Loss of farms and farmland
 - b. Increasing numbers of 1-10 acre homesites
 - c. Overdevelopment of water frontage
4. Invasive Species
 - a. Phragmites on the coastal regions
 - b. Unmanaged idle lands harbor noxious non-native plant/seed bank
 - c. Exotic insects and/or diseases
 - d. Invasive plants
 - e. Loss of natives species to invasive species.
5. Forest Issues
 - a. Over cutting of State and National Forests
 - b. Clear cuts near water
 - c. Loss of horse trails
 - d. Increase use of mountain bikes and dirt bikes
 - e. Exotic insects and/or diseases
 - f. Over browsing by too many deer
 - g. Unsustainable harvests
 - h. Recreational houses fragment forestlands
6. Water Quality and Quantity
 - a. Sediment deposition in streams
 - b. Nutrient enrichment of lakes
 - c. Diversion of water from Great Lakes
 - d. Ground water contamination from abandoned industries
 - e. Agricultural runoff
 - f. Fish passage blockage
 - g. Sedimentation at Road Stream Crossings
 - h. Development in riparian zones.
 - i. Litter and Lake Pollution
 - j. Discharges from NDOT roadways (nutrients; petroleum and heavy metals)
 - k. Zebra mussels
 - l. Bay Harbor leachate into Little Traverse Bay
 - m. Poor storm water management

7. Land Fragmentation
 - a. Loss of Prime Farmland
 - b. Loss of Wildlife Habitat
 - c. Loss of ecological connectivity
 - d. Loss of forestland
 - e. Loss of wetlands
9. Funding and Economic Issues
 - a. Too Many Non-Profits
 - b. Funds for Recycling and Household Hazardous Waste
 - c. Lack of funding for MDEQ and MDNR
 - d. Increase of big box retailers sucking the life from small retailers
 - e. Lack of funding for conservation districts
10. Other
 - a. Revitalize local economies without degrading natural resources
 - b. Resources being loved to death/over use
 - c. Bovine TB
 - d. Lack of energy conservation
 - i. Lack of energy alternatives to fossil fuel
 - e. Politics involved in natural resource management
 - f. Lack of public understanding of science and natural resource management
 - g. Lack of full-blown resource recovery and recycling (policies and implementation)

QUESTION: *In your opinion, what are the best solutions for the problems you gave in the previous question?*

There were 95 responses (n= 96 - 1 "test") and 29 survey-takers skipped the question. In addition a couple of survey-takers gave potential solutions in their response to the problem question: These have been incorporated in the list below. Comments are paraphrased and grouped below:

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

1. Development and Sprawl
 - a. Better planning and less greed
 - b. Re-use brown fields
2. Population Growth
3. Lack of Land Use Planning and Appropriate Zoning
 - a. (Create)Strong planning agency with enforcement authority to protect land, water and air
 - b. Develop and/or enforce strong zoning and land development laws
 - c. Use Regional Councils and stricter zoning standards
4. Invasive Species
 - a. More information to coastal homeowners about spraying
 - b. Quicker release of Federal funds to complete Phragmites spraying
5. Forest Issues
 - a. Incorporate non-cutting areas into forest management plans

6. Water Quality and Quantity
7. Land Fragmentation
 - a. Land preservation and conservation easements
 - b. Land buy-backs and set asides
9. Funding and Economic Issues
 - a. Dedicated support for Household Hazardous waste and recycling programs
 - b. More money for Conservation
10. Education and Appreciation Issues
 - a. Support outdoor activities.
 - b. Encourage children to get outside
11. Other

SURVEY MONKEY CONTACT LIST FOR PUBLIC INPUT
B-22 to B-29

SURVEY MONKEY QUESTIONNAIRE
B-30 to B-49

