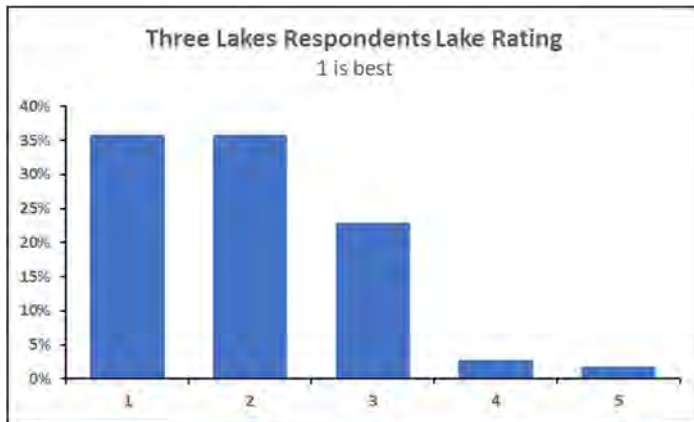


User survey 2026

This report gives the question and a summary of the answers.

A new question for 2026 was an **overall assessment the lakes**, ranked 1 to 5 with 1 best. We asked “How would you rate your lake?” The overall rating was generally 1 or 2, although there were some 4 or 5 ratings. Oscaleta had a higher percentage of both 1 and 5 ratings. Rippowam had fewer top (1) ratings, but no 4s or 5s.



Rating	Overall	Waccabuc	Oscaleta	Rippowam
1	36%	36%	41%	27%
2	36%	34%	37%	47%
3	23%	25%	15%	27%
4	3%	3%	4%	0%
5	2%	2%	4%	0%

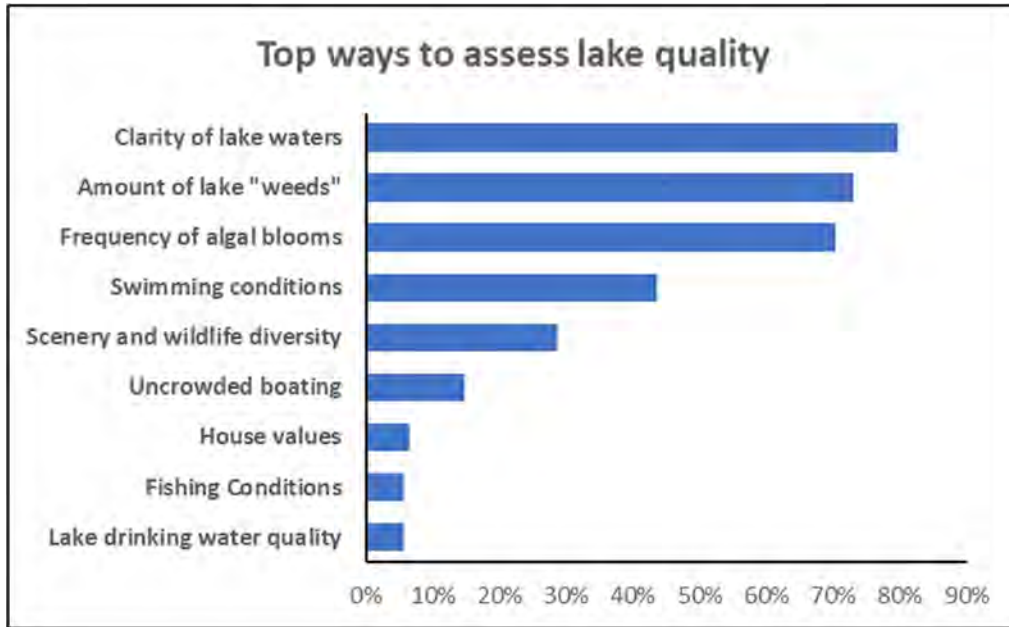
Recreational use of the lakes. We want to know how you use the lakes, how important each activity is to you, and your experience with lake conditions for this activity. The large number of “no response” makes interpretation and comparison with prior years difficult. Results below are from all the lakes.

Recreational Activities	I do this activity			Importance of activity			lake conditions for activity		
	Do	Do not do	no response	important	not important	no response	good	poor	no response
Swimming and wading	84%	6%	11%	63%	1%	36%	35%	9%	56%
Gas motorboating	41%	51%	8%	22%	21%	57%	20%	5%	75%
Electric motorboating	13%	71%	17%	13%	12%	75%	7%	4%	89%
Kayak, canoe, SUP, other boating	79%	6%	16%	62%	3%	35%	35%	5%	61%
Fishing	41%	44%	15%	25%	15%	61%	14%	2%	84%
Scenic & wildlife enjoyment	83%	1%	17%	66%	1%	33%	34%	3%	63%

The top recreational activity varies by lake. The list below is ordered by overall popularity of the activity. Swimming, scenic enjoyment, and non-motorized boating are popular on all of the lakes. Gas motorboating is mainly practiced on Waccabuc.

Recreational Activities	Overall	Waccabuc	Oscaleta	Rippowam
Swimming and wading	84%	84%	82%	93%
Scenic & wildlife enjoyment	83%	83%	85%	80%
Kayak, canoe, SUP, other boating	79%	80%	78%	87%
Gas motorboating	41%	64%	11%	7%
Fishing	41%	48%	41%	20%
Electric motorboating	13%	9%	19%	13%

Check the top three ways you assess water quality. Algae, weeds, and harmful algal blooms were the top criteria, the same as in prior surveys. House values and fishing conditions are less important across the lakes.

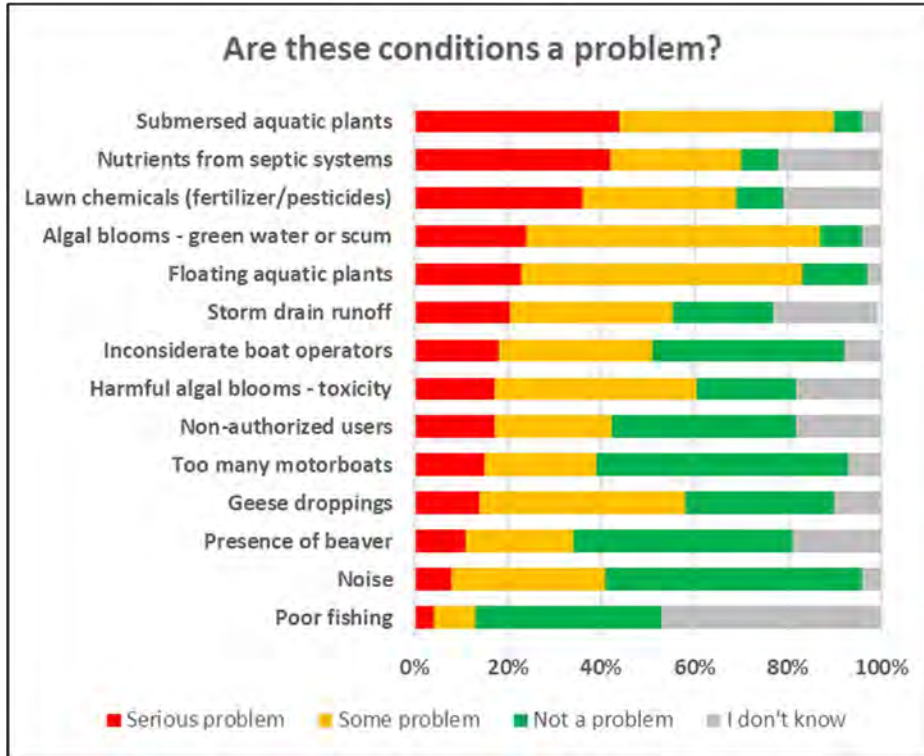


Looking at the criteria by lake, the combination of weeds and algae dominate, followed by swimming and scenery. In Waccabuc, weeds are the top criteria, while in Oscaleta clarity and algal blooms are the top. Boating is relatively low, and less important on Rippowam.

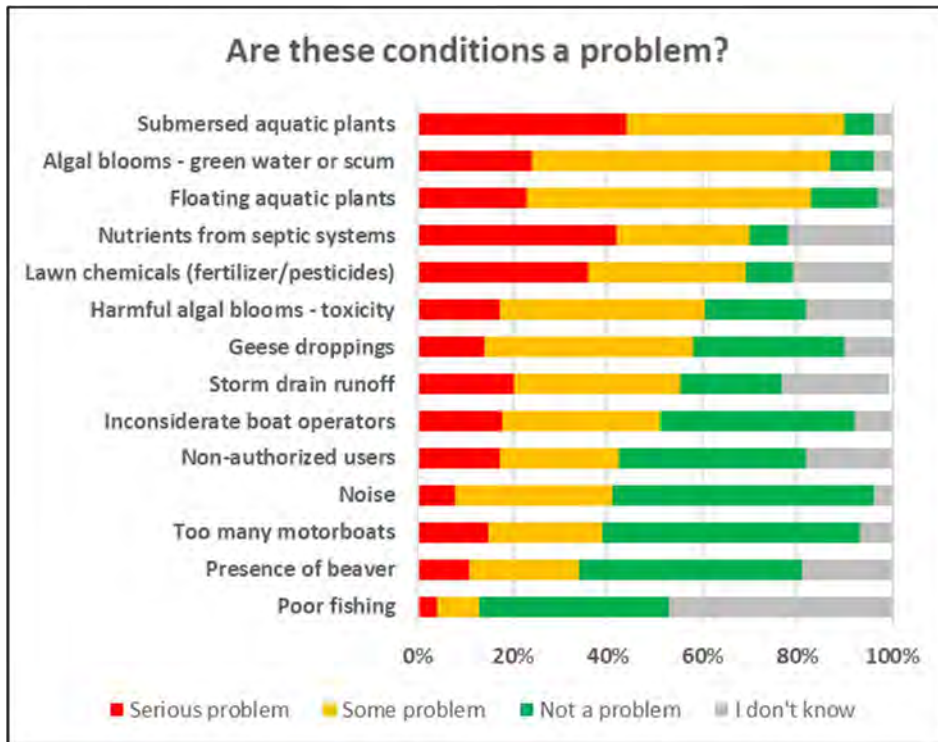
Quality indicator	Overall	Waccabuc	Oscaleta	Rippowam
Clarity of lake waters	80%	80%	82%	73%
Amount of lake "weeds"	73%	84%	56%	60%
Frequency of algal blooms	70%	73%	70%	60%
Swimming conditions	44%	36%	52%	60%
Scenery and wildlife diversity	29%	22%	37%	40%
Uncrowded boating	15%	19%	11%	7%
House values	7%	6%	4%	13%
Fishing conditions	6%	5%	7%	7%

Conditions that are a problem in your lake

Weeds, nutrients, and algal blooms were the most serious problems across the lakes.

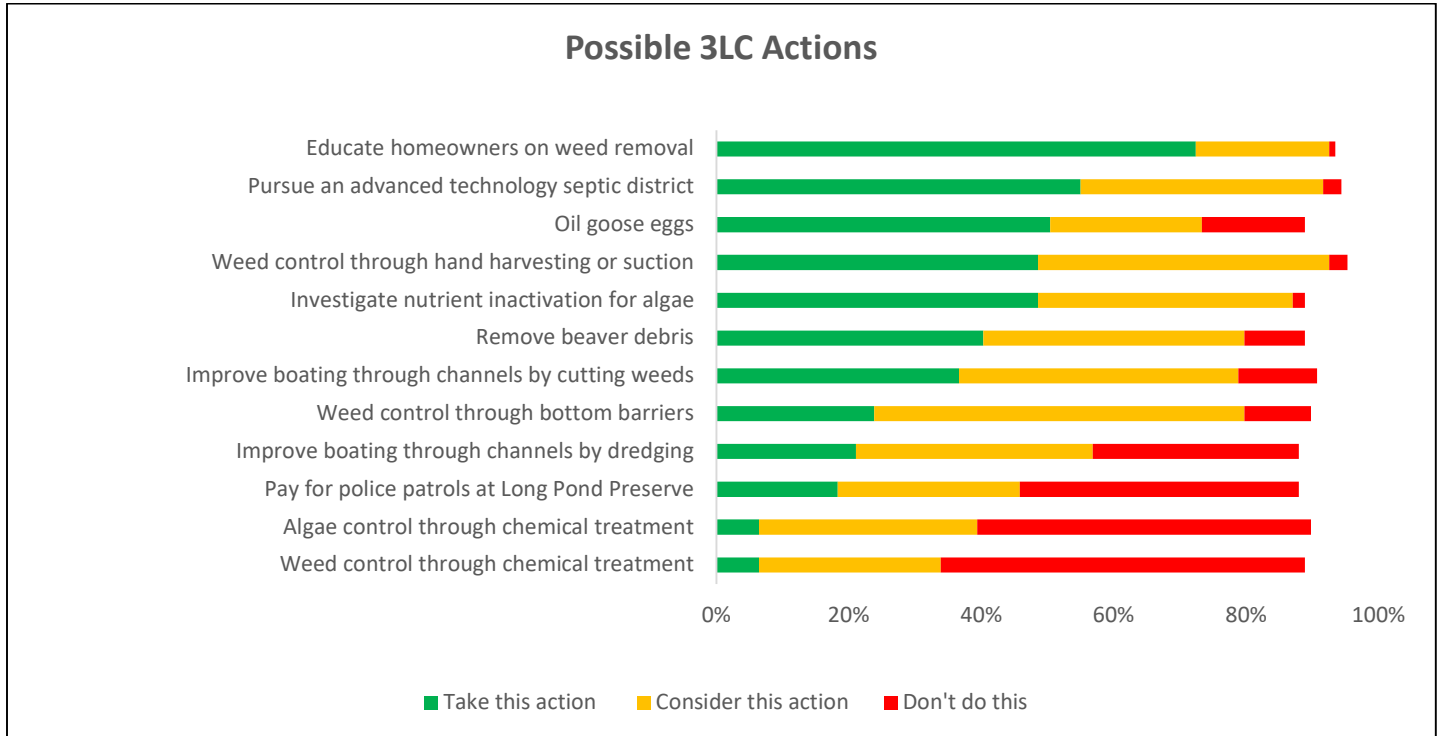


Combining “serious problem” with “some problem” gave a different ranking, moving nutrients below algal blooms and floating plants.



Should the Three Lakes Council take these actions in shared areas?

Respondents felt strongly that Three Lakes Council's first action to control weeds should be to education homeowners. Manual activities came next. Respondents were not supportive of chemical treatments in our lakes: a majority were against chemical treatment of weeds and algae in total and in each of our lakes. Maintenance of the channels got support through beaver debris removal and weed cutting, but dredging was not as popular. An advanced technology septic district was strongly supported, with some interest in nutrient inactivation.



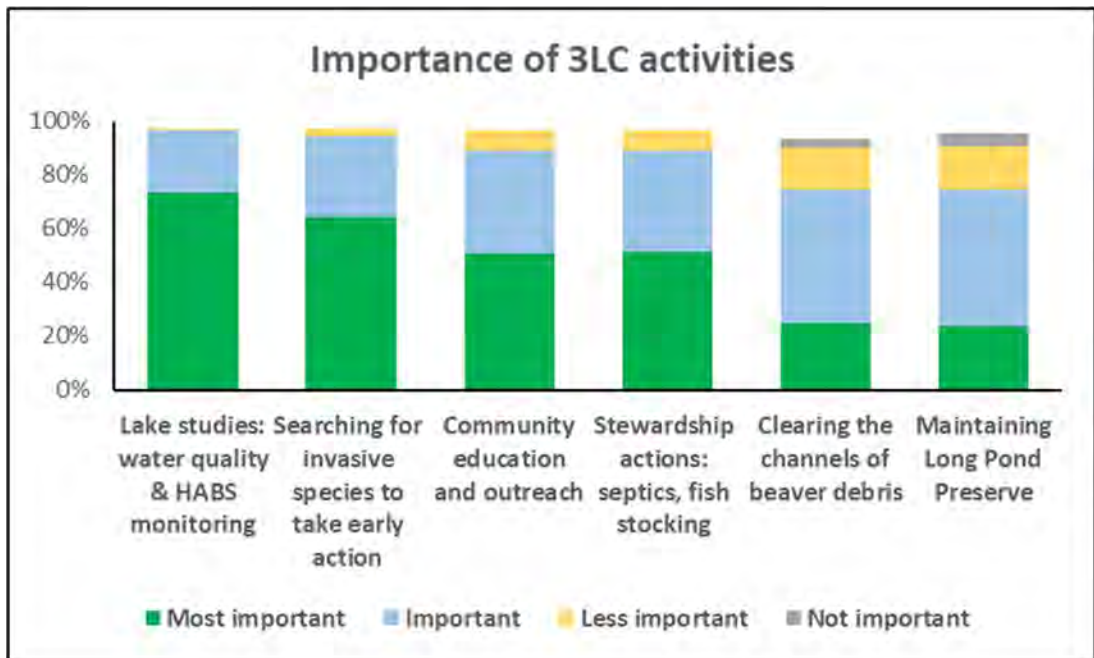
This table presents the same results in a different format.

Possible Actions	Take this action	Consider this action	Don't do this
Weed control through hand harvesting or suction	49%	44%	3%
Weed control through bottom barriers	24%	56%	10%
Weed control through chemical treatment	6%	28%	55%
Algae control through chemical treatment	6%	33%	50%
Remove beaver debris	40%	39%	9%
Improve boating through channels by cutting weeds	37%	42%	12%
Improve boating through channels by dredging	21%	36%	31%
Educate homeowners on weed removal	72%	20%	1%
Oil goose eggs	50%	23%	16%
Pursue an advanced technology septic district	55%	37%	3%
Investigate nutrient inactivation for algae	49%	39%	2%
Pay for police patrols at Long Pond Preserve	18%	28%	42%

Indicate the importance of the following Three Lakes Council activities:

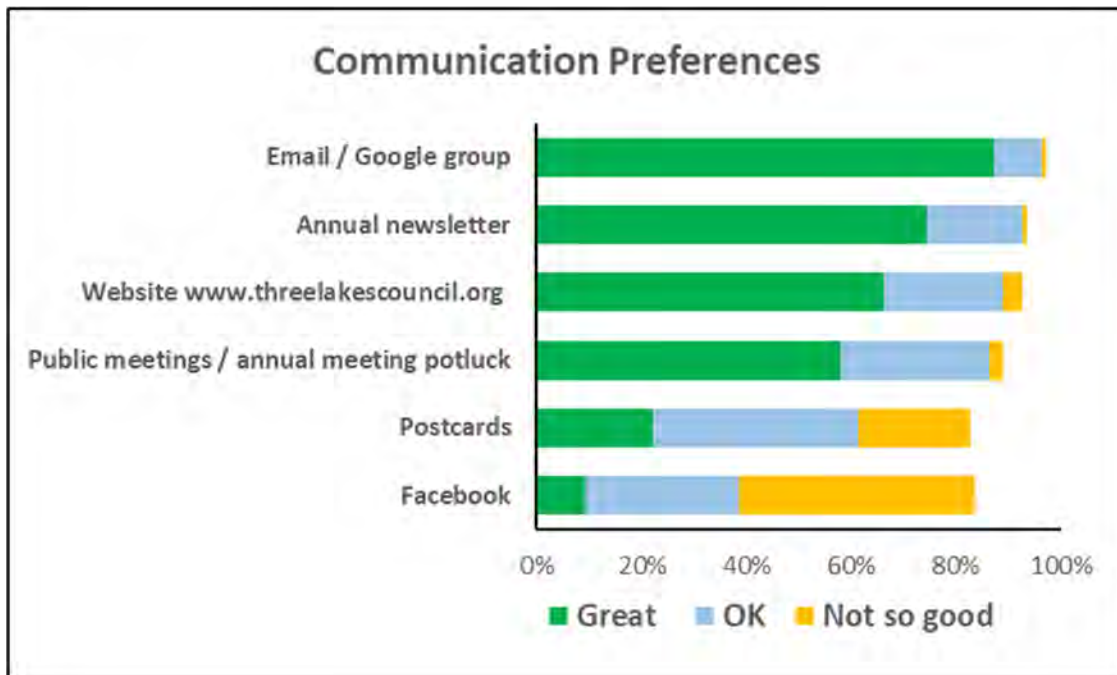
Lake studies and monitoring are evaluated as the most important activities, together with community outreach and stewardship activities. Respondents want to know the status of HABs and want to keep new invasive species out.

Activities	Most important	Important	Less important	Not important
Lake studies: water quality & HABS monitoring	73%	23%	1%	
Searching for invasive species to take early action	64%	30%	3%	
Community education and outreach	50%	39%	7%	
Stewardship actions: septics, fish stocking	51%	38%	7%	
Clearing the channels of beaver debris	25%	50%	16%	4%
Maintaining Long Pond Preserve	24%	50%	17%	5%



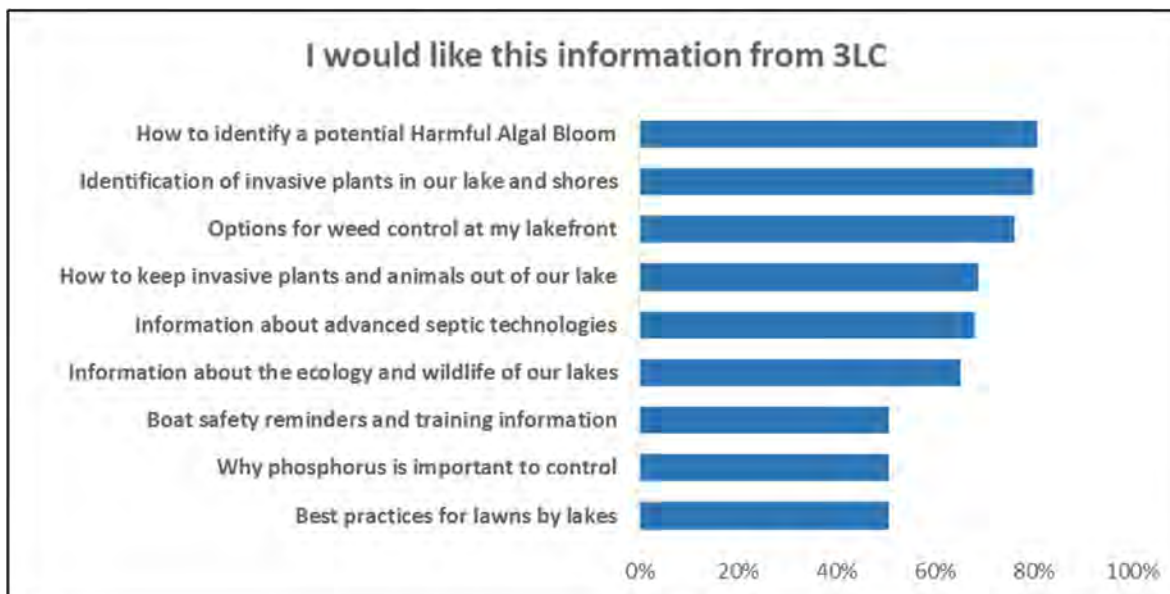
How do you prefer to get lake stewardship education from Three Lakes Council?

We set up the Three Lakes google group after a prior survey asked for more email communications. Electronic communication is the most preferred means of distributing information, followed by our annual newsletter, website, and public meetings.



What information would you like to get from Three Lakes Council?

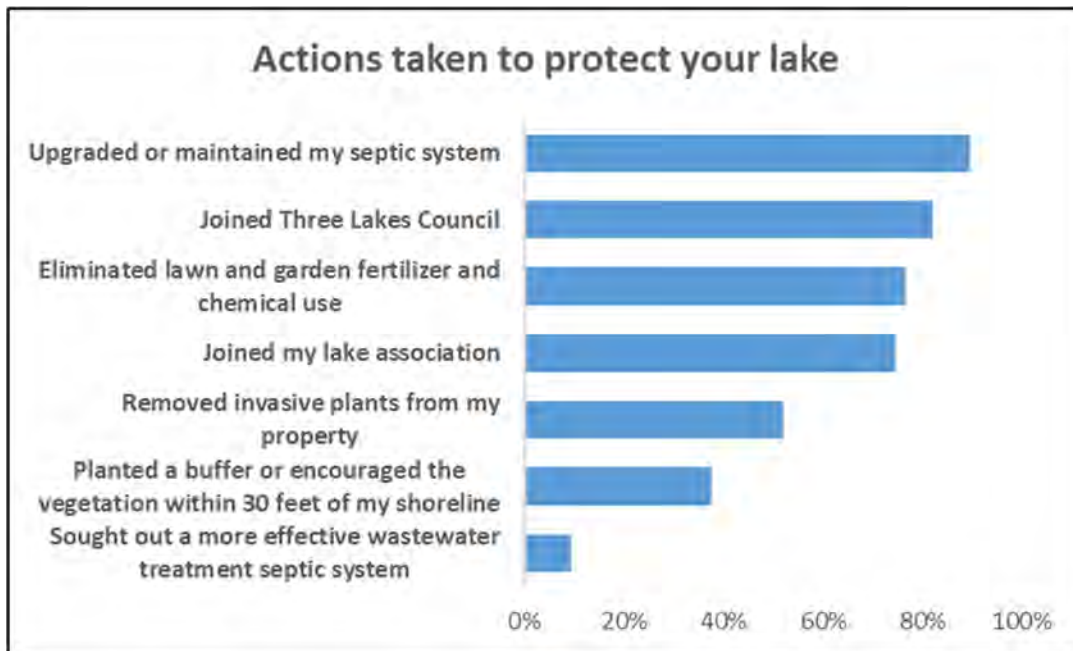
Information about harmful algal blooms, invasive plants, and weeds top the list of desired information. This feedback will help us as we prepare our newsletters and update our website.



I have taken these actions to help protect our lakes

Most of the people who responded have taken actions in one way or another to support lake health. This is great news about an involved and caring community. Most have maintained their septic system in the last five years, as required by law. Good job! Of course, it may be that the people who answered the survey care more about the lakes so these

results may not be representative of the entire watershed. And thanks to all of you who support the Three Lakes Council and your lake association where applicable.



About those who responded

Full time residents made up 70% of the respondents. In general, the full-time residents are more critical of lake conditions than part-time residents. Perhaps those that are not full time favorably compare this scenic and recreational location to their permanent homes. Permanent residents may also feel more invested in the health of the lakes.

Most respondents have lived here over 20 years.

