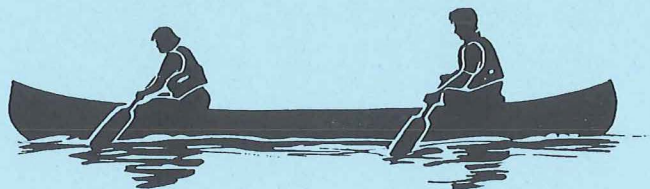




**Property Owner
Survey
*Results***



**Conducted by the Forest Lake Improvement Association, Inc.
May 2005
Forest Lake, Town of Auburn, Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin**

2005
Forest Lake Improvement Association
Property Owner Survey Results

Introduction

This survey is an integral part of the Integrated Watershed & Lake Planning Grant for the years 2004-2005. The survey focuses on specific issues facing Forest Lake and the diverse group of individuals that share in the common goal of protecting and enhancing Forest Lake. This sociological and lake use survey was conducted by the Forest Lake Improvement Association.

Survey Logistics

The survey form was developed by the Forest Lake Improvement Association. Using an updated property owners list surveys were mailed on March 5, 2005 by first class mail to all 54 permanent and seasonal properties within the Forest Lake watershed. Some properties are owned by more than one family, however, only one survey per property was solicited. A self-addressed envelope with return postage was included in all survey packets, and 45 replies were received. The completed survey forms were returned to Margaret Hebein, Forest Lake Improvement Association president. All responses were hand tallied and entered on a computer. Survey design, computer charting and graphing was completed by Linda Kuntsman.

Survey Questions

The FLIA Property Owners Survey contained a series of questions covering a variety of lake related issues, including lake use activities, satisfaction levels, water quality, fishing, watershed factors, aquatic plant management, and lake studies. Respondents offered comments and suggestions on a wide range of issues and presented diverse recommendations.

Reporting Back of the Survey Results

A critical step in the survey process is the reporting of the survey results back to the Forest Lake community and the Wisconsin DNR. It is intended to send respondents the message that the Forest Lake Improvement Association is concerned about and interested in everyone's opinion, members as well as non-members of the association. The information gathered will help FLIA better advocate for Forest Lake, Fond du Lac County, and guide future action plans.

Acknowledgments

Thank you very much to all of the respondents who took the time, energy and enthusiasm to return the questionnaire in a timely manner. Special thanks to Linda Kuntsman, Casey Kendziorski and Grace Hebein. Questions and comments can be directed to Margaret Hebein, 170 East Green Tree Road, Fox Point, WI 53217, 414-351-4537.

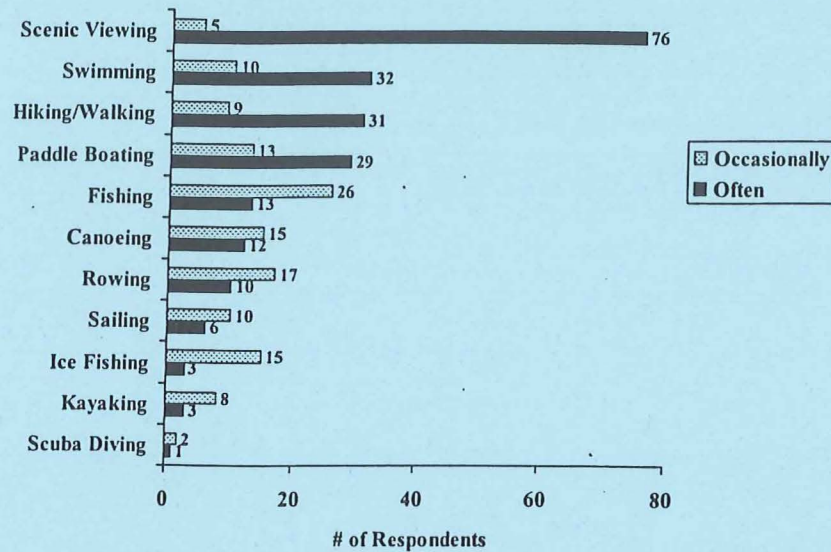
Results

Out of 54 survey questionnaires sent out, 45 were returned. As you read the report, keep in mind that it is based on the responses of 83% of the property owners at Forest Lake. Enjoy !

Forest Lake Residents Enjoy a Spectrum of Lake Activities

A treasured gem in the Northern Kettle Moraine State Forest, that's Forest Lake, Town of Auburn, Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin; ask any of the residents and they will agree. In fact, here is an idea of what Forest Lake families and friends would be engaged in as they enjoy the lake. Scenic viewing is at the top of the list with 86% participation, followed by swimming at 74%, hiking or walking at 74% and paddle boating at 69%. Other popular activities engaged on an occasional level are fishing at 62%, rowing at 43%, canoeing with 42%, ice fishing at 35%, sailing with 28%, kayaking at 21% and a rare scuba diver now and then 5%. [Figure Q1](#)

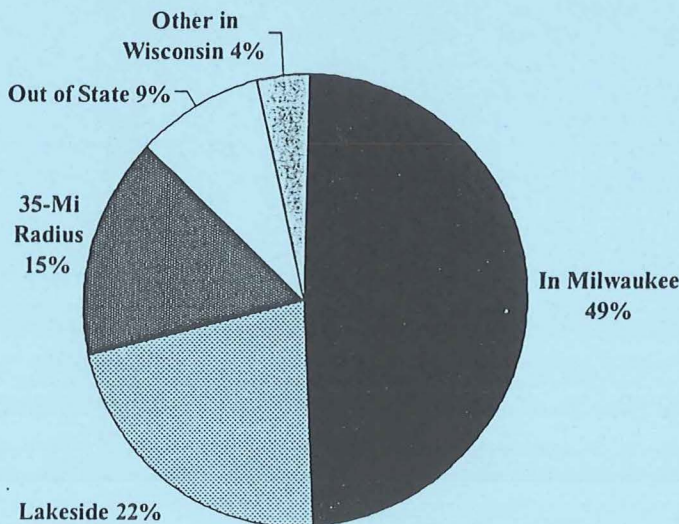
Q1 How Often Engaged in on Forest Lake



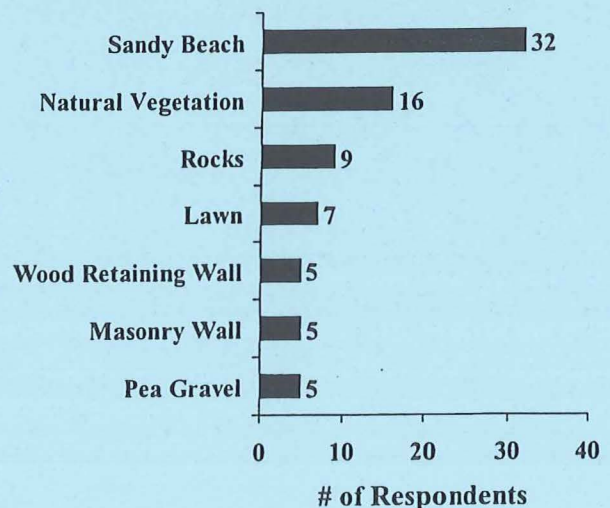
The property owners at Forest Lake are primarily Wisconsin residents: 10 living lakeside, 7 only 35 miles or less from the lake, the majority at 22 reside in metro Milwaukee and 2 families live in other areas of Wisconsin. We also have 4 out-of-state families. [Figure Q2](#)

While enjoying the lakeshore most property owners prefer their sandy beach and natural vegetation, however, most have a combination of more than one type of frontage. This may include rocks, lawn, wood retaining walls, masonry walls and pea gravel. [Figure Q3](#)

Q2 Main Residence

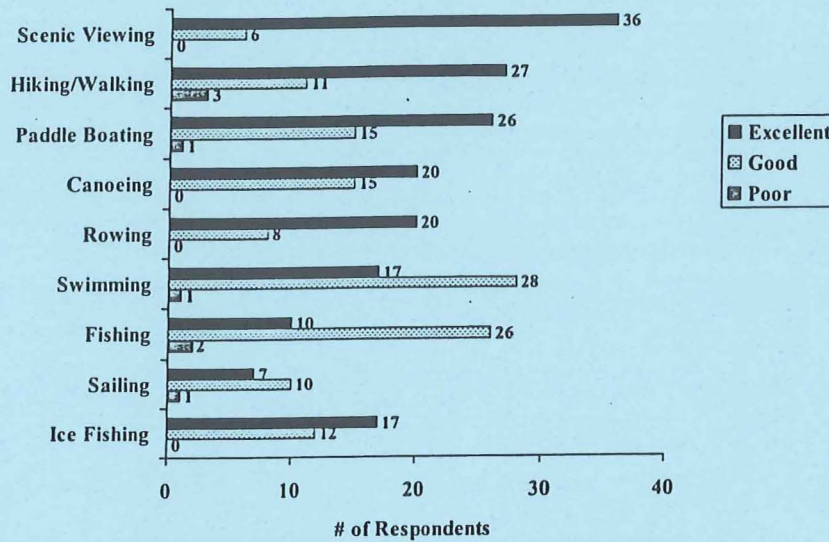


Q3 Describe Lake Frontage



It shouldn't come as a surprise that when property owners were asked to rate the condition of Forest Lake for their leisure activities, that the *excellent* categories would overwhelmingly include scenic viewing, hiking/walking, paddle boating, canoeing and rowing. Swimming, fishing, sailing and ice fishing ranked in the *good* range, with only a couple of *poor* ratings in a few categories. Figure Q4

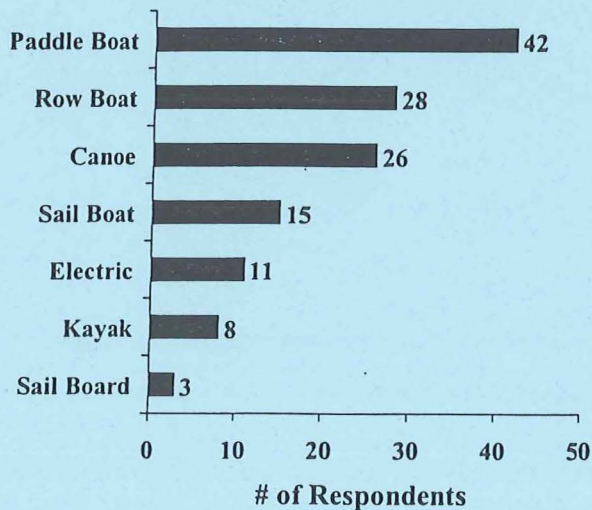
Q4 Rating the Lake's Condition for Activities



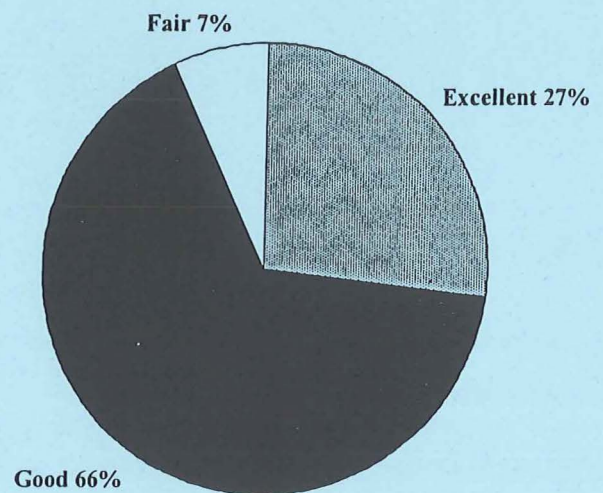
Traffic on Forest Lake will be predominantly paddle boats, with 93% of families owning one, along with rowboats, 62% have one and canoes owned by 58%. Sailboats are found on 33% of the properties, electric boats used by 24% of the folks and kayaks owned by 18%. 7% have one of those challenging sail boards that everyone loves to watch ! Figure Q5

When it comes to rating the existing quality of Forest Lake, 29 families gave it a grade of *good*, 12 declared *excellent* and 3 decided on *poor* ! Figure Q6

Q5 Watercrafts Used



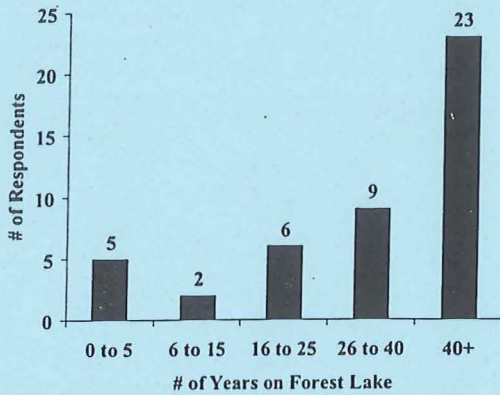
Q6 Rate Lake Quality



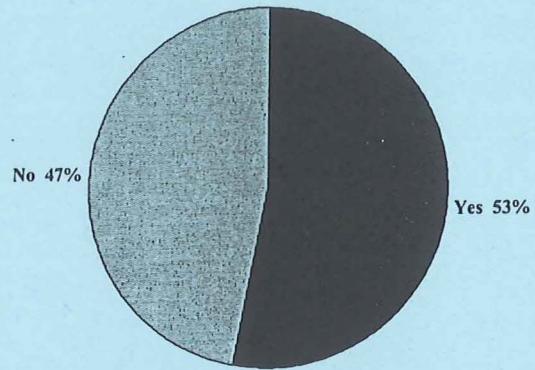
Forest Lake families know that their lake is the closest thing to paradise, and that's probably why the duration of family ownership of over 40 years is just over 50% ! 20% of the families have been on the lake between 26 and 40 years, 13% at 16 to 25 years. The newcomers who have been around for up to 15 years represent only 15% ! Phenomenal ! Figure Q7

The following questions pertain to the watershed of Forest Lake, and are of interest. How close is your lake home to the shoreline ? Figure Q8 Do you apply sand to your beach ? Figure Q9 Do you apply fertilizer on your property ? Figure Q10

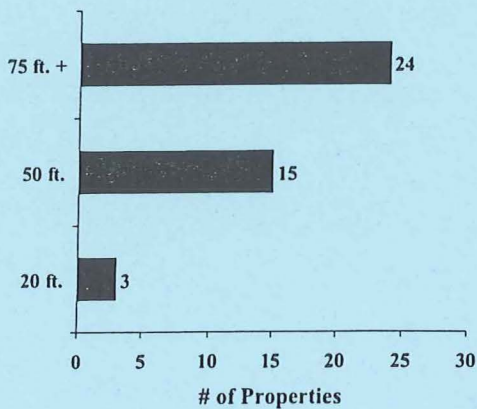
Q7 Years on Forest Lake



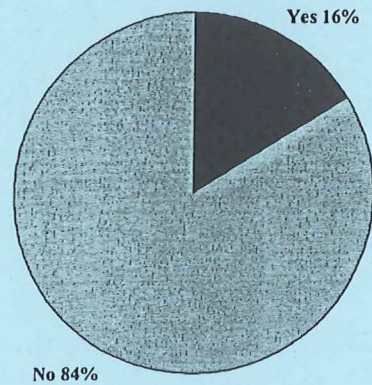
Q9 Beach Sand Applied



Q8 Home Distance to Shoreline



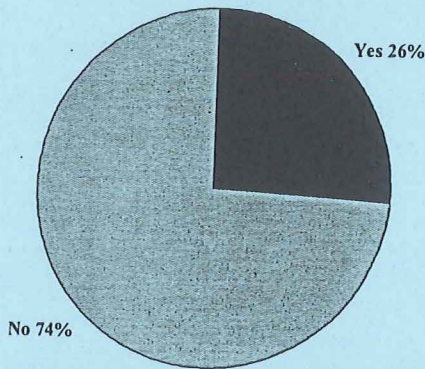
Q10 Apply Fertilizer



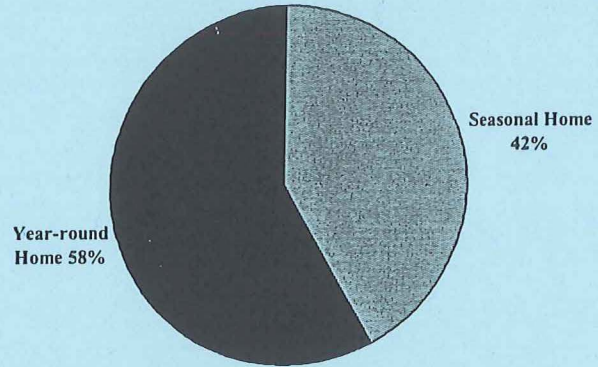
Ah, those pesky parasites found in shallow water during swimming season, that cause swimmer's itch, fortunately, most at Forest Lake have not been afflicted. [Figure Q11](#)

Forest Lake families, 23 to be exact, own a year-round home on the lake, while 19 are considered seasonal dwellings. That's more time to enjoy lake life ! [Figure Q12](#)

Q11 Encountered Swimmers Itch



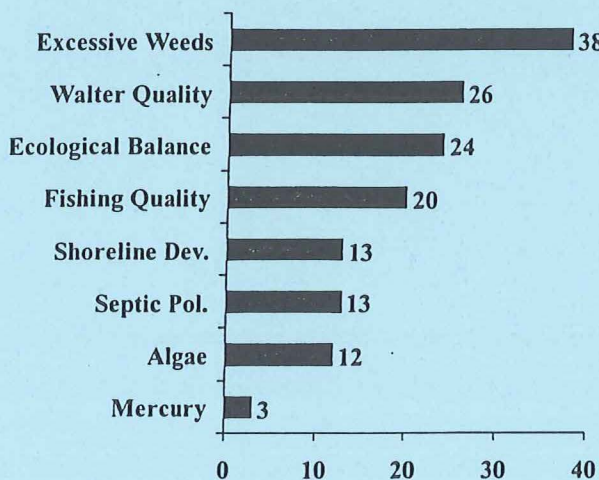
Q12 Forest Lake Home Type



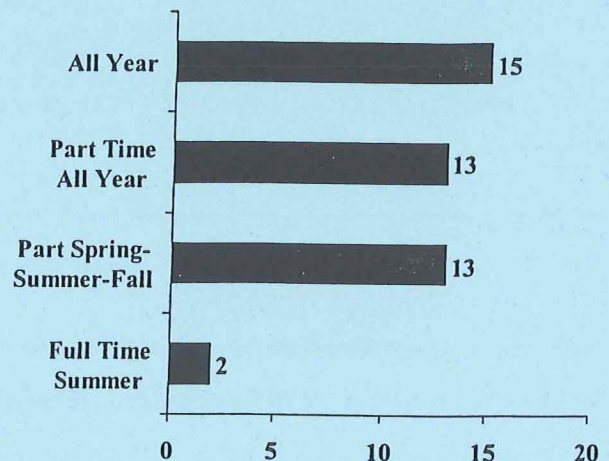
With lake life come major concerns and families at Forest Lake genuinely share in that common goal of protecting and enhancing the lake. Many folks have multiple concerns, with excessive weeds leading the list at 84%, followed by water quality at 58%, ecological balance at 53%, fishing quality at 44%, shoreline development at 29%, septic pollution also 29%, then algae with 27% and mercury at 20%. [Figure Q13](#) Additional write-in concerns can be found in the Appendix.

Population of Forest Lake is about 154 people and their 23 dogs, all enjoying the lake at various times of the year. [Figure Q14](#) & [Figure Q16](#)

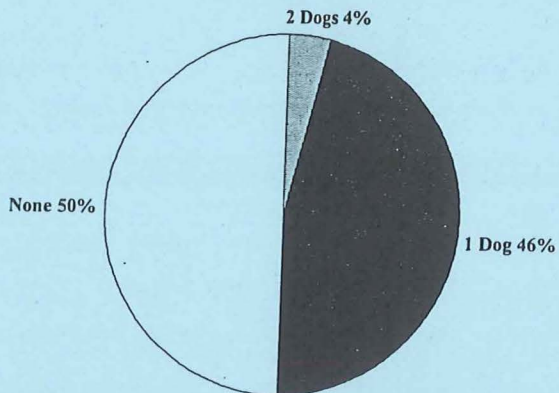
Q13 Major Concerns on Forest Lake



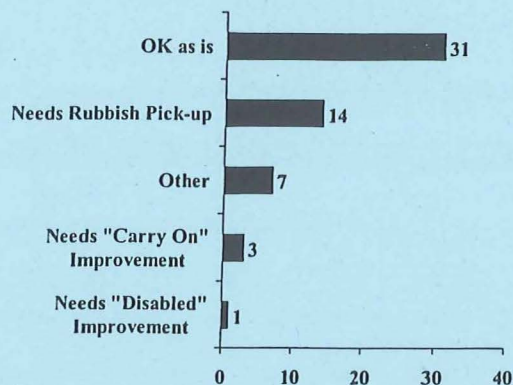
Q14 How Often Use Forest Lake



Q16 Dogs/Household



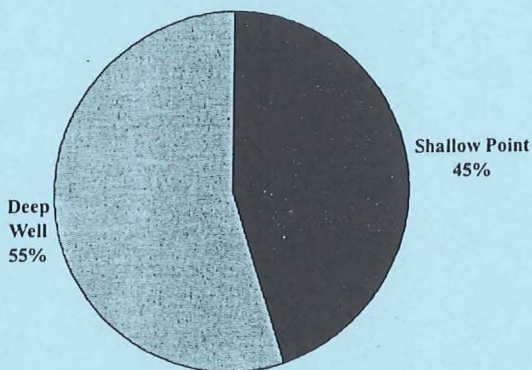
Q17 Public Access Way Feeling



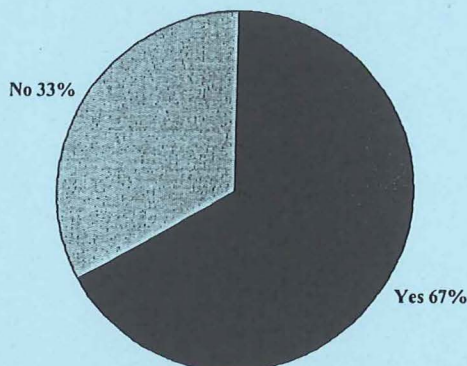
The population on Forest Lake can increase on any given day and at all times of the year with people who use the public access on the WDNR land. Property owners have strong feelings regarding the access, however, 69% agree that it's OK as is. The need for some kind of rubbish collection is vital to 31% and some would like to see improvements made for *carry-on* and *disabled public*. Figure Q17 Additional *public access* comments are in the Appendix.

The following information involves the type of *water well systems* on Forest Lake properties and the drinking water from these wells. Figures Q18, Q19 & Q20

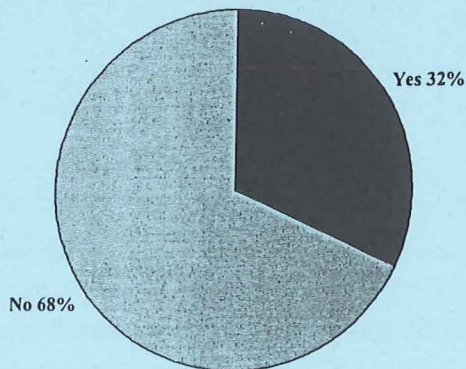
Q18 Well System



Q19 Drinking Water Tested



Q20 Drinking Water Taste/Odor



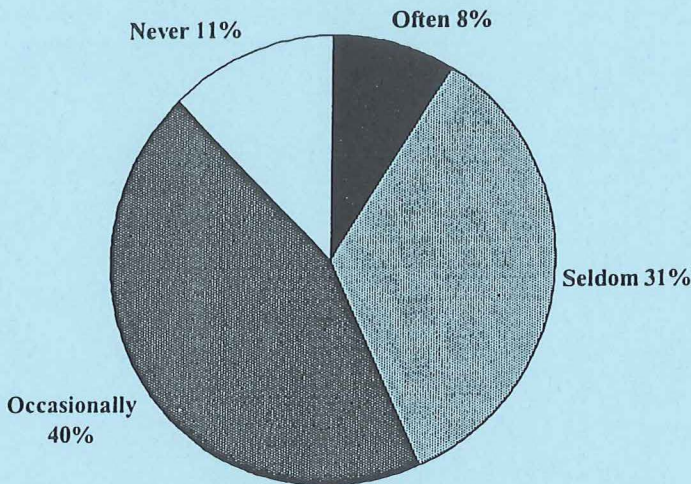
How's the Fishing at Forest Lake ?

There is much to be said about fishing at Forest Lake. How often property owners partake in the sport might surprise some folks. Only 8 families fish *often*, while 18 are considered *occasional* fisherpeople, 14 claim *seldom* and 5 admit to *never* reaching for a fishing pole. Figure Q21

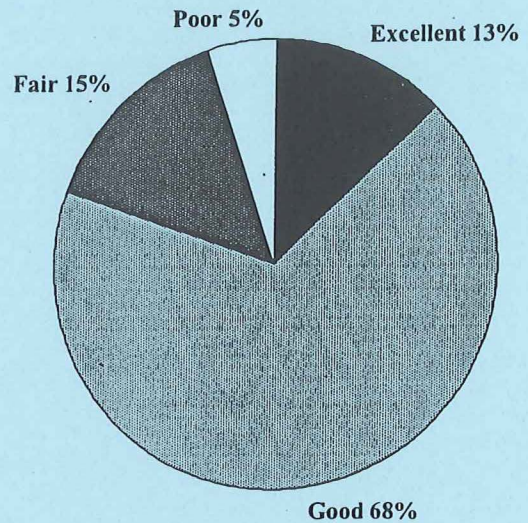
Good news, fishing fans, when asked to rate the quality of fishing on the lake 32 folks said *good to excellent*. Let's keep that a secret ! Only 8 advised *poor to fair* ! Figure Q22

The preferred catch of the day is bass, followed by pan fish, northern, crappie, walleye and bullheads or catfish. Figure Q23

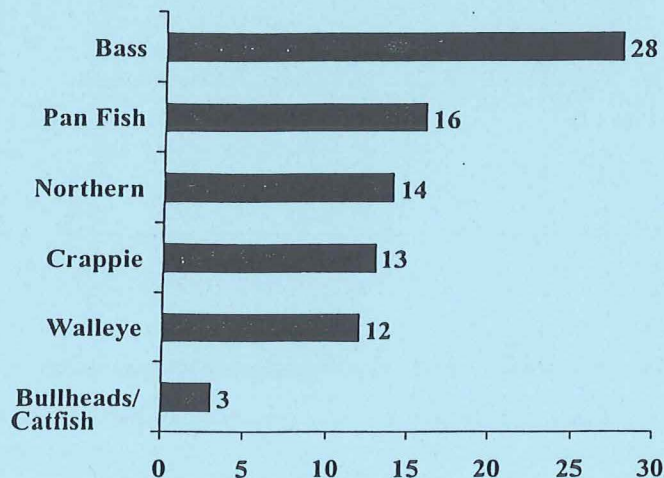
Q21 How Often Fish



Q22 Rating of Fishing

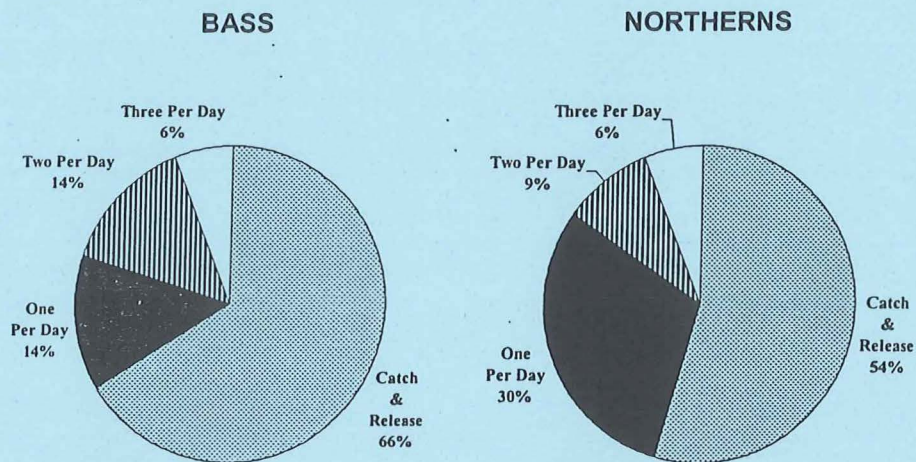


Q23 Fish Species Preferred to Catch



The "Catch & Release" regulation for gamefish, which is enforced by WDNR, has been in effect for several years at Forest Lake. There's more than one way to interpret a quality fishing experience, which is evident by the respondents choices to their preference to size & bag limit for gamefish caught on Forest Lake, some had no opinion about this at all. Figure Q24

Q24 Bag Limit Preferred for Bass & Northernns

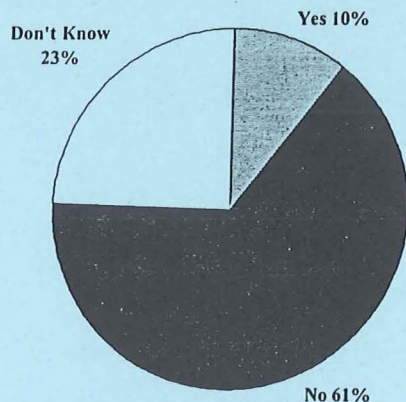


Aquatic Plant Control and Water Quality Monitoring

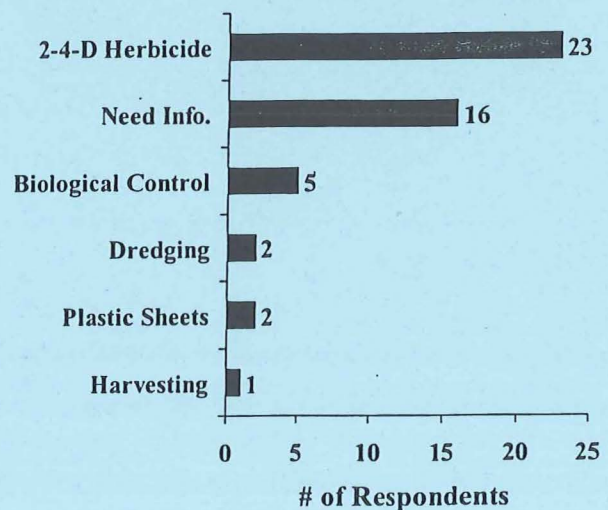
After several years of increasing growth of Eurasian watermilfoil in Forest Lake, an herbicide treatment, 2-4-D, was applied in 2003 & 2004. When asked if property owners thought that Forest Lake had excessive aquatic plant growth in 2004, the majority said no. Figure Q30

It's probably safe to say, that's why 23 respondents favor herbicide, 2-4-D, however, 16 folks indicated the need for *more information* on the subject. Others prefer alternative methods, and one person wrote in a comment "Continue exploring all methods." Figure Q31

Q30 Feel That Lake Has Excessive Plants in 2004



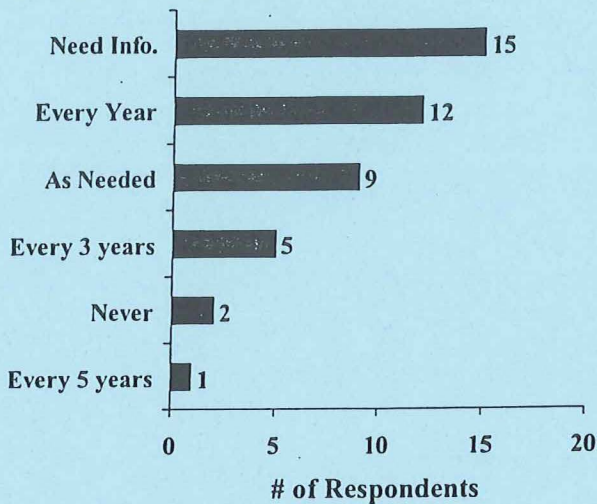
Q31 Favored Plant Control Method



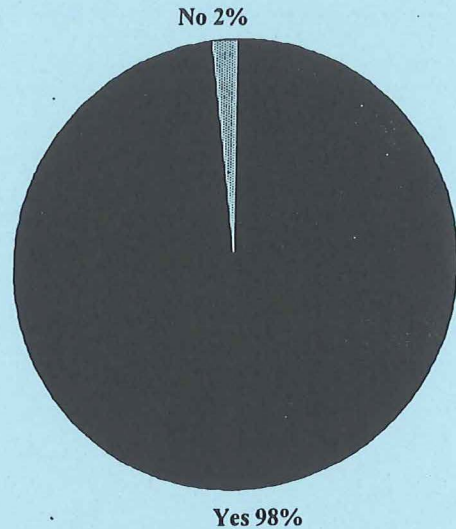
When it comes to frequency of the applications of herbicide, 2-4-D, if required and approved, clearly, the sentiment is diversified. Many feel the *need for more information* on the results, and cause & side effects of 2-4-D. [Figure Q32](#)

USGS (U.S. Geological Survey) performed water quality monitoring of 29 physical and chemical properties in 1994, 1995, 1996 and now in 2004 and 2005. It's a rare moment when almost everyone agrees, but 44 favor repeated analysis every 10 years to identify the ecological health of Forest Lake. [Figure Q33](#)

Q32 How Often to Apply 2-4-D



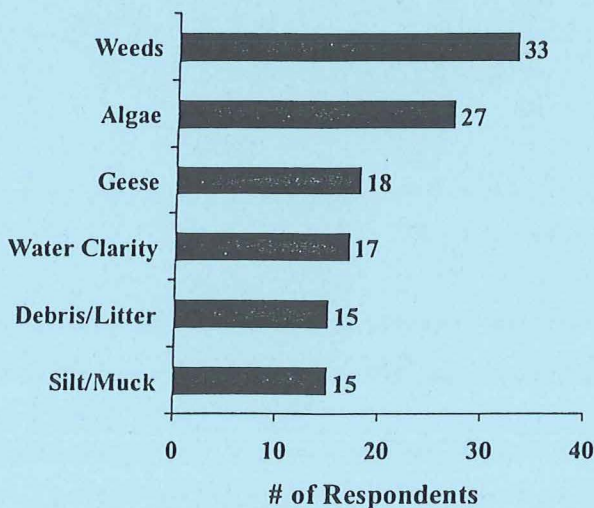
Q33 Favor USGS Monitoring Every 10 Years



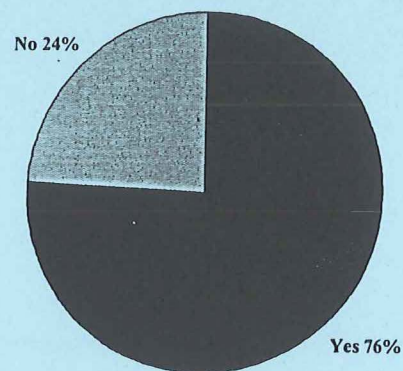
Asked to describe any changes in lake water quality that may affect the use of Forest Lake by respondents, all choices gave cause for concern. [Figure Q34](#)

It was asked if folks were aware that Forest Lake is presently engaged in an Integrated Watershed & Lake Management Plan under the auspices of the WDNR and USGS. [Figure Q35](#)

Q34 Changes That May Affect Use

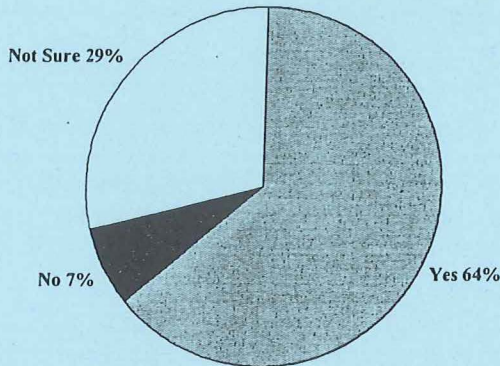


Q35 Aware of Integrated Watershed & Lake Study

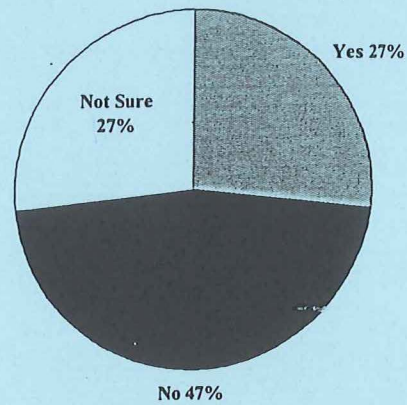


Forest Lake Improvement Association has implemented a *Eurasian watermilfoil Alert*. As explained on the association website www.flia.org everyone is asked to notify any one of the board members if they locate Eurasian watermilfoil anywhere in the lake. 100 pairs of eyes are the best defense ! Milfoil can be difficult to distinguish from Coontail. It's interesting to see how many feel that they can identify Milfoil and Coontail. Figure Q36 & Figure Q37

Q36 Can Identify Milfoil

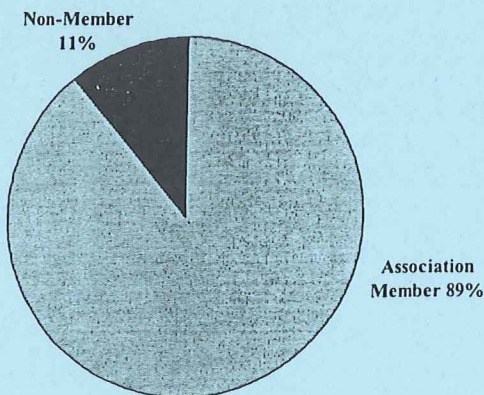


Q37 Able to Identify Coontail

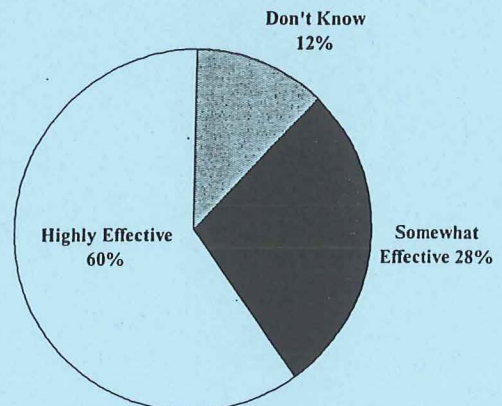


It is very clear that Forest Lake property owners whole heartedly support the Forest Lake Improvement Association, 40 are members and 5 are not, however, the non-members do offer their cooperation and support in many ways. The performance rating given to FLIA is very favorable, and the comments & suggestions offered on the survey form are much appreciated. Figure Q38 & Figure Q39

Q38 Association Membership of Survey Respondents



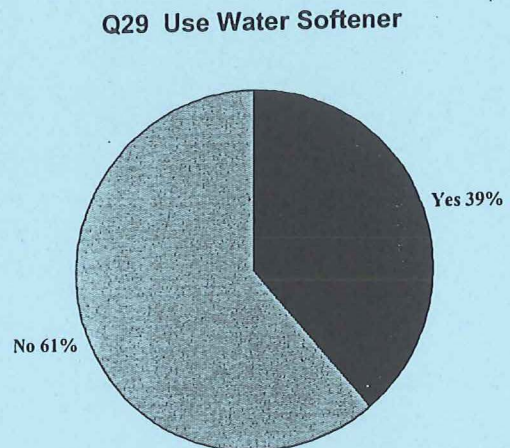
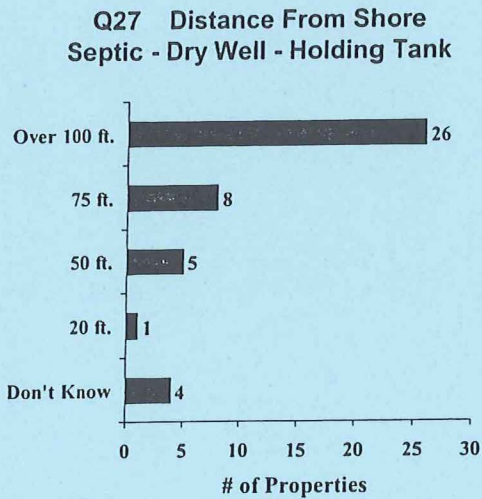
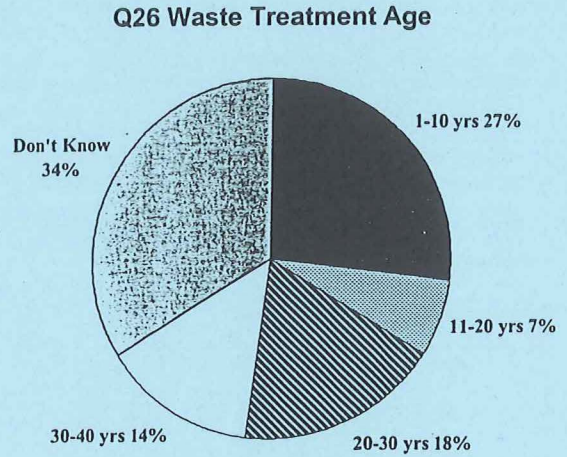
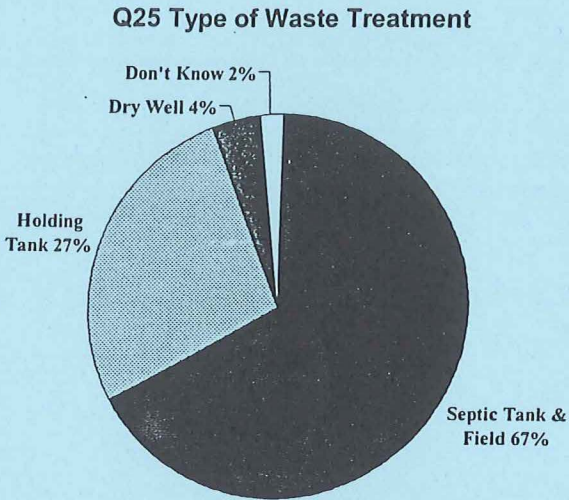
Q39 Performance Rating of Association



Waste Treatment Systems at Forest Lake

Questions were asked regarding the type and age of waste treatment systems, as well as, the distance from the system to the lake shore. Figure Q25, Figure Q26 & Figure Q27

The use of a water softener system was included. Figure Q29 All of these are pertinent to the watershed and nutrient study being conducted on the lake.



Concluding Comments

The property owners on Forest Lake continue to demonstrate a commitment to the stewardship and preservation of Forest Lake as a natural resource. The response of 83% to the survey, along with many thoughtful comments and suggestions and the high rate of participation and support for lake projects is testimony. A sociological and lake use survey reveals attitudes, highlights lake management issues, suggests new directions and concerns, as well as develops a profile of lakeshore and watershed residents. The Forest Lake Improvement Association appreciates all of the commentary regarding respondents "likes" and "dislikes" about the association and will focus on the opportunity to grow as an effective organization.

Successful lake management necessitates a union of property owners, both members as well as non-members of a lake association, a vital association, the DNR and even the local government.

Appendix

Question 13: Other major concerns about Forest Lake: As written in by respondents

Keep lake free of gas motors
High taxes
Loud late parties & fireworks
Keep "catch & release" regulation
Trash & forest management
Maintaining the quality of life as it exists currently
Trash from state property floating to shore
Return to keeping gamefish
Use & development of "greenspace"
Excessive speed on the road
Noisy neighbors & barking dogs

Question 17: How do you feel about the public access: As written in

Enforce "no campfires" regulation
Keep walk-in only
No expansion of access
Have large fines for litter
Public doesn't care
It's too large, too many cars, not as agreed
Restrict parking
Access agreement included fish management which they reneged on
Wish it wasn't there

The following include "Comments & Suggestions" written on the survey form by respondents:

1. I wish more people understood parliamentary procedure and proper ethics in running organizations and meetings. It can get out of hand at times.
2. Muck problem, near shoreline, should be addressed, and Forest Lake Rd. paved.
3. Thanks for commitment and staying on course.
4. Do a little more around the lake.
5. Keep up great work.
6. More people should get involved, nice to have young people on the lake, Forest Lake has improved tremendously.
7. Too many yard lights left on all night all year long.
8. Heavy emphasis on lake, need more input on forest management. The trees are dying. Officers should introduce themselves for the sake of newcomers. Name tags for all ?
9. The northwoods atmosphere is spoiled by mercury vapor outdoor lights.
10. Continue to work for health of the lake rather than "looks".
11. Dogs should be restricted to owners property.
12. Herbicide treatment was highly successful, should be continued and monitored. It has allowed us to use our lake again.
13. Association is working hard.
14. Keep on top of milfoil problem. Would like to keep bass 12"-16". Try to get DNR to enforce bag limits for ice fishing.
15. Keep high standards of leadership and organization, appreciate newsletter and important mailings. Keep the road private perpetually for the good of Forest Lake forever.
16. "Catch & Release" is a farce, has not had effect on producing less & large panfish, and is now producing a stunted bass population, to stock is a waste of money when we have and have always had great bass reproduction, only reason implemented C&R was to keep public off the lake.

The following include "Things you LIKE about the association" written on the survey by respondents:

1. Keep property owners informed.
2. Splendid leadership and information dissemination.
3. Good at keeping members informed.
4. Great interest in ecological health and well being of the lake.
5. There is a united effort to control the quality of the lake, doing good job, keep it up.
6. There seems to be tolerance of wide range of opinions.
7. Cooperation of owners, opportunity to air opinions and reach decisions, effort to deal with milfoil.
8. Meeting new people, getting matters resolved.
9. Everyone's participation.
10. Proactive.
11. Appreciated the work getting milfoil under control.
12. A voice in monitoring the quality and environment around the lake.

13. Friendly people.
14. Stay on top of problems.
15. Discussing issues important to residents, sharing information, data gathering and studies, coordinated lake management, meeting other residents.
16. Chance to get to know other lake members, good way to keep lake owners informed on issues, creates good communication and constructive action to be taken on lake matters, works as a team to better Forest Lake.
17. Has tried to engage the entire community at F.L., have a fair & just agenda to address concerns, good at gathering info lately.
18. Helps to maintain high quality of F.L., good intentions for quality of life, chance to meet lake owners & exchange thoughts & suggestions, good working relationship with DNR, help to keep road in good condition without confrontation, good leadership, including various committees.
19. People seem to be actively concerned about their property, I like that certain folks seem knowledgeable re: biological issues.
20. Ability to talk things over & see many points of view before a decision is made, bigger voice as member of a group, rather than as single property owner (ie: DNR issues.)
21. Great volunteer collection of data & sharing of info, good communication among owners regarding key issues, celebration of the 4th of July.
22. Lakes without an association flounder, focus on the lake as a resource, responds to majority votes, brings people together, not all but most.
23. Brings owners & friends together twice a year to discuss lake problems.

The following include “Things you DISLIKE about the association” written on the survey by respondents:

1. Some discussions (opinions) too lengthy.
2. Board members need to work together rather than independently.
3. Lack of 100% participation.
4. Bad maintenance of the road.
5. Not enough people are really involved, work done by a few, sometimes due to personalities.
6. Some people just don't pull their weight, majority doesn't always rule.
7. Sometimes too long of discussions before a vote.
8. Too much grandstanding, people need to limit their time that they speak.
9. Meetings last too long, conflicts & disagreements not resolved.
10. Conflicts, but it's part of the process.
11. Some course of action may be bias, more neutral presentation of info, need some energy committed to developing the “greenspace” as a community gathering space for kids & families.
12. Officers & some directors are a clique that have been in office way too long; majority doesn't rule, which drove dedicated members away from the association and has brought politics into decision making.
13. Some people seem to take advantage of the leadership and have “side” meetings. Control needs to be kept so everyone is involved in plans and decisions; officers should run the meetings and set agenda, follow parliamentary procedure and non-officers should not run side meetings and be able to take over meetings.