

**Walworth County
Lake Landowner Survey
Results 2005**



2005 Whitewater Lake Landowner Survey Results

(104 surveys – percentage relative to responses)

1. Lake Name **Whitewater**
2. Are you a full time resident? **Yes 24 (23.1%) No 80 (76.9%)**
3. Do you live on or off the lake? **On 84 (80.8%) Off 20 (19.2%)**
4. How long have you owned property on or near a lake in Walworth County? **Ave. 14.4 yrs (0.3-48)**
5. If you are a part-time resident, approximately how often are you in residence?
 - a. less than 3 months per year **8 (10.0%)**
 - b. 4-6 months per year **14 (17.5%)**
 - c. more than 6 months per year **2 (2.5%)**
 - d. mostly weekends **56 (70.0%)**
6. Do you have any plans to become a full-time Walworth County lake residence at some future date?
Yes 27 (38.0%) No 44 (62.0%)
7. Please tell us which lake protection groups are associated with your lake?
 - a. Lake Association **59 (38.1%)**
 - b. Lake District **31 (20.0%)**
 - c. Lake Improvement/Protective **3 (1.9%)**
 - d. Land Conservancy **1 (0.6%)**
 - e. Sanitary District **1 (0.6%)**
 - f. Property/Home Owners Association **60 (38.7%)**
 - g. Other (please list) **0 (0.0%)**
8. Which, if any, of the groups listed above are you a member of?
 - a. Lake Association **35 (31.0%)**
 - b. Lake District **24 (21.2%)**
 - c. Lake Improvement/Protective **2 (1.8%)**
 - d. Land Conservancy **0 (0.0%)**
 - e. Sanitary District **0 (0.0%)**
 - f. Property/Home Owners Association **52 (46.0%)**
 - g. Other (please list) **0 (0.0%)**
9. What are the three (3) primary reasons you bought property on your lake?
 - a. Boating **75 (21.7%)**
 - b. Fishing **34 (9.8%)**
 - c. Swimming **38 (11.0%)**
 - d. Water Skiing **36 (10.4%)**
 - e. Jet Skiing **8 (2.3%)**
 - f. Non-motorized boating **6 (1.7%)**
 - g. Natural scenic beauty/Relaxation **81 (23.4%)**
 - h. Investment **21 (6.1%)**
 - i. Get away from the big city **38 (11.0%)**
 - j. Other **9 (2.6%)**

Family, Family, Family, Family, Family, Family/inherited, kettle Moraine, Job, job commute

10. Which of the following do you feel curtails your enjoyment of the lake?

	No Problem	Minor Problem	Serious Problem	No Opinion
	23	39	29	13
Excessive algae	22.1%	37.5%	27.9%	12.5%
Poor overall water quality	35	33	19	17
	33.7%	31.7%	18.3%	16.3%
Litter on shoreline	62	20	5	17
	59.6%	19.2%	4.8%	16.3%
Strange odors/tastes	70	10	2	22
	67.3%	9.6%	1.9%	21.2%
Debris/obstacles in water	51	28	9	16
	49.0%	26.9%	8.7%	15.4%
Oil/Gas film	68	15	1	20
	65.4%	14.4%	1.0%	19.2%
Fish kills	66	14	0	24
	63.5%	13.5%	0.0%	23.1%
Unwanted fish species	47	27	9	21
	45.2%	26.0%	8.7%	20.2%
Excessive aquatic weeds	0	7	92	5
	0.0%	6.7%	88.5%	4.8%
Excessive floating weeds (left from harvesting operation)	0	14	82	8
	0.0%	13.5%	78.8%	7.7%
Increased number of structures takes away from the natural scenic beauty of the lake	53	27	5	19
	51.0%	26.0%	4.8%	18.3%
Excessive development around lake	54	24	4	22
	51.9%	23.1%	3.8%	21.2%
Excessive sediment deposited into lake	39	30	7	28
	37.5%	28.8%	6.7%	26.9%
Lake level too high/low	32	41	11	20
	30.8%	39.4%	10.6%	19.2%
Too many geese	23	33	37	11
	22.1%	31.7%	35.6%	10.6%
Exotic Invasive Species	23	24	26	31
	22.1%	23.1%	25.0%	29.8%
Excessive Boat Traffic	34	48	8	14
	32.7%	46.2%	7.7%	13.5%
Decline in Boating Safety	50	27	9	18
	48.1%	26.0%	8.7%	17.3%
Limited Access/Parking	68	14	0	22
	65.4%	13.5%	0.0%	21.2%
Other (please list)	0	0	6	98
	0.0%	0.0%	5.8%	94.2%

List: *Inconsistent & unfair enforcement of antiquated zoning laws, bogs, weeds, Dangerous jet ski drivers, Bogs, poor attitudes*

11. Which of the following do you feel are a problem for the water quality of the lake?

	No Problem	Minor Problem	Serious Problem	No Opinion
	27	32	28	17
Excessive algae	26.0%	30.8%	26.9%	16.3%
	61	17	1	25
Fish kills	58.7%	16.3%	1.0%	24.0%
	61	19	3	21
Litter on shoreline	58.7%	18.3%	2.9%	20.2%

Car

Boats bringing in exotic species	25 24.0%	23 22.1%	10 9.6%	46 44.2%
Accidental spills of oil or gas by boats	9 8.8%	38 37.3%	13 12.7%	42 41.2%

List: **weeds, noise pollution - jet ski, lawn fertilizer, Bogs, weed killers**

13. Does your lake protection group promote any of the following lake best management practices?
- a. Maintain/install native vegetative buffer on lakeshore **14 (11.2%)**
 - b. Limit mowing adjacent to the shoreline **10 (8.0)**
 - c. Protecting against soil erosion **30 (24.0%)**
 - d. Limit use of chemical (especially phosphorous) lawn care products **40 (32.0%)**
 - e. Raingardens and basins to control and filter stormwater runoff **2 (1.6%)**
 - f. Limit amount of impervious surfaces **6 (4.8%)**
 - g. Exotic species prevention **23 (18.4%)**
 - h. Others **0 (0.0%)** please list

14. Are you familiar with the Shoreland Zoning Regulations for your property?
Yes 48 (47.1%) No 54 (52.9%)

15. How effective do you think current shoreland regulation efforts are at protecting water quality?
 Very effective **7 (6.8%)** Very ineffective **5 (4.9%)**
 Somewhat effective **27 (26.2%)** No opinion **59 (57.3%)**
 Somewhat ineffective **5 (4.9%)**

16. Are you aware that Walworth County offers technical assistance and educational opportunities, which are available for lakeshore landowners? **Yes 27 (26.2%) No 76 (73.8%)**

17. Have you ever taken advantage of this assistance? **Yes 10 (9.7%) No 93 (90.3%)**

18. Would you be interested in taking advantage of this assistance? **Yes 58 (67.4%) No 28 (32.6%)**

19. How effective do you believe current educational efforts are at protecting water quality?
 Very effective **2 (1.9%)**
 Somewhat effective **18 (17.3%)**
 Somewhat ineffective **2 (1.9%)**
 Very ineffective **1 (1.0%)**
 No opinion **81 (77.9%)**

20. To what extent are the following actions needed to deal with your concerns for the lake?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	No Opinion
Conduct a whole lake study and develop lake management plan	43 41.3%	25 24.0%	7 6.7%	29 27.9%
Conduct an aquatic plant survey	62 59.6%	19 18.3%	3 2.9%	20 19.2%
Conduct a study of land uses in the watershed	20 19.2%	38 36.5%	14 13.5%	32 30.8%

Provide more education about environmentally friendly land use practices	32 30.8%	42 40.4%	7 6.7%	23 22.1%
Provide residents with technical assistance to reduce shoreline erosion	33 31.7%	46 44.2%	7 6.7%	18 17.3%
Promote methods to reduce soil erosion	31 29.8%	42 40.4%	10 9.6%	21 20.2%
Promote methods to reduce stormwater runoff	23 22.1%	41 39.4%	14 13.5%	26 25.0%
Increase enforcement of boating laws	20 19.2%	39 37.5%	25 24.0%	20 19.2%
Stock fish	44 42.3%	32 30.8%	9 8.7%	19 18.3%
Better enforcement of current zoning and land disturbance ordinances	23 22.1%	36 34.6%	17 16.3%	28 26.9%
Develop stronger zoning and land disturbance regulations for lake development	20 19.2%	31 29.8%	24 23.1%	29 27.9%

21. What lake protection or management activities or programs would you recommend that the County undertake, improve or promote? **County should exercise common sense with variances; monthly newsletters to promote lake protection, weed control - it's out of hand, need weed control, More cooperation & faster action - most residents view DNR as foe rather than friend, I'm concerned about the high cost of improving shoreline erosion; Floating weeds have been a problem, Walworth County shoreland zoning & building and zoning departments are all about revenue - not about protecting lake quality and property value of owners. These departments are all about money not helping property owners and preservation of lake quality. Richmond and Whitewater townships should take over these areas - they would do a better job, Leave lake property owners alone, weed control is the biggest problem, Do everything to eliminate invasive Eurasian Water milfoil - all other lake problems pale in comparison to this one, Eliminate private septic systems for homes with lakefront property as the drainage likely leachates into the lake. Lakefront property owners should be required to install a holding tank or remit payment of some sort of annual environmental impact fee to cover the cost of enhanced lake management/water quality services, chemically treat aquatic weeds, I believe our lake management assn. Has done the above; work with the DNR & Whitewater Lake Management Assn o weed control and maintaining the quality of our water, Perhaps when I retire I would like to read documentation; additional funding to remove weeds, Educate residents on correct use of fertilizers; random inspections of boats at ramps for mussels etc; better trash receptacles at ramp, Limit lake access lots that only have lake access but no frontage, lake choked with weeds, Become more interested & involved with Whitewater/Rice Lake Management District. Current board members have zero expertise in running any kind of lake protection. All they know is spray & cut - they need professional help & advise ASAP - Thanks for your interest, Police Whitewater Lake, need stronger chemicals allowed to kill milfoil; Also geese to be controlled, None - we can do a better job of this than the County, Developing some shoreline landscape models that are attractive, Exotic weeds a major problem in Whitewater Lake. Must be a way to get them under control - It has been a problem for 18 years. Surely someone at the County has a program that is working, 1. The areas with erosion are the areas left natural - current lake use is not "natural" anymore - therefore shorelines need to be protected by other means - natural shorelines will not hold up. 2. Obsolete septic systems not checked are leeching sewage into the lake. 3. How close or how big a home is has not effect on weed management of the lake or soil erosion.4. Natural area/state land soil erosion, weed control, weed decay/removal, goose feces, silt & bog accumulation/removal, removal of goose population; septic tank inspections; removal of carp; permanent removal of milfoil & floating bogs; control water depths; shoreline protection - with rocks - I don't want "natural vegetation" in front of my \$600,000 home, weed removal/bog control, Whitewater lake is beautiful but has problems with weeds and the floating bogs in the NE lobe of the lake, Main problem that we see is excessive weeds in some areas which is both alleviated and compounded by cutting them since we get a major build up of cuttings. It would seem important to know the cause of the excessive weed growth and to take action to reduce/eliminate the causes if possible, get rid of**

the exotics, The Lake District has purchased several weed cutters - taxes went up 49% this year - Basically it's like paying for someone to mow the lake. I've lived here for 41 years and the quality of the lake has not changed, Our lake is well patrolled for boating law regulation; Bog removal - many small bogs - dangerous, My guess is that much of the problem is lawn care. I have seen more people cut the trees & fill in with lawns - which is likely to result in greater use of fertilizers & pesticides, 1. Eliminate jet skis on small lakes 2. Increase no-wake areas, the only real problem on our lake are the weeds and bog. We are working on the bog & the weeds get harvested, Have a booth at Whitewater Lake Day to educate - promote limited use of fertilizers, As you can see - we do not receive information on this topic - other than weed removal & bog dredging our lake assn doesn't focus on these issues, silt (1-3 ft deep) removal - dredging near shoreline - at min. permit to be done at private owners expense, work more closely with our lake management team, encouraging more natural shorelines with education & zoning. More demonstration sites exp. Individual home sites - more proactive stormwater decisions - reduce impervious areas, design with nature, more infiltration - groundwater protection, Develop alternative to aquatic weed harvesting. The mowing operation seems to make the weeds become a greater problem, Enforce zoning laws regarding short-term rental of homes that are not zoned for that, we presently have a very active lake mgnt group and more government is not needed, Deal more effectively with the growing weed problem - a more efficient harvesting of weeds to eliminate "floaters" - use of chemicals on a "need be" basis to help control the weed problem as long as they do not cause bodily harm, Anything to get rid of weeds & bog, More property owner participation, change state & local laws to permit use of Japanese Hybrid Carp for weed control as is allowed in 26 states with good success', We are very disturbed and unhappy with the weeds on the lake. We love lake living however our grown children & grandchildren will not swim or go into the lake. To us this is a real problem - why do we want a lake house when no one wants to use the lake? We will help try to fix the problem - lets work together!, I just do not know the answers to most of the questions, water patrols on the lake are excessive - intimidate boaters unnecessarily. This is a quiet lake with few problems - many time the water patrol is the only boat on the lake, Have an annual or biannual inspection for septic systems, Train people to get rid of weeds & bog, Education - when buying properties on or near lake you should be given information such as shoreland zoning. People do things & find out after the fact they were in error - some is intentional - some innocent. If info was given at sale of property they could not be ignorant, Generally people on our lake are respectful of the environment & the lake - it is the bog that is a problem, No chemicals should be used to kill weeds, Improve public relations with lake residents. Now many residents you as an enforcement agency rather than a helpful educational resource, 1. Copy each owner with shoreland regulations 2. Provide owners with technical assistance & educational opportunity 3. Get information/communication out though lake assn. & lake management,