

Resident Perceptions of The Minnesota River Basin

Results from a St. Cloud State
University survey

Sponsored by

Minnesota River Board
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
Friend of the Minnesota Valley
Minnesota State University, Mankato



INTRODUCTION

The perceptions of Minnesota River watershed residents about pollution levels, water quality, pollution sources, and clean water responsibilities are important to the various agencies, non-profit groups, and local government units that work to improve land and water quality in the basin. To obtain information about resident perceptions on the issues listed above, a telephone survey was conducted by St. Cloud State University of residents in the Minnesota River Basin. The survey was sponsored by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Minnesota River Board, Friends of the Minnesota Valley, and Minnesota State University, Mankato.

SURVEY METHODS

The survey included counties with 20% or more of their land mass in the Minnesota River watershed (Figure 1). Households were selected from these counties by random digit dialing, a survey or selection method unique to telephone survey research. The telephone numbers included in the sample were proportionate to the telephone population of each county. Thirteen questions were asked of the sample. Additionally, gender was utilized by the interviewers as a way to randomize each household. This ensures a more representative sample of the population.

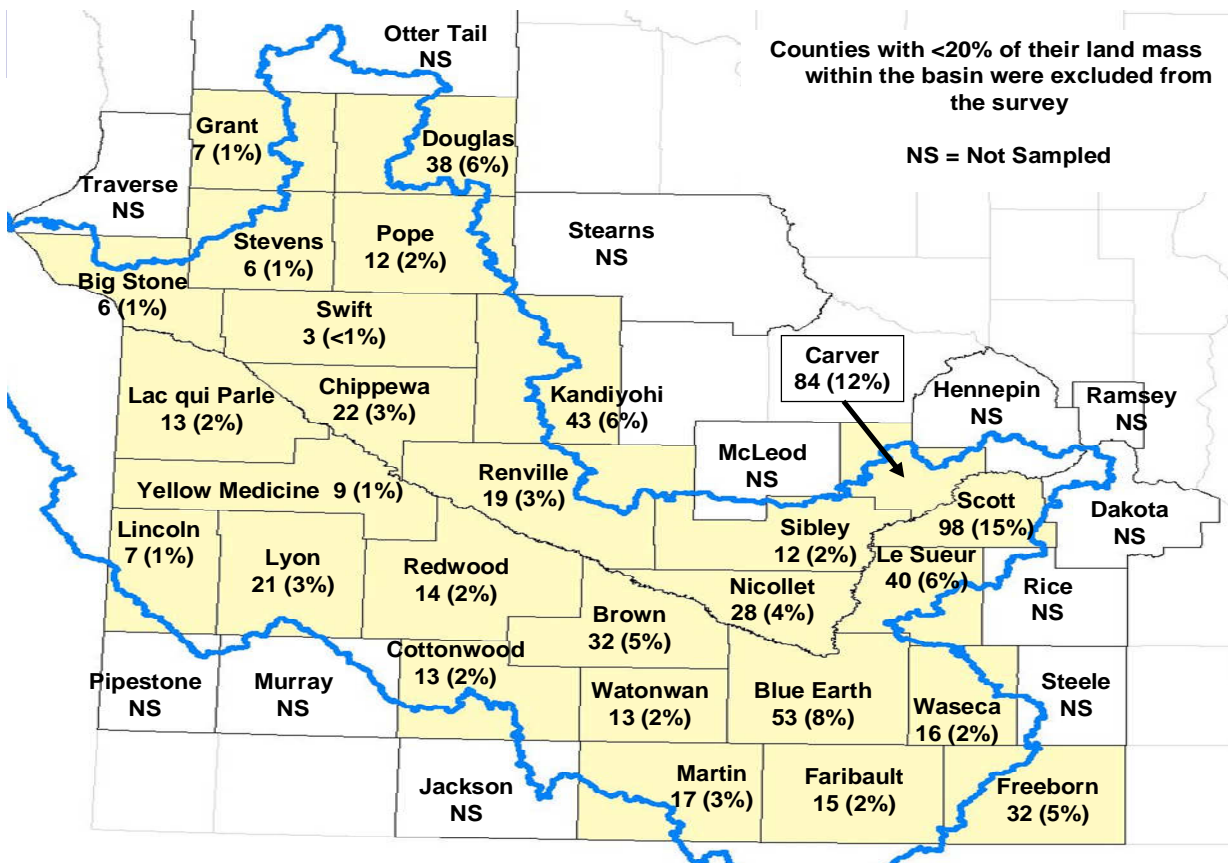


Figure 1. The Minnesota River watershed denoting the number of citizens that completed telephone interviews as part of the 2005 Minnesota River Survey. The percentage of each county's residents from the total sample (N=673) is noted in parenthesis.

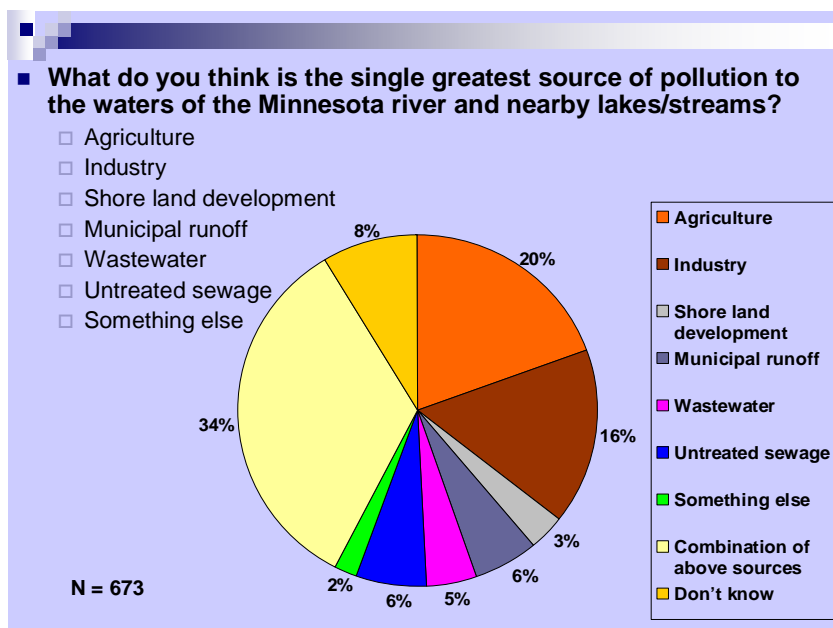
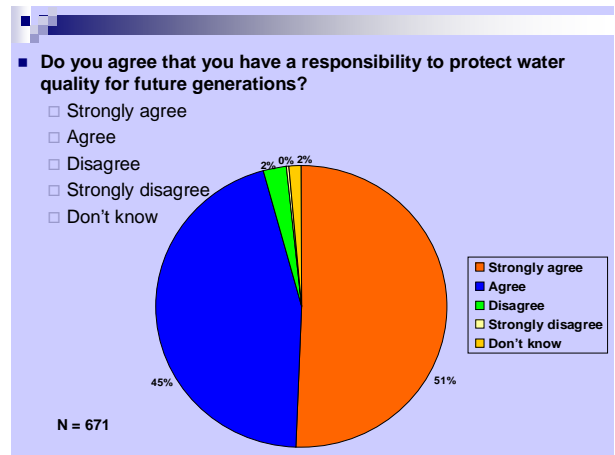
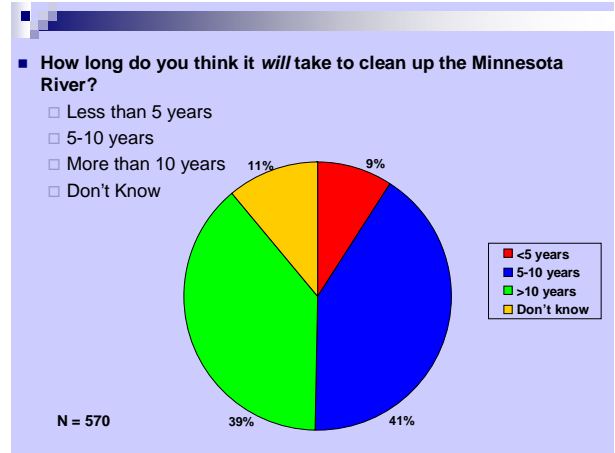
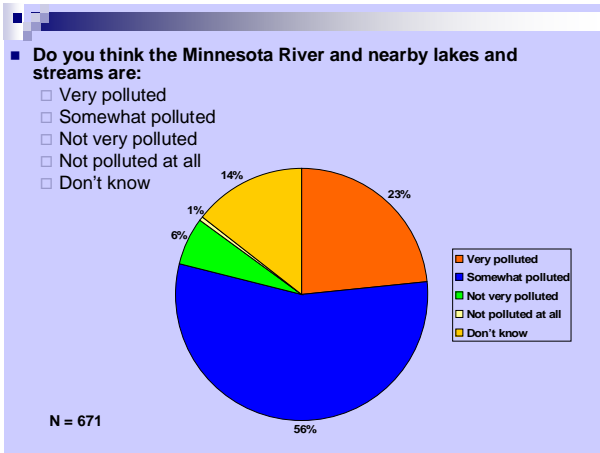
A total of 673 residents from the Minnesota River watershed completed the survey (Table 1). The cooperation rate of the survey was 79 percent.¹ A cooperation rate of 80 percent is well above the average for professional marketing firms. Cooperation rate means that once we reached an eligible respondent, eight of ten respondents agreed to participate in the survey. The statistical margin of error was 3.7%.

Table 1. Calling statistics for the Minnesota River survey conducted in August of 2005 by St. Cloud State University.

Disposition Record	Frequency
Completed Calls-weighted shown (unweighted n=674)	673
Not Working Numbers	1,127
Not Eligible – Respondent not available during the period of the study, illness, out of town.	26
Callbacks – Appointments made but contact could not be made with designated respondent.	525
Refusals-most recalled for additional attempt	174
Answering Machine – Live contact could not be.	772
No Answers – Probable non-working numbers but some may be respondents on vacation, etc.	660
Language or Hearing Problem	47
Fax/Modem	200
Business Phone	299
Busy – Live contact could not be made.	152
Call Blocking	59
Partial – Attempt was made to complete survey but was unsuccessful	2
Total Calls Placed	4,717
Not Attempted – Not released by calling software	336
Total Sample Size	5,053

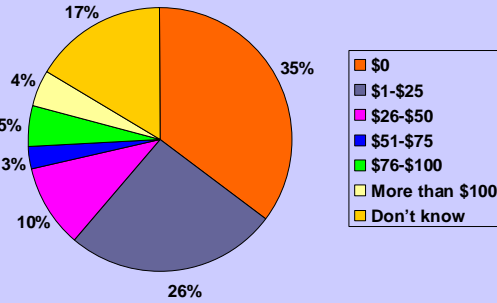
¹ Cooperation rate is determined by adding the completions to the refusals and dividing the completions by the sum of the completions and refusals.

SURVEY RESULTS



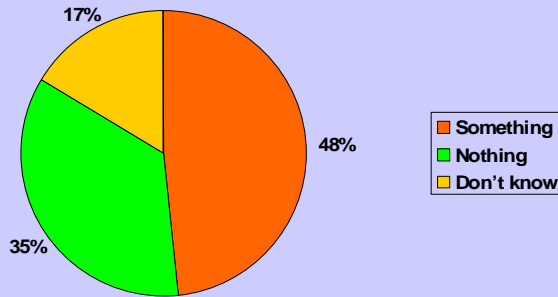
■ How much would your family be willing to pay annually to support water quality protection and improvement of the MN river and nearby streams/lakes?

- \$0
- \$1-\$25
- \$26-\$50
- \$51-\$75
- \$76-\$100
- >\$100



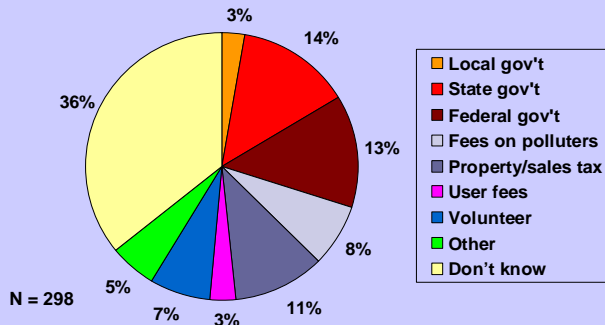
N = 645

Willingness to Contribute to the clean up efforts of the Minnesota River



■ Do you have any suggestions about how these payments should be collected?

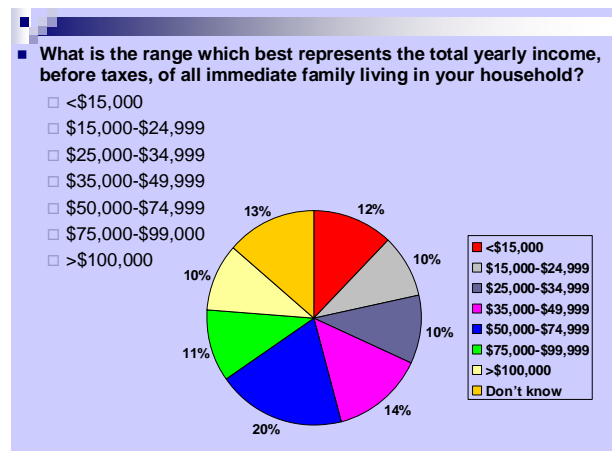
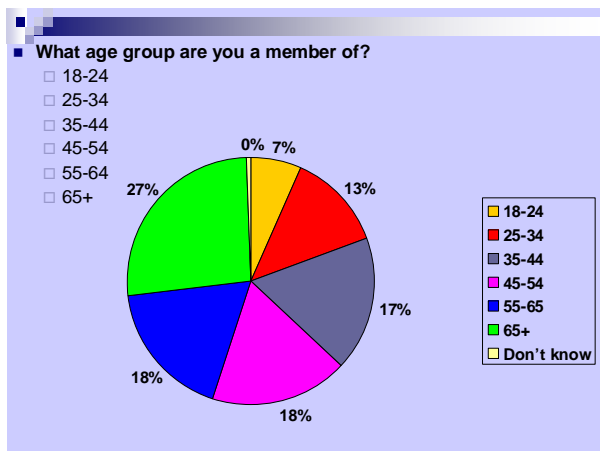
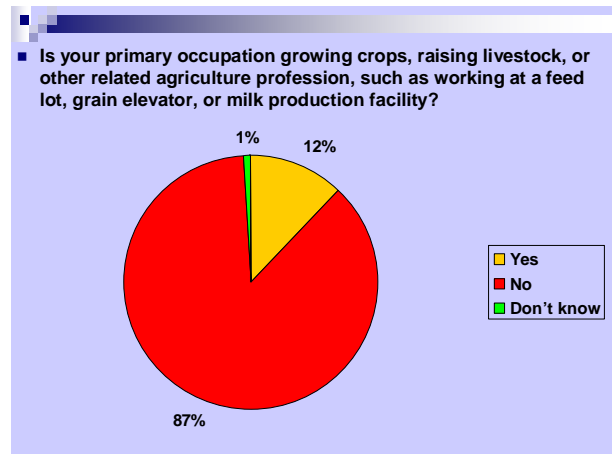
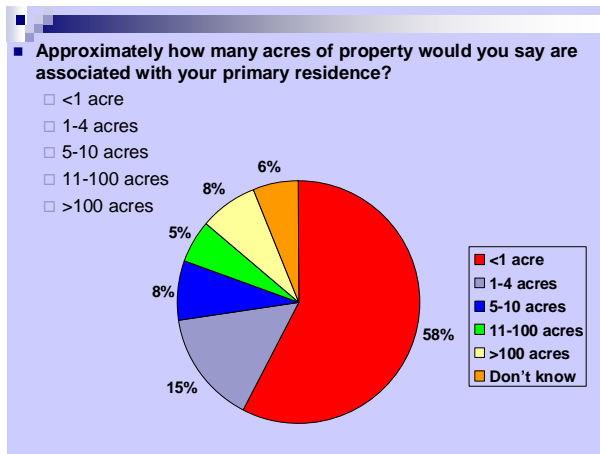
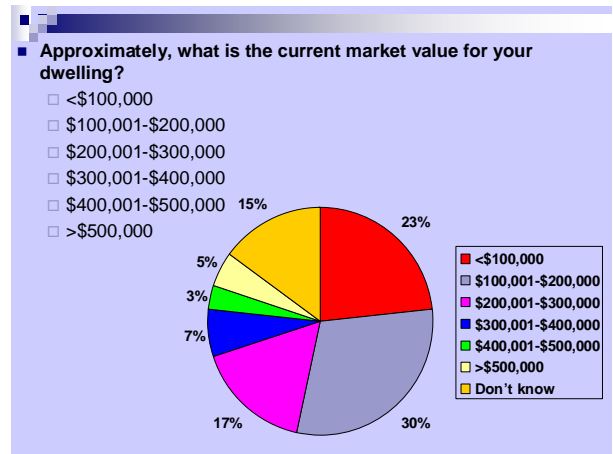
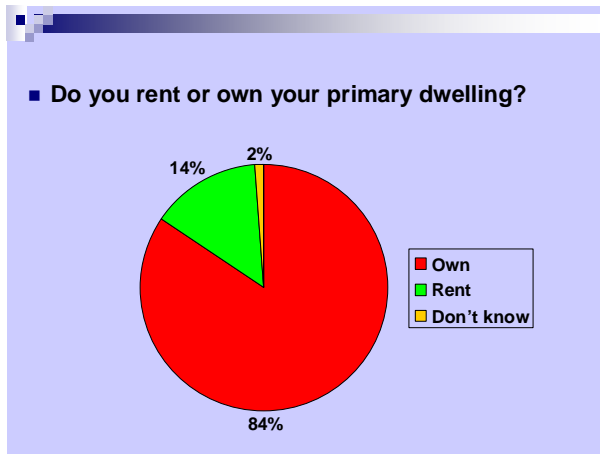
- Local government
- State government
- Federal government
- User fees (on boaters, fishing licenses, hunters)
- Property/sales taxes
- Fees on polluters
- Volunteer contributions
- Other



N = 298

DEMOGRAPHICS

To better understand the relationship between participant lifestyles, family attributes, and other demographics, the following questions were also asked of the respondents. Many of these demographics were obtained for statistical analysis and to help us verify the presence of a random sample. Sexes were represented in a statistically equal manner (males = 49% and females = 51%).



Survey Staff Information:

Steven C. Wagner

Dr. Wagner holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science and a Master of Public Administration from Northern Illinois University. Dr. Wagner earned his Bachelor of Science in Political Science from Illinois State University. Dr. Wagner teaches courses in American Politics and Public and Nonprofit Management at St. Cloud State University. Dr. Wagner joined the SCSU Survey in 1997. Before coming to SCSU, Dr. Wagner taught in Kansas where he engaged in community-based survey research and before that was staff researcher for the U.S. General Accounting Office. Dr. Wagner has written many papers on taxation, health care delivery and state politics and has published articles on voting behavior, federal funding of local services and organizational decision making. Dr. Wagner, with Dr. Frank, recently published two texts on Jesse Ventura's election as Minnesota's Governor and a book chapter on the campaign.

SCSU SURVEY LAB STUDENT DIRECTORS/CONSULTANTS SENIOR STUDENT LAB DIRECTORS/SUPERVISORS

Ms. Nicole Kahler, Fifth Year, Social Work Major
Roseville, Minnesota

Ms. Sara Lorchman, Junior, Political Science Major
Willmar, Minnesota

STUDENT TECHNICAL CONSULTANT

Mr. Jason Amunrud, Senior, Computer Science Major
Shoreview, Minnesota

Summary Report prepared by Deanne Kolander and Shannon Fisher
Water Resources Center, Minnesota State University, Mankato