



# Cloverleaf Lakes Protective Association

## RECREATIONAL WATER USE SURVEY RESULTS

October 6, 2005



Total useable returns: 245	Surveys mailed: 412	Return rate: 59%
----------------------------	---------------------	------------------

Grass Lake	Pine Lake	Round Lake	Other
------------	-----------	------------	-------

	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Other	TOTAL %
Full-Time Residents	46	65%	61	45%	17	77%	11	55%
Seasonal Residents	25	35%	72	52%	5	23%	3	43%
Other			4	3%			1	2%
TOTAL	71		137		22		15	

**FINDINGS:**

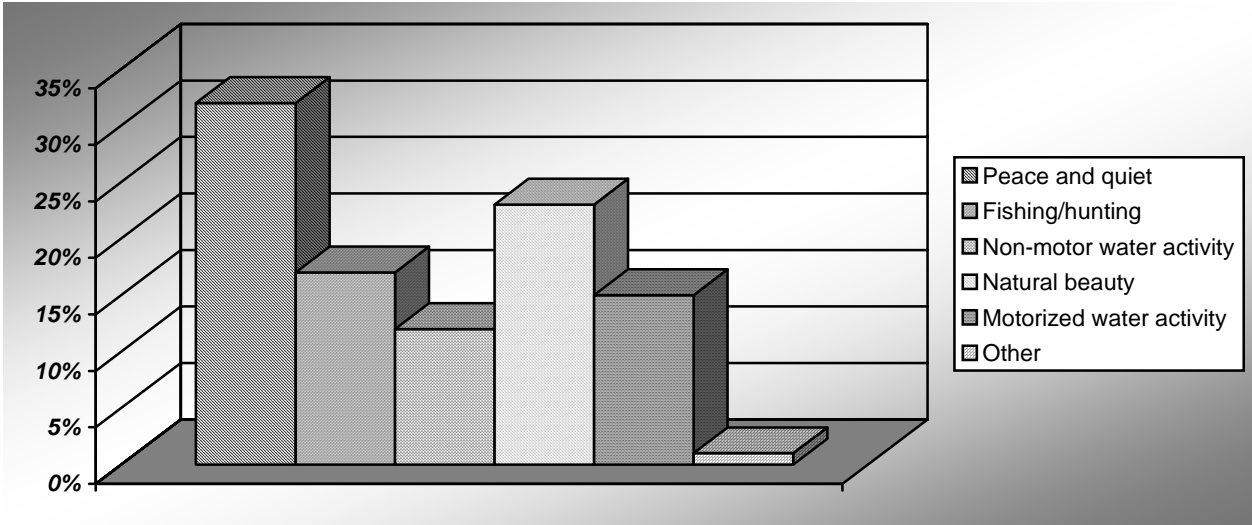
Of the 245 usable surveys returned, 135 reported they are full time residents. 209 of the 412 entries in the Lake Association database are coded as full time residents. Hence the return rate for full time residents was 65%. Using the same methodology, the return rate for seasonal residents was 52%. Responses did not differ significantly for full-time versus seasonal residents or location of home; therefore, this data is presented in the aggregate for all respondents.

**How many years have you lived in this area?**

< 1 year	3%
1-5 years	17%
6-10 years	15%
> 10 years	65%

**FINDINGS:** The majority of participants who returned the survey are long time residents. 65% have lived here more than 10 years and 80% have lived here over 6 years.

**1. I enjoy the lakes for:**



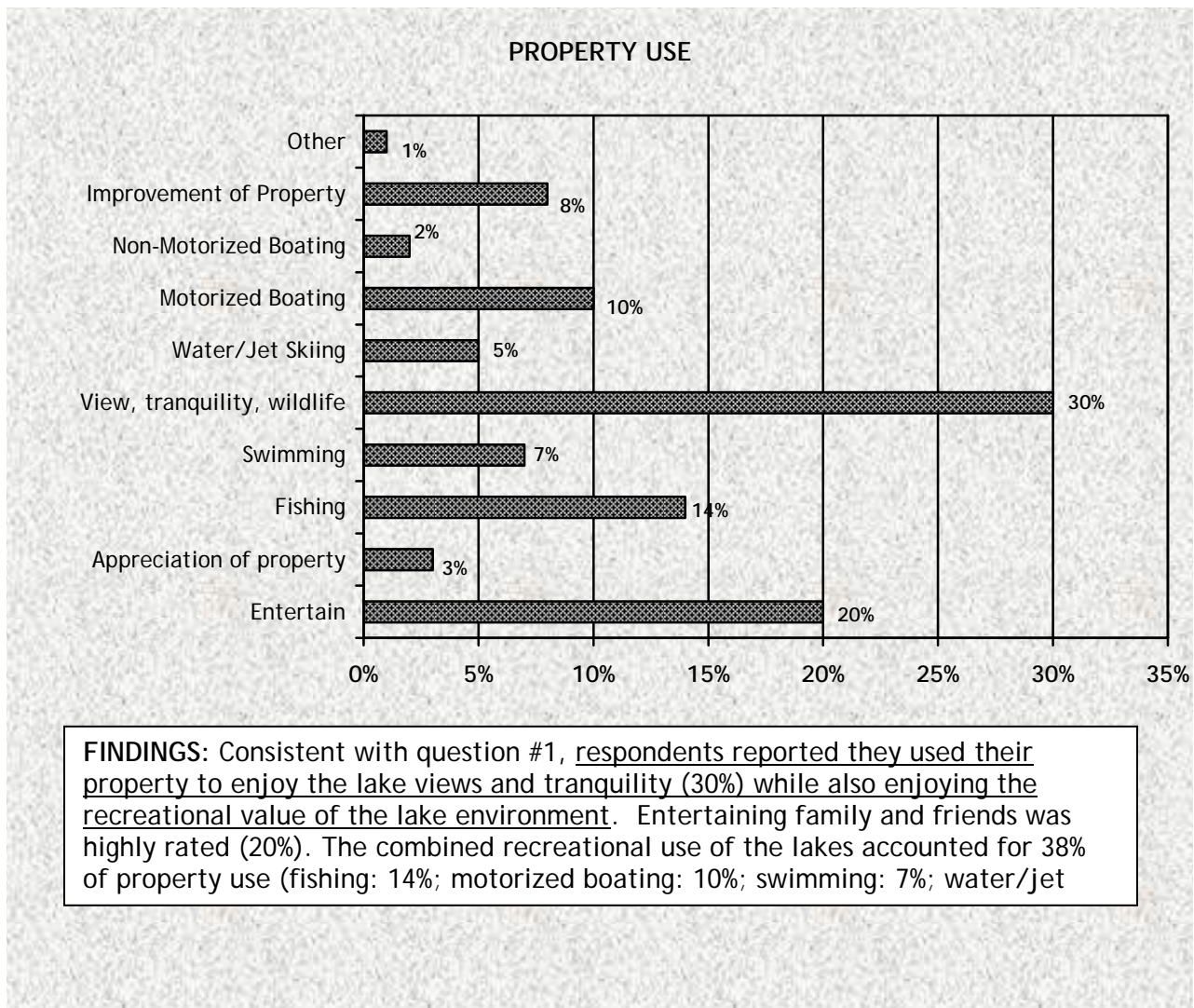
**FINDINGS:** Respondents value the peace and tranquility of the lake environment while also enjoying its recreational opportunities. More than half (55%) rated peace & quiet and natural beauty as important to them. Nearly 45% report enjoying the lakes for their recreational value (fishing/hunting - 23%; non-motor boating - 12%; motorized sport - 15%).

2. How many of the following watercraft are kept at your property?

Type of Watercraft	Number	Percentage	Type of Watercraft	Number	Percentage
Pontoons	111	20%	Jet Skis	38	7%
Canoes	98	18%	Paddleboats	37	7%
Rowboats	62	11%	Sailboats	16	3%
Motor 25-90	60	11%	Kayaks	14	2%
Motor <25	58	10%	Other	6	1%
Motor >90	56	10%			

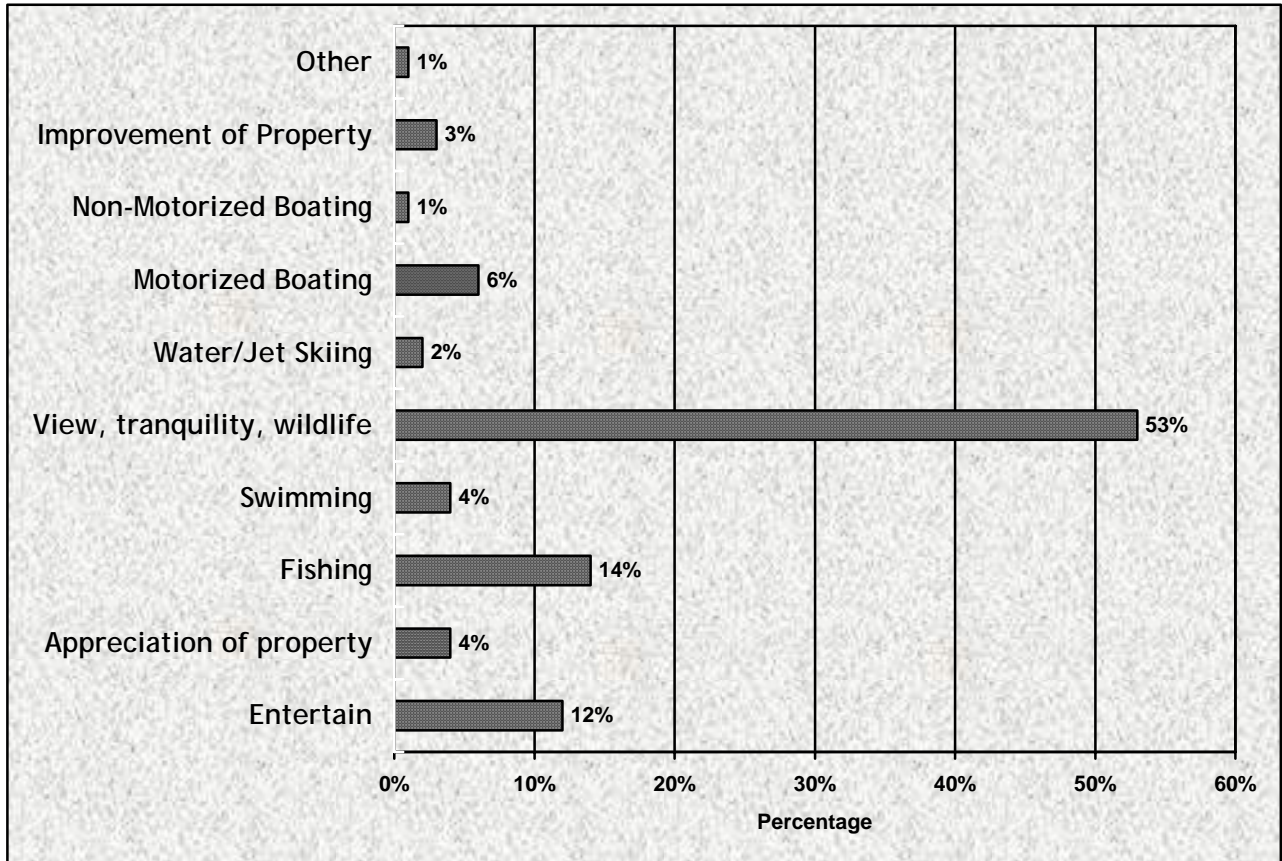
**FINDINGS:** Watercraft of all types are kept at Cloverleaf Lakes. Pontoon boats were the most mentioned (20%) with canoes ranking second (18%).

3. How do you use your property and the lakes?



**FINDINGS:** Consistent with question #1, respondents reported they used their property to enjoy the lake views and tranquility (30%) while also enjoying the recreational value of the lake environment. Entertaining family and friends was highly rated (20%). The combined recreational use of the lakes accounted for 38% of property use (fishing: 14%; motorized boating: 10%; swimming: 7%; water/jet

4. Which is most important to you?



**FINDINGS:** The majority of respondents (53%) reported that “enjoying the view, peace, tranquility, and wildlife” was most important to them of all the choices given in question # 3. The combined recreational uses of the lakes accounted for 27% and entertaining friends and family were reported at 12%.

5. How many days do you fish?

142 respondents (60%) indicated they use the lakes for fishing. This accounts for 3408 fishing days. While some fish more than others, the average for those who fish is 24 days/year.

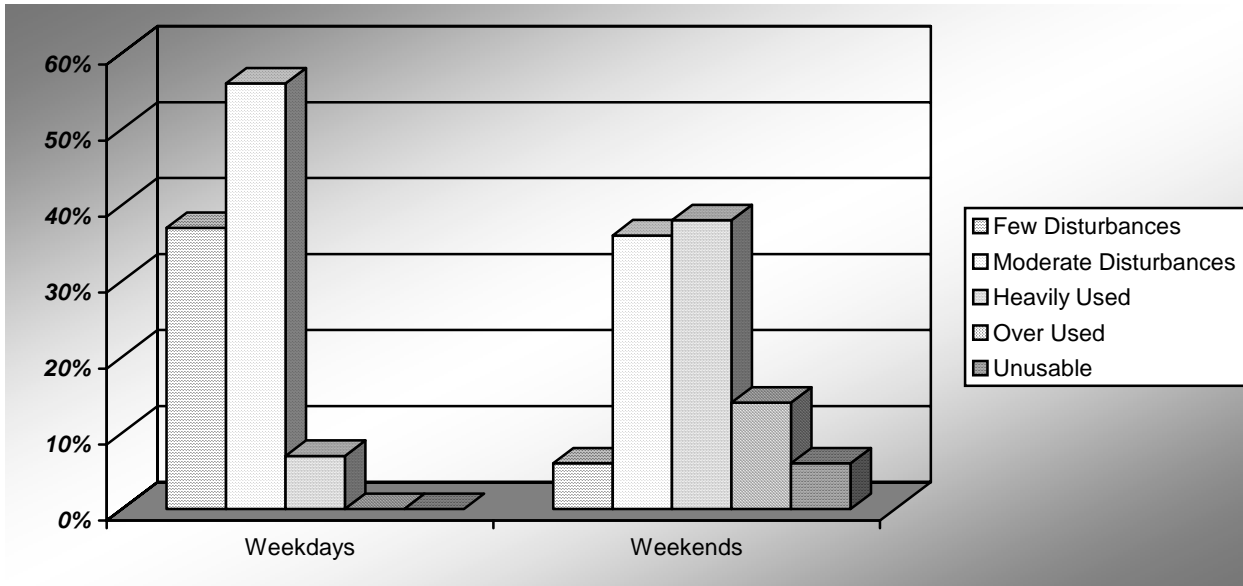
69 respondents (29%) indicated they ice fished. This accounts for 748 ice fishing days. While some fish more than others, the average for those who ice fish is 10.8 days per year.

6. How do you rate the fishing quality?

Excellent	4%
Good	36%
Fair	50%
Poor	10%

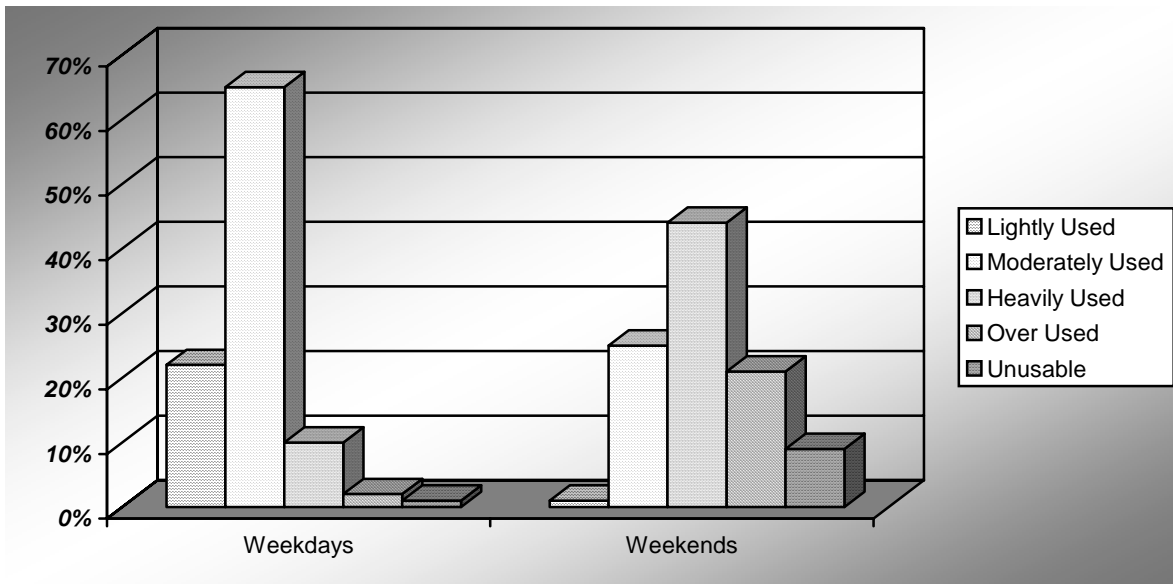
**FINDINGS:** Of those who fish, 40% are happy with the fishing quality. 50% think it’s only fair. Only 10% rate it poor.

7. Which statement best describes the peace and tranquility at the lakes?



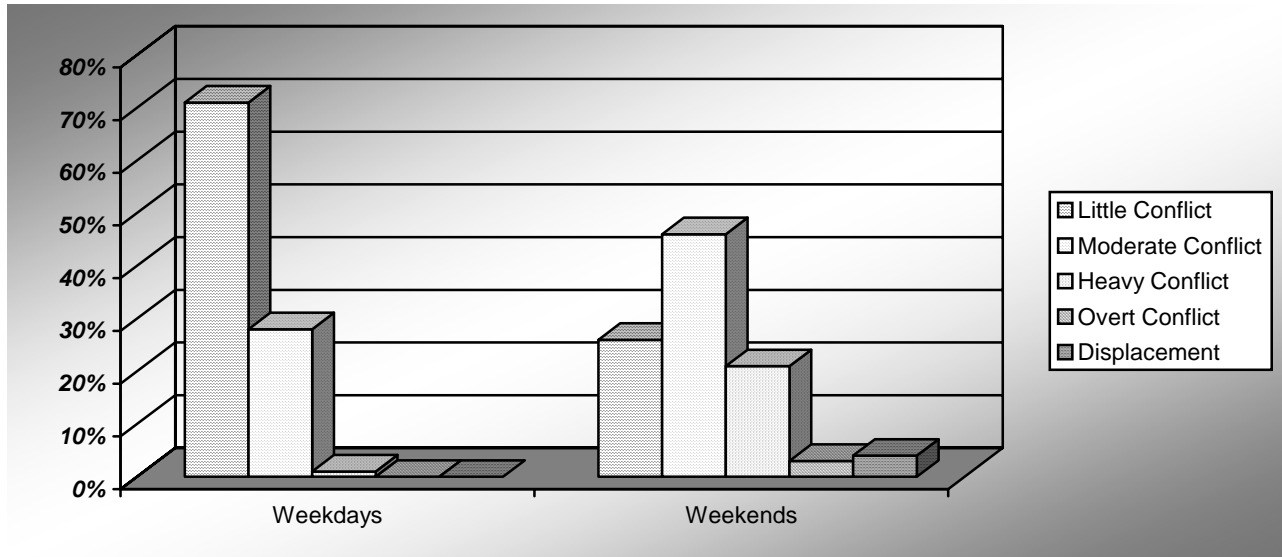
**FINDINGS:** The data clearly demonstrates that weekdays are more peaceful and tranquil than weekends. Respondents overwhelmingly report that there are few to moderate disturbances on weekdays (93%). On the weekends, residents report less peace and tranquility (42% report few to moderate disturbances) and report that the lakes are more heavily used (38%). Those who feel it is over-used or unusable on the weekends make up 20% of the respondents.

8. Which statement best describes the boat traffic the lake receives?



**FINDINGS:** The data clearly demonstrates that weekdays receive far less boat traffic than weekends. In describing boat traffic, respondents once again are satisfied with the amount of use on weekdays (87% report light or moderate use). On weekends, boat traffic increases with 44% feeling the lakes are heavily used and 30% believe the lakes are over-used (21%) or unusable (9%). 26% still believe boat traffic is light or moderate on the weekends.

## 9. Which best describes your experience with other boaters on the water?



**FINDINGS:** Respondents report more conflict on weekends than on weekdays. During the week, conflict is at a minimum with 99% reporting little to moderate conflict. While this figure decreases (72%) on weekends, conflict is still not a major issue. 28% believe conflict is high: heavy (21%); overt (3%); displacement (4%)

## 10. Comment Section

121 respondents (49% of the total) wrote comments that accounted for 192 statements regarding specific issues. These comments are organized into seven (7) categories plus a miscellaneous grouping. Residents who responded tended to have strong feelings about their concerns. What follows is a summary of these remarks. The full verbatim list of comments are in Appendix 2.

### Need for Better Enforcement (14% of the 192 statements made by 121 respondents)

Nearly half (13) of the comments in this category were concerned about the abuse of the no-wake ordinance in general (not specifically related to channel). While these comments called for better enforcement, several responses cautioned about over-regulating our lakes. Several commented on the limited knowledge of rules as a problem. Other issues raised were: pontoon boats coming too close to shorelines, enforcing speed limits on the roads around the lakes, drunk party-goers on the sand bar, and fireworks beyond the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.

Recommendation: Reinforce the “laws” of the lake so lack of knowledge is not causing the abuses. As a possible deterrent, consider intermittent enforcement (particularly at busy times) and publish the number of citations given and for what.

### Limit Jet Skis and Large Motors (14% of the 192 statements made by 121 respondents)

Of the 26 comments in this category, half advocated for limiting the motor size on boats that use our lakes while the other half were annoyed by disturbances caused by jet skis. These comments directly support the strong survey response for peace and tranquility. As the survey pointed out, this is primarily a problem on summer weekends.

Recommendation: Educate residents about regulations regarding the use of public lakes. This would also be an opportunity to define a “public lake” and how this designation benefits lake residents.

### **Usage of Lakes (13% of the 192 statements made by 121 respondents)**

Of the 25 comments received in this category, half (12) felt the lakes are over-used, primarily by non-residents. Specific concerns were expressed about lengthy congregating of boats on the southwest shoreline of Pine Lake. The remainder of the comments acknowledged the expected increase of lake usage on weekends and during summer months.

Recommendation: Educate residents about the concept of a lake "carrying capacity," and provide estimates of the capacity of our lakes as compared to our actual usage.

### **Slow No-Wake (12% of the 192 statements made by 121 respondents)**

This survey was administered in the summer of 2005 at the same time the channel slow no-wake ordinance was implemented. Understandably, this change resulted in strong comments on the survey. Of the 23 remarks in this category, five (5) were pleased with the change, 16 were unhappy, and two (2) wanted to see a no-wake zone in the Adams Beach area. Of those unhappy with the new ordinance, nine (9) were concerned about the crowding effect on Pine Lake.

Recommendation: Educate residents as to why this ordinance was enacted. Describe the width of the channel and then state DNR regulations. Focus on safety concerns.

### **Lake Levels (9% of the 192 statements made by 121 respondents)**

16 comments were made about this year's lake levels, probably resulting from low water levels caused by drought conditions and the man-made lowering of our lake levels. While a couple people are happy with the lake levels, the majority (14) of the comments were unhappy with low water levels.

Recommendation: Educate residents as to how the optimum level was determined, and how it will be monitored.

### **Boat Launch Fees (3% of the 192 statements made by 121 respondents)**

Of the 10 comments regarding the newly instituted boat launch fee, more than half (6) didn't understand why residents needed to pay a fee to launch their boats since they support the lakes through their taxes. A few others believe fees should be higher.

Recommendation: Publish the rules that prohibit charging some and not others for launching at a public boat launch facility.

### **Miscellaneous Comments (33% of the 192 statements made by 121 respondents)**

These miscellaneous comments were put into 10 categories:

1. Enjoy the Lakes (4%): Eight (8) individuals reflected on their enjoyment of lake living.
2. Appreciate Work of Association and Volunteers (4%): Seven (7) respondents took time to express their appreciation for work being done on their behalf. Four (4) specifically appreciated the survey.
3. Fish Stocking (3%): Fish stocking and protecting the lake habitat were 6 concerns expressed regarding fishing as a recreational use of the lakes.
4. Weeds (2%): Of the four (4) comments, three (3) were concerned about too many weeds.
5. Safety Concerns (2%): Four (4) people expressed concern about unsafe conditions resulting from speeding on roads along the lakes and inadequate street lighting.

6. Long-Term Residents (2%): Three (3) people commented on how long they have lived on the lakes.
7. Gibson Island (2%): Three (3) of the four (4) comments were favorable toward the purchase of the Island.
8. Shoreline Concerns (2%): Four (4) comments call on the Association to pay attention to shoreline habitat erosion.
9. Light Pollution (1%): Two people commented on the over-use of lake lighting.
10. Other single issues (11%): 22 other issues were raised by individuals, including: concern about taxes, keeping the lakes clean, dog issues, no representation for 2<sup>nd</sup> home owners, widening the culvert, swimmer's itch, dredging the channel, and enforcement of the no-wake ordinance on Round Lake.

Survey distributed and compiled: Summer 2005

Data entered and compiled by Mary Pardee, *River Muse*  
Data analyzed and reported by Esther Letven, Facilitator

Report reviewed and submitted to Cloverleaf Lakes Protective Association  
October 6, 2005

Recreational Use Study Team  
*Jim Aumann, Jim and Nancy Green, Marv and Esther Letven, Carol Wegner, Mary Wetzel,  
Bob Korth, UW-Extension, UW-Stevens Point, (consultant)*