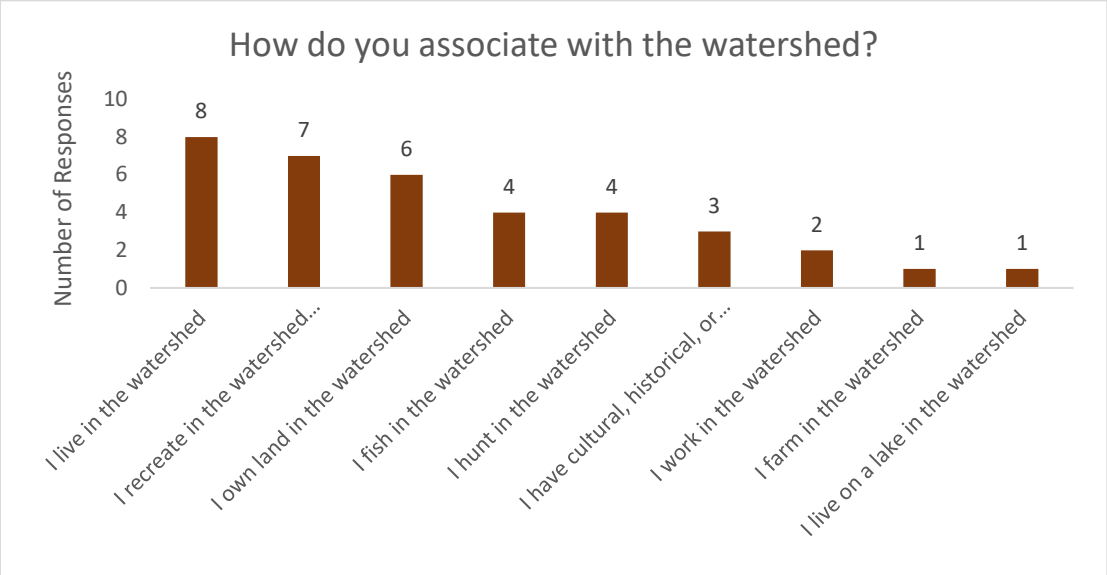
Wild Rice - Marsh River Watershed
One Watershed, One Plan

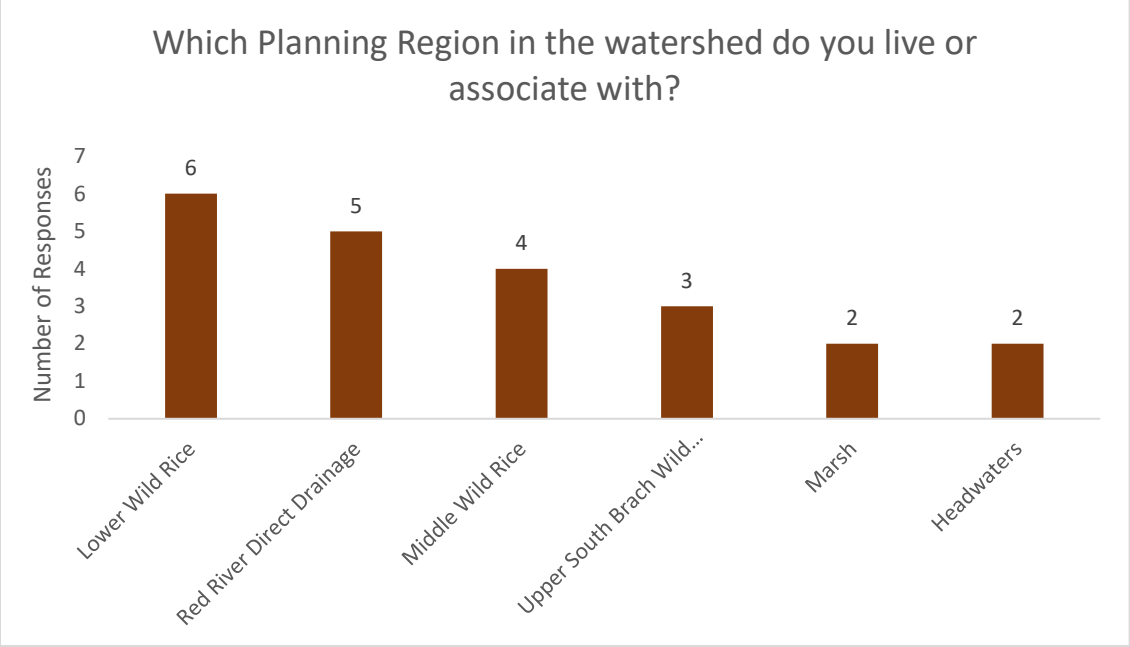
Public Meeting Summary

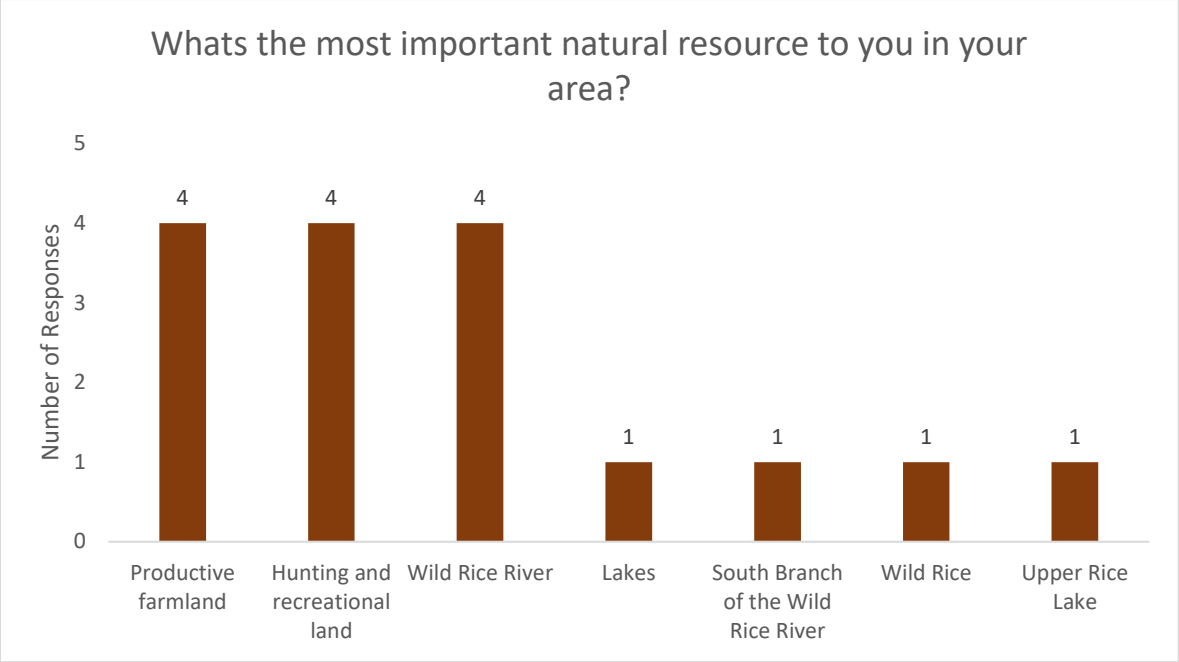
On July 22, the Wild Rice – Marsh One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) partnership held their public kick-off open house. The purpose of this open house was to gather information to incorporate into the 1W1P including:

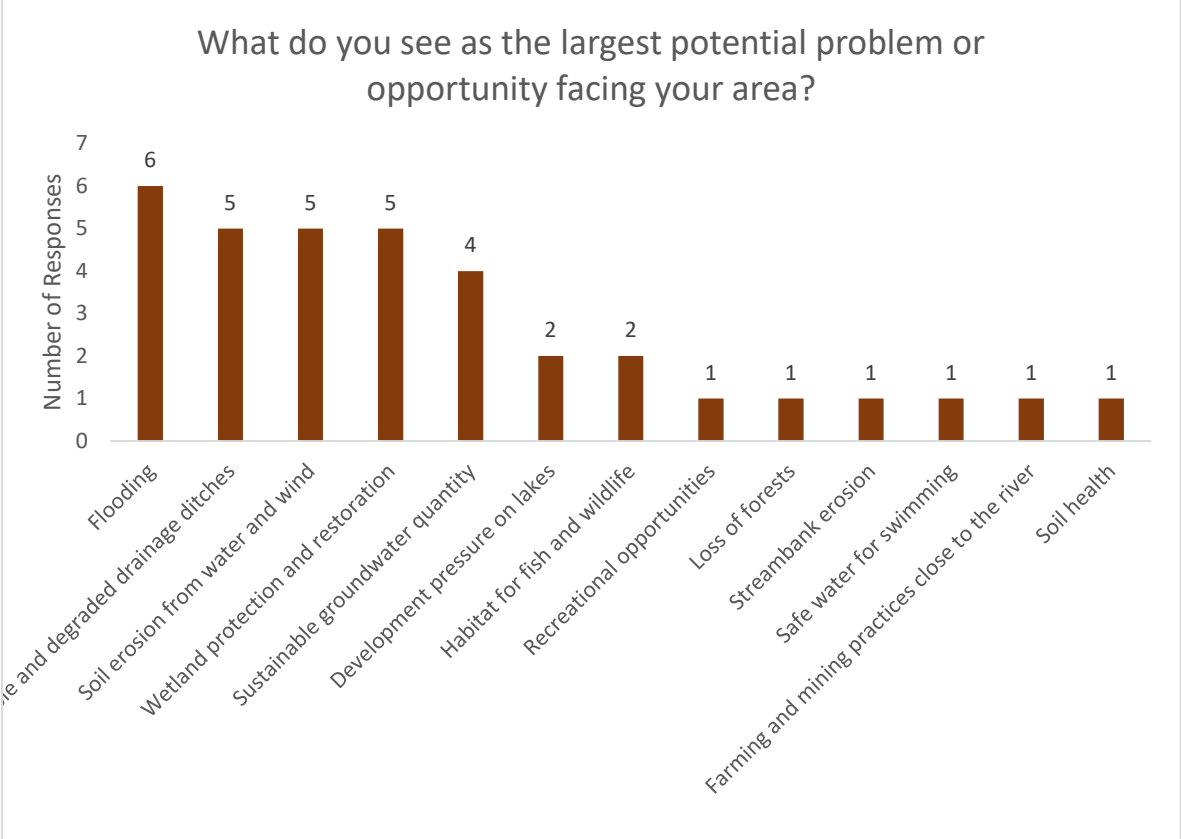
- What are their top-rated issues and opportunities they would like included in the plan?
- What resources would they like prioritized for protection and restoration?

Below is a summary of the public survey responses.





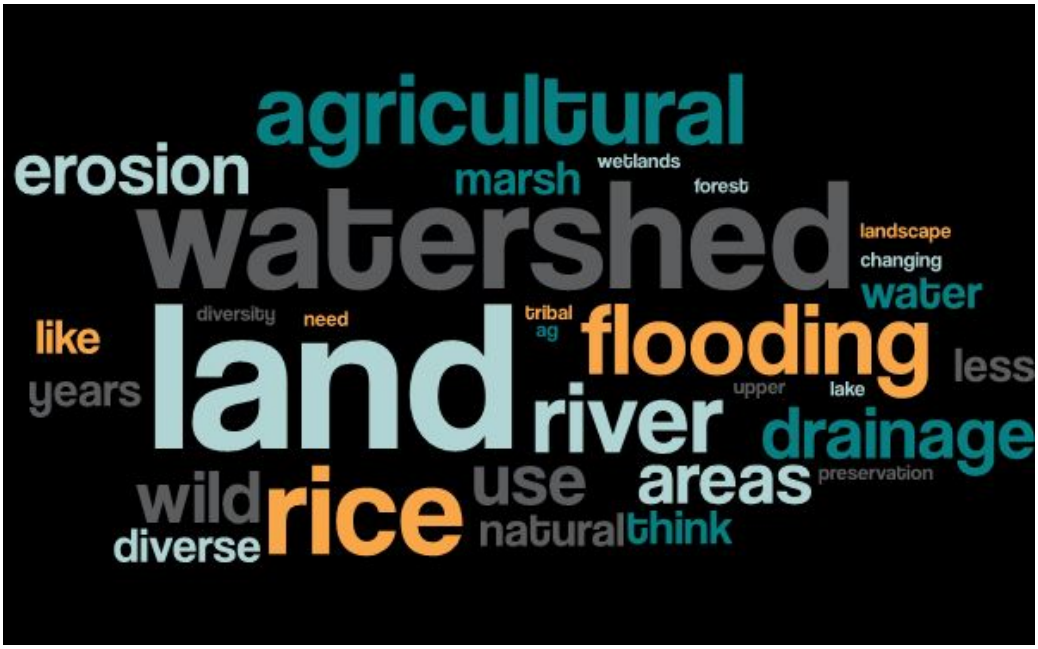

Whats the most important natural resource to you in your area?
Number of Responses
0
1
2
3
4
5
4
4
4
1
1
1
1
Productive farmland
Hunting and recreational land
Wild Rice River
Lakes
South Branch of the Wild Rice River
Wild Rice
Upper Rice Lake


What do you see as the largest potential problem or opportunity facing your area?
Number of Responses
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
6
5
5
5
4
2
2
1
1
1
1
1
1
Flooding
and degraded drainage ditches
Soil erosion from water and wind
Wetland protection and restoration
Sustainable groundwater quantity
Development pressure on lakes
Habitat for fish and wildlife
Recreational opportunities
Loss of forests
Streambank erosion
Safe water for swimming
Farming and mining practices close to the river
Soil health

Are there any topics, resources, problems or opportunities that we didn't cover during this survey?

- Can we take monies from this 1W1P and try to maximize them by signing up for RCPP, or other matching funds or partners (DU, PF, TNC, etc...)
- Gravel mining to close to the river. Chemical run off.
- The mixture of different chemicals, etc. combined together leaching from runoff into the river could possibly cause health issues in the long term for fish, wildlife and even people.
- Tribal presence in watershed.

Using just 4-5 words, when you think of the Wild Rice - Marsh Watershed, what comes to mind?



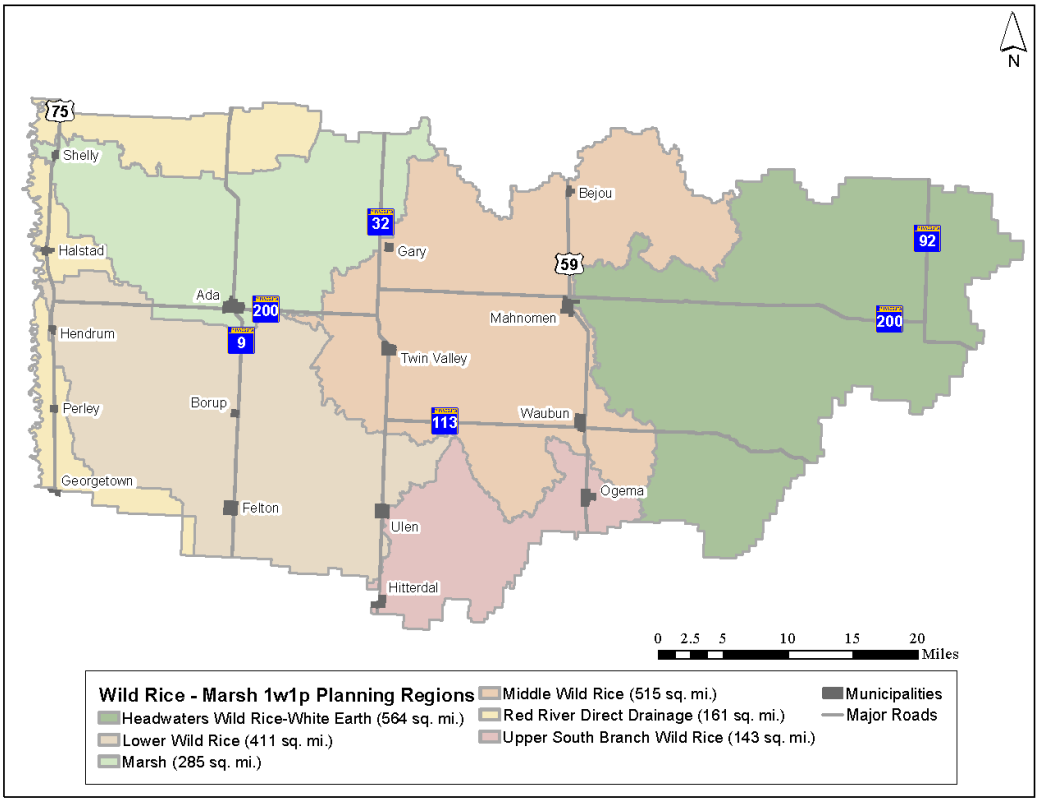
Considering the rate of land use change in the watershed, what do you think the Wild Rice - Marsh Watershed will look like in 50 years?

- I fear it will be mostly cleared, drained ag land.
- I worry about the loss of trees we are seeing and the impact that artificial drainage systems are having on the watershed.
- More agricultural.
- More developed, hopefully less run off.
- Much the same with the exception of more development around lakes.
- That depends on what is done along the watershed. I have seen water quality degrade over the past years.
- I think the wetland areas will be the most affected.

What would you like the Wild Rice - Marsh Watershed to look like in 50 years?

- Cleaner. As a small boy I use to swim in it. Today I really do not care to. The more polluted, the more apt waterborne illness type situations could possibly arise. Not to mention the fish and wildlife be affected as well.
- I would love to see an increase in trees planted, especially in the agricultural areas. We are losing tree rows by the minute it seems.
- I'd like the river system to be natural, clean and used for recreation and as a natural resource.
- More diverse land use.
- More natural areas, less channelization of streams and ditches, productive and sustainable agricultural land.
- Similar to what it is now, more public land in sensitive areas, less erosion, maintain forest connectivity.
- Buffers, restored wetlands, restore meanders.
- In the headwaters where I live I hope it will be the way it is now.

Below is a summary of suggested areas and resources for protection and restoration by Planning Region.



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Headwaters

- Protect surface water by preserving trees and forests.
- Protect forest area. Focus on "lower value" land due to reduced crop output. Offer financial incentive to leave forests natural.
- Protect soil with cover crops. It will help store water. Provide financial incentives.
- Protect the streams and lakes identified by the MPCA and DNR.
- Fix ag land with steep fields. Protect them from water erosion.
- Fix unused wells. A large number of unused wells need sealing.

Middle Wild Rice

- Protect calcareous fens.
- Protect drinking water.
- Protect the 59 corridor for visitor movement.
- Fix streams and ditches. On crop land we need more buffers, side inlets, and water & sediment control structures.
- Fix cropland with slopes. Use cover crops, perennial cover and hay. We need more funding for these practices.

Lower Wild Rice

- Protect the Wild Rice – Marsh River confluence with the Red River. Grand Forks and Winnipeg reliance on drinking water supply.
- Protect Felton Prairie SNA/WMA. Protect from aggregate development. See Felton Prairie Stewardship Plan.
- Protect Felton Creek. It is a designated trout stream. Promote groundwater recharge and provide recreational access.
- Fix ditch in section 9 Lee Township. It needs outlet repair.
- Fix the upper reach of Felton Creek. There is a potential water storage site in a large cattail slough with very little open water. It would benefit wildlife and provide storage.

Upper South Branch Wild Rice

- Protect calcareous fens.
- Protect the diversity of land in the area.
- Protect groundwater supply and promote recharge near fens.

Marsh Creek

- Protect Shelly and Ada public water supplies. Groundwater used for consumption is over 10,000 years old and unique. Involve city utility staff in protection.

Red River Direct Drainage

- Fix degraded streams.
- Protect Halstad public water supply. 10,000 year old water is drawn for customers in this community. Involve the city utility staff for protection.
- Concerns that increasingly extreme weather events have the potential to impact the Red River.