

Lamoille River Watershed Survey Results (Basin 7)

The information highlighted below was provided by the 139 people who filled out the 2020 Lamoille Watershed Public Survey during the months of January through April 2020. This feedback will be considered in the development of the 2021 Lamoille Tactical Basin Plan. A special thanks to all those folks who submitted responses. To learn more about the Lamoille River Tactical Basin please visit our webpage at: <https://dec.vermont.gov/water-investment/watershed-planning/tactical-basin-planning/basin7>.

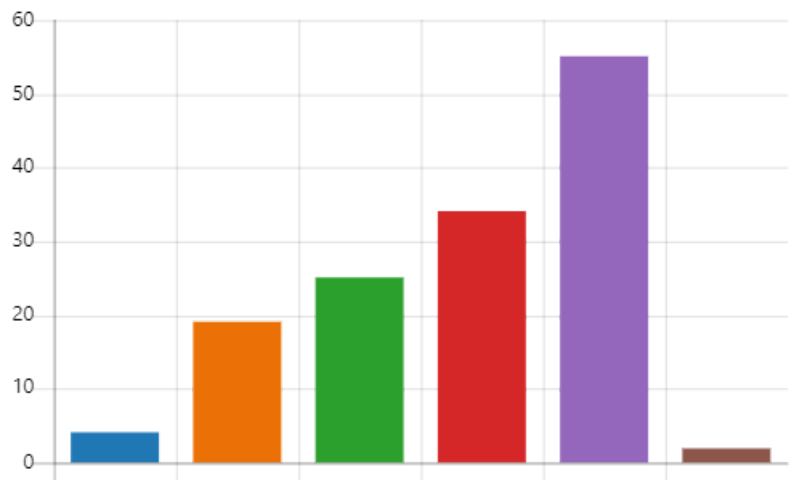
139
Responses

16:04
Average time to complete

Closed
Status

1. How familiar are you with Tactical Basin Plans and the planning process?

● I could give a presentation on ...	4
● I've read plans and provided f...	19
● I've looked at plans, but have ...	25
● I've heard of basin planning, b...	34
● This is the first time I've heard ...	55
● Other	2



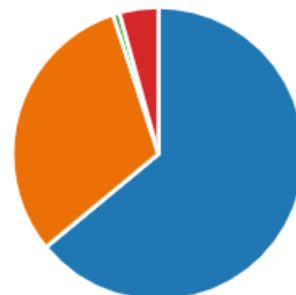
2. How familiar are you with the Lake Champlain Phosphorus TMDL?

● I can give a presentation on it.	9
● I am involved with implementi...	15
● I've heard of it and know a little.	92
● This is the first time I've heard ...	18
● Other	5



3. Do you live in Basin 7 (Lamoille Watershed)?

● Yes	89
● No	43
● Part of the year	1
● I don't know	6



4. Do you have a surface water on your property and/or are adjacent to a waterbody?

● Yes	44
● No	52



5. What is the name of the waterbody?

43

Responses

6. Are you interested in improving water quality on your property?

● Yes	23
● Not right now.	5
● I don't need to.	16



7. Please provide contact information if you'd like to talk to someone about implementing water quality projects on your property.

18

Responses

8. What is your primary town and state of residence?

139

Responses

Latest Responses

"Fairfax"

"Fairfax, VT"

"Hardwick"

11. Are there any surface waters that you highly value in Basin 7?

Yes	88
No	10
I don't know	24
None that I'd like to mention	17



12. Please list surface waters that you highly value in Basin 7.

90

Responses

13. Are you aware of any threats to the current use of this resource(s)?

Yes	59
No	54



14. Please describe the threat(s) and recommended solution(s).

57

Responses

15. Can you describe any water quality concerns you might have about surface waters in Basin 7?

Yes	55
No	55



16. Please describe the surface waters or areas of specific concern in relation to surface waters in Basin 7.

62

Responses

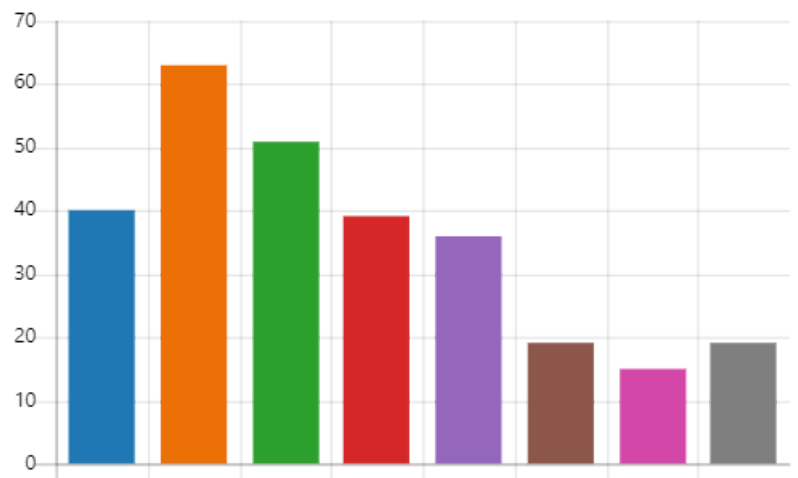
17. Please briefly describe any water quality-related projects you are aware are happening in Basin 7.

49

Responses

18. What are the biggest obstacles (in your opinion) for achieving water quality health in your area?

● Lack of staff resources (e.g. no...	40
● Lack of funding	63
● Lack of interest from commun...	51
● Lack of information available t...	39
● Lack of access to available fun...	36
● Not aware of water quality he...	19
● I don't know	15
● Other	19



19. Please share any solutions to the address obstacle(s).

62

Responses

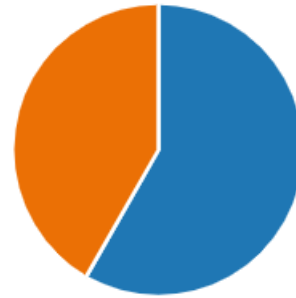
20. What additional recommendations, suggestions, or water quality concerns do you have that you would like to see addressed in the Basin 7 2021 plan update?

29

Responses

21. Would you like to be notified by email of any upcoming public meetings?

● Yes 74
● No 53



22. Please enter your email below.

72

Responses

23. Were you able to provide the information you wanted to during this survey?

● Yes 123
● No 4



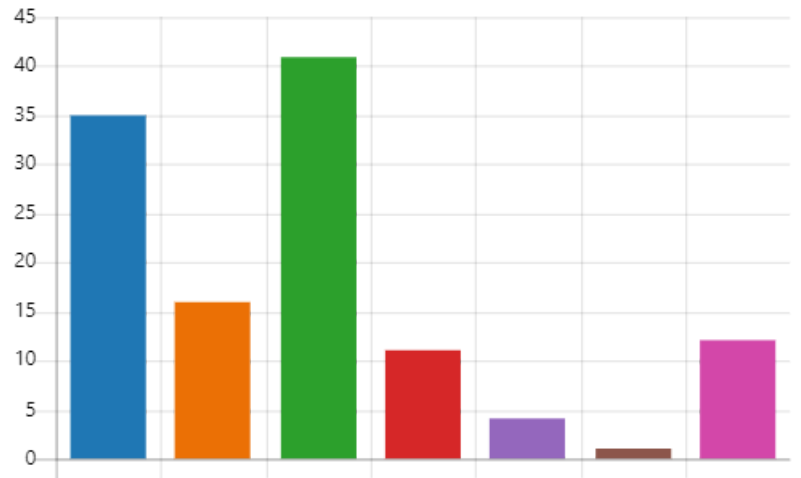
24. What information did you want to share, but were unable to?

2

Responses

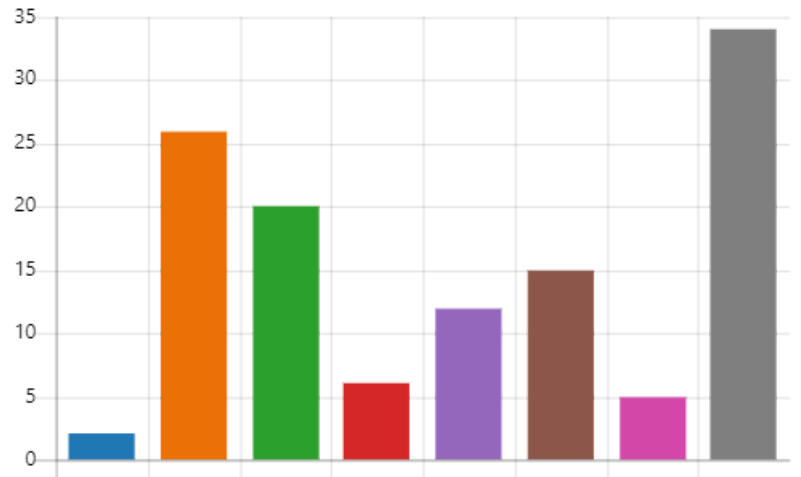
25. How did you find out about this survey?

Individual Email	35
Social Media	16
Front Porch Forum	41
Listserve (Group Email)	11
Website	4
Flyer	1
Other	12



26. Who shared the survey with you?

University	2
Regional Planning Commission	26
State of Vermont	20
Natural Resource Conservatio...	6
Municipality	12
Friend	15
Watershed Group	5
Other	34



27. How did you like this survey?

127
Responses

★★★★☆
3.99 Average Rating

2020 Lamoille Watershed Public Survey Results Summary

The information highlighted below was provided by the 139 people who filled out the 2020 Lamoille Watershed Public Survey during the months of January through April 2020. The summary provided here is in response to the long form questions. This feedback will be considered in the development of the 2021 Lamoille Tactical Basin Plan. A special thanks to all those folks who submitted responses. To learn more about the Lamoille River Tactical Basin please visit our webpage: <https://dec.vermont.gov/water-investment/watershed-planning/tactical-basin-planning/basin7>.

Areas of Importance

- Browns River
- Lamoille River mainstem (including many swimming, fishing spots, and rail trail)
- Lake Elmore
- Green River Reservoir
- Seymour River
- Brewster River
- Lake Lamoille
- Foote Brook - Journey's End
- Gihon River
- Smith Brook
- Wild Brook
- Elmore Branch
- Caspian Lake
- Long Pond
- Lake Eligo
- Roaring Brook in Underhill
- Moss Glen Falls
- Wolcott Pond
- North Branch Lamoille
- Terrill Gorge
- Kenfield Brook
- Lake Eden
- Zack Woods Pond
- Little Elmore Pond
- Wild Branch
- Deer Brook
- Hardwick Lake
- Milton Pond
- Wetland areas for wildlife watching
- Centerville Brook
- Rodman Brook
- Mallett's Bay
- Fishable tributaries to Upper Lamoille
- Sterling Pond

Threats and Recommendations

List of Threats from Public Survey	List of recommendations from Public Survey
Ag runoff (manure, fertilizer, pesticides, land erosion)	Ag best management practices (BMPs) (manure injection, cover crop, livestock fencing, barnyard management, manure management), green infrastructure, don't allow spreaders to leak; enforcement of regulations (buffers, spreading, cover crops)
Sedimentation in rivers, lakes, and wetlands from ag, forest, developed lands, and roads	Stormwater BMPs, riparian buffers, enforcement of regulations
Stormwater runoff (including chloride) from roads and development (parking lots & buildings)	Better stormwater management, less development near surface waters, green infrastructure

Residential runoff (fertilizers and chemicals)	Education to homeowners on impacts of chemical application
Erosion (river and lake shores)	Decrease impacts from flooding by protecting riparian areas
Forest fragmentation	Compact development
Loss of Green River Reservoir	Do not remove the dam
Irresponsible ATV use in rivers and wetlands	Signage
Loss of public swimming & fishing area access and over crowding	Protection, maintain parking areas
Development in riparian areas (lakes and rivers)	Protection of buffers; prevention of development in riparian areas
Loss of recreational value (swimming, paddling, ice skating, hiking, fishing, camping, wildlife observation)	Land acquisition and protection, management of sedimentation; hybrid approach of restoration/acquisition and low-impact uses
Rising population leading to development and use of resources	Better development practices, slow population growth
Motorized boat use on certain waterbodies where it impacts aesthetics and shorelines	Ban on motorized boats in certain areas
Flooding impacts to infrastructure and public safety	Riparian area & forest protection, buffers, hazard mitigation plan implementation
Invasive species	No recommendation
Loss/lack of riparian buffers impacting aquatic habitat	Plant buffers and encourage restoration, strategic wood addition
Logging impacts	Going beyond AMPs for protecting surface waters; manage state lands to a higher standard
Spreading of biosolids in floodplains and flood prone areas (PFAs contamination)	Don't allow spreading of biosolids on floodplains
Belvidere Asbestos Mine impairment	No recommendation
Presence of dams (siltation, impact on aquatic organism passage, low flows)	Dam removal and licensing updates
Failing septic systems (on lakes and rivers)	No recommendation

Additional Areas of Specific Concern

- Visibly cloudy water with algae, especially in areas where ag lands abut rivers without vegetated buffers (Lamoille, Mill Brook). Lower and middle Lamoille smelly, hot, and low during certain times of the year.
- Small buffers on ag land with manure applications
- Snow dumping into rivers during the winter
- Excessive nutrient runoff into surface waters (phosphorus)
- Is it safe to swim in the Lamoille?
- Drinking water loss and safety
- Trash in the rivers and dumping at river access sites
- Runoff of extensive road networks
- Changing of lakeshore housing use (part to year-round use)

- Bad tasting salmon downstream of Peterson Dam during fall
- Surface water withdrawal for irrigation
- Excessive and undersized stream crossings (culverts and bridges)
- Impacts from Climate change (increasing temps, dry streams, drought)
- Projects in the plan restricting development in flood zones
- Use of lampricide in the Lamoille impacting non-target species
- River manipulation – straightening, ditching, excavation

Water Quality Projects Happening

- Rain barrels and rain gardens (individual practices of Green Infrastructure)
- Culvert and bridge replacements
- Municipal road projects (ranging from large to small)
- Riparian plantings along surface waters (trees and shrubs)
- Development of town plans and bylaws to protect natural resources – stormwater management and riparian setbacks
- Municipal green infrastructure for stormwater treatment
- Stormwater master plan development resulting in priority projects
- School-based stormwater (colleges and primary schools) assessment and implementation
- Lay monitoring of rivers and lakes
- Greeter programs (for aquatic invasives)
- Lake Wise education and assessments for lakeshore properties
- Deer Brook Gully remediation
- Floodplain reconnection along the Lamoille and general floodplain mitigation projects
- Stream geomorphic assessments
- Johnson Arboretum on the Gihon River
- Habitat linkages in riparian and upland habitats for wildlife
- Lake Elmore Watershed Action Plan
- Wolcott feasibility study for village septic and water
- Hardwick bond support for upgrades to wastewater facility

Recommendations for Solutions

- More funding; incentivize practices and solutions; don't pit the environment against the economy; increased staffing; provide subsidies on products that protect water quality (e.g. rain barrels) (like efficiency Vermont); more reliable funding for groups putting the projects on the ground (watershed groups, conservation districts)
- Create more community focused conservation efforts to create a connection for the public
 - More coordinated community outreach and simple unified message that can be shared and spread via municipalities
 - More outreach to parties contributing to water quality problems
 - Have governor and other state officials provide a unified message of tree planting and water quality improvement
- More enforcement of regulations
- Make it easy to do projects

- Focus on proactive measures
- Focus funding on projects with multiple benefits
- Managing private roads/driveways online training for individuals with cost-share opportunities for those who receive trainings. Develop skilled workforce for hire.
- Provide training on gravel road maintenance (*already achieved through Municipal Roads General Permit)
- Inventory Class 4 and former Class 4 roads – develop proper close-out protocols and provide funding for the work
- Bans on floodplain manure spreading
- Develop and adopt a river segment for river clean-up (provide funding and truck to haul garbage)
- Deregulation
- Stop lampricide treatment in the Lamoille
- Involve educational institutions
- Increased water quality monitoring and more monitoring for emerging pollutants of concern
- Town conservation fund can be used for smaller restoration projects
- Use existing resources to educate (Lamoille Valley Rail Trail)

Additional recommendations to be addressed in the 2021 Lamoille Tactical Basin Plan

- Include a summary of projects in the basin plan (*we provide a summary of progress on projects from the previous plan and you can find lists of projects through the [Clean Water Portal](#))
- Support working lands enterprises that follow conservation practices within the basin
- Pave town highways
- Focus on other issues, not just phosphorus
- Concerns about water treatment and disposal of medication and other sources of pollution
- Improve fish habitat to reduce stocking and support wild fish populations
- Legislation to increase riparian buffers
- Keep the plan short and to the point
- More outreach to the public and news media exposure
- Consider rare/unusual wildlife when considering water quality
- Develop clear and concise outreach materials
- Incorporate Vermont State Hazard Mitigation Plans and Vermont Conservation Design when prioritizing lands and waters for restoration and protection
- Keep the State out of it