

Memorandum

Date: August 2, 2016
To: Clean Water Initiative Interagency Finance & Reporting Subcommittee
From: Clean Water Initiative Program
Subject: Summary of Results of the Vermont Clean Water Fund Fiscal Year 2018 Priorities Questionnaire

The Clean Water Fund (CWF) Board posted an online questionnaire to collect public and stakeholder input on the State Fiscal Year 2018 CWF allocation priorities. The public notice and comment period was for 30 days from July 1st to July 30th. We received 260 responses. The results of the survey are as follows:

Question #1: Rate the water pollution sources that the CWF Board should focus on for FY18.

- a. Approximately 75% of respondents rated agricultural lands as high priority;
- b. Approximately 50% of respondents rated lack of vegetated buffers along waterways as a high priority;
- c. Approximately 45% of respondents rated unstable stream channels and wastewater treatment as a high priority;
- d. Approximately 40% of respondents rated developed lands as a high priority;
- e. Approximately 35% of respondents rated industrial facilities and roads as a high priority;
- f. Approximately 20% of respondents rated logging areas and logging roads as a high priority.

Question #2: The fundamental purpose of the CWF is to target the most significant water pollution sources in order to achieve clean water in the most cost-effective manner. How well does this targeting of the CWF meet your expectations for achieving clean water across the state?

- a. 71% of respondents generally agreed with this statement, and 15% did not agree. It would be helpful in future surveys to inquire further into the public's expectations for these funds.

Question #3: Which of the following activities should the Vermont CWF employ to address current water quality needs for FY2018?

- a. There was significant support for using the CWF to support financial assistance through grants (82%);
- b. Respondents also support technical assistance activities to offer guidance in implementation (74%) and to support municipalities in establishing local stormwater management programs (62%);
- c. There was also support for using the CWF to support monitoring, water quality testing and mapping for tracking purposes (64%).

Question #4: Indicate how you would allocate FY2018 funds from the CWF among the program categories listed below to address the State's priority clean water needs.

- a. There was strong interest to support all sectors; there was no majority of respondents favoring one sector over others;
- b. Respondents would like to see the agricultural sector receive around 30% of the funds; municipalities receive between 20-30% of the funds, which grants for municipal roads would receive an additional 10-25%; and funds for the restoration of natural resources receive between 10-25%.

Question #7: How did you hear of this questionnaire?

- a. Majority (75%) of respondents heard about the questionnaire through email, followed by word of mouth (10%) and Clean Water Conversations outreach (8%).

Other Notable Comments

- a. U.S. EPA Region 1 commented that Lake Champlain Basin Program will no longer support the agronomist positions in Lake Champlain Basin beyond Oct 2018. We will need to evaluate whether a portion of the FY2018 CWF budget should provide funds to support this work.