

Manitowoc County Conservation Study

Unique Study on Community & Conservation Needs

Manitowoc County Fish & Game and Leede Research partnered on the first of its kind study to look at how the community sees conservation and sporting organizations in the area. 301 households completed interviews in this process to help better prepare for the next generation of conservation.



CREATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF STEWARDS

Manitowoc County has a storied history of conservation dating back to 1907, when the Manitowoc County Fish & Game Protective Association was created. For over 115 years organizations have partnered to protect the rights and resources of the area and support the natural resources that make this area great. This history could be jeopardy as sporting clubs are experiencing declining membership and lack of future leadership. This project is an effort to help identify how to adapt to a new future of stewardship in the area.

Study Quick Facts

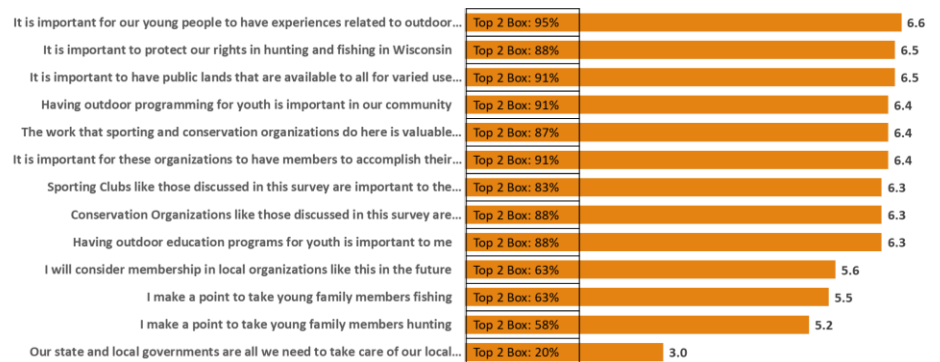
- ✓ 52% Are Currently Members of a Sporting Club or Organization
- ✓ 65% of Members Also have Family who Are Members
- ✓ 63% of Non-Members have Never Been Part of These Clubs
- ✓ 43% Were Not Aware of Declining Members in Clubs
- ✓ 47% Are Highly Likely to Join a Sporting Club in the Next Year
- ✓ Respondents see the Importance of Protecting Rights & Resources in the Area



YOUTH AND THE OUTDOORS ARE KEY!

The study sought to understand what is important to people of the area. Youth Programming, Protecting Rights, and Access to Public Lands were top issues. Respondents value the work done by sporting clubs and do NOT feel that governments can fully support our local resources.

Statement Agreement

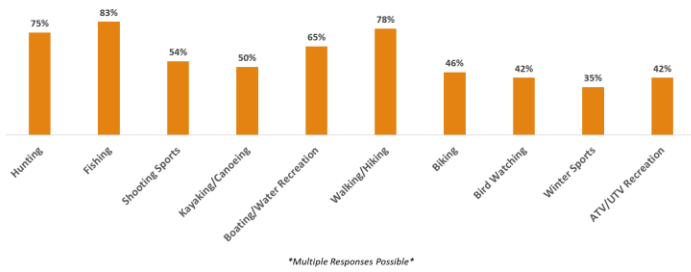


There is only moderate response for people personally engaging with young people to take them hunting or fishing. This indicates some potential gaps in the future development of the strong sporting heritage that makes Wisconsin special. This has been documented in declining hunting and fishing license sales and lower participation documented in other work. This may be another key area for sporting clubs to build future support, membership, and leaders.

Outdoor and sporting assets and resources were strongly seen as the Best Feature of living in this area, documenting the related importance of protecting them. When asked when asked what Could Be Improved the following items were seen:

1. **Maintenance of public areas:** Several respondents mentioned the need for better maintenance of public areas, including landings and wooded areas.
2. **Access to public hunting grounds:** Many respondents expressed a desire for more public hunting grounds and increased access to these areas.
3. **Improved access to public land:** Respondents mentioned the need for better access to areas of public land, including the ability to access them by 4-wheeler.
4. **Outdoor education and awareness:** Some respondents highlighted the importance of outdoor education programs and increased awareness of available resources.
5. **Beach amenities:** The addition of amenities such as lifeguards, concession stands, and improved beach facilities was mentioned by respondents.
6. **Youth involvement:** Several respondents emphasized the importance of getting more youth involved in outdoor activities and conservation efforts.
7. **Publicity of available resources:** Respondents mentioned the need for better publicity and information about the resources available for outdoor activities.
8. **Connectivity of bike trails:** The desire for connected bike trails, specifically mentioning the trail along R and the trail in Rockwood, was mentioned by respondents.
9. **Cleanliness and environmental stewardship:** Some respondents highlighted the importance of cleanliness, proper waste management, and environmental conservation.
10. **More public land and hunting opportunities:** Respondents expressed a desire for increased public land and hunting opportunities, including more public hunting areas and access to private land.

Activities Participated In

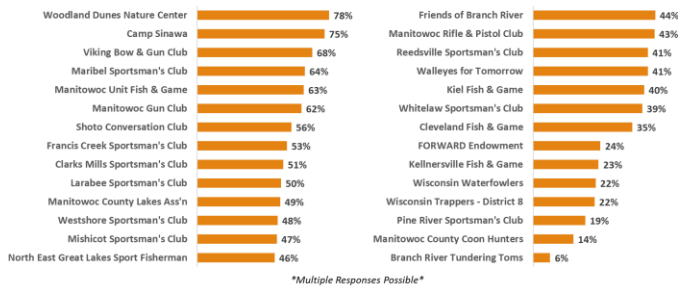


The results show a wide range of participation in outdoor activities and can create a roadmap to better meet community needs in the future. Walking & Hiking is a strong item that may not be fully addressed in current offerings. This could represent a unique opportunity for MCFG to leverage the over 450 acres of property they own.

Sporting Club Awareness Good with Improvements Possible

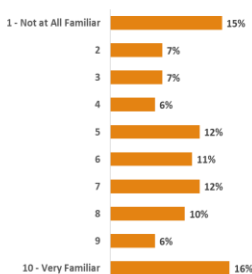
The study sought to create the first measure of club awareness done in Manitowoc County. We see varied levels by organization but generally solid results.

Aided Awareness



58% of respondents who know these clubs work together as part of Manitowoc County Fish & Game Protective Association. That leaves 42% who are not aware of one of the oldest conservation organizations in the US! Work needs to be done to address community awareness, familiarity, and the position of the organization overall.

Familiarity with MCFG

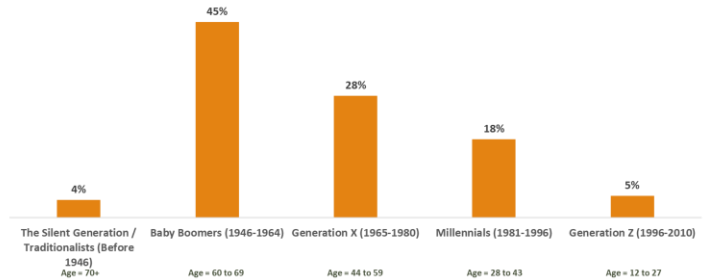


Mean: 5.7
Top 3: 32%
Bottom 3: 29%

"Manitowoc County Fish & Game Protective Association was founded in 1907 and is considered one of the oldest conservation groups in the U.S. The organization owns 450 acres of property in Manitowoc County that is always open and available to the public. They partner with state and local governments and support most of the inland lake public access in the area, updating piers and other needs. They provide and support youth programs including Hunter Education and a variety of shooting and fishing programs..."

The study generated strong Male response and generationally was older, reflecting what the clubs already know. Targeted work needs to be done to reach Females and younger members in future programs and opportunities. This should be a focal point in future plans.

Respondent Generations (Age)



The study reached a good cross section of the community geographically, and results document those with children of various age groups. This can help in future targeting and program development. Media information and usage was also included in the study and will allow for better, targeted communications in the future.

CLEAR OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE!

The results document numerous opportunities for improvement and in generating a new generation of conservation stewards to continue the work of over 115 years in Manitowoc County.

Recommendations:

- Membership Promotion:** Develop targeted marketing campaigns to raise awareness about the benefits of membership, addressing common barriers such as time constraints and lack of interest. Emphasize the importance of these organizations in resource preservation and highlight the unique experiences and opportunities they offer.
- Youth Engagement Programs:** Create and promote outdoor programs specifically designed for young people to foster their interest in hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities. Provide educational opportunities and hands-on experiences to engage and inspire the next generation.
- Property & Banquet:** Leverage the value of 450+ acres of public land in future plans and development. Trails may offer a significant opportunity for development. The Annual Banquet offers a significant touchpoint and resource for member development.
- Social Media Presence:** Establish a strong presence on popular social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, to engage with the community, share updates, and promote events and initiatives. Leverage social media as a powerful tool for communication, outreach, and building connections with potential members.
- Media Outreach:** Collaborate with local radio stations and online news sources to increase coverage of sporting club activities and conservation efforts, raising awareness among the broader community. Utilize media channels to showcase the positive impact of these organizations and inspire others to get involved.

Using existing resources like club programs and events, MCFG's 450+ acres of land, and the Annual Banquet can help to address future needs and plans.

LET'S CONTINUE THE COMMUNITY DISCUSSION!

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