

Gull Lake Land Use

Manitoba's Gull Lake area is known for a wide variety of land uses. Manitobans and visitors appreciate the ecological, economic, social and cultural diversity the Gull Lake area offers. The Minister of Agriculture has received communications from various stakeholders identifying concerns with the area. The intent of this engagement is to gain an understanding of concerns and priorities from the Gull Lake community.

Engagement Overview

The Manitoba government launched the Gull Lake survey on EngageMB on November 12, 2021. The public engagement opportunity was shared on Manitoba government and Manitoba Agriculture social media channels, in the GrowingMB Ag newsletter and on the Manitoba Agriculture website. The Manitoba government was informed that the EngageMB link was also shared through stakeholder newsletters and circulated by interest groups.

What We Heard

The survey took place from November 12, 2021 to December 28, 2021, longer than initially planned, in response to stakeholder requests for extension. A total of 310 responses were received. The survey was available online and in an alternate format upon request.

Survey

Participation:

Of the total of 310 responses that were received, there was representation from (51 per cent) females, (43.5 per cent) males and (5.5 per cent) who preferred not to answer this question.

Just under a quarter (23.7 per cent) of respondents were in the 55-64 age bracket, followed by (21.8 per cent) 65+, (21.8 per cent) 45-54, (14.6 per cent) 35-44, (11.4 per cent) 25-34, and (2.9 per cent) 18-24.

When asked: **In which region of Manitoba do you live?** The majority (58.7 per cent) responded Winnipeg, followed by (23.3 per cent) Eastern Manitoba, (13.1 per cent) Interlake Region, (3 per cent) Western Manitoba, (3 per cent) did not select an option, (1.6 per cent) Central Manitoba, and lastly (0.3 per cent) Northern Manitoba.

Connection:

It was important to ask questions related to personal connections to the Gull Lake land use. The first question asked: **What are your connections to the Gull Lake area?** The majority (56 per cent) selected *I enjoy recreational pursuits in the Gull Lake area*, followed by (21 per cent) selected *I pay property taxes to the local rural municipality* (Figure 1).

The second question related to personal connections asked: **How long have you had a connection to Gull Lake?** The majority (50.3 per cent) of respondents selected *25 years or more* (Figure 2).

A third question was asked: **During what seasons do you spend your time in the Gull Lake area?** The majority (53 per cent) of respondents selected *summer for 2-3 months* (Figure 3).

Figure 1: Survey Question Related to Personal Connections to Gull Lake Land Use.

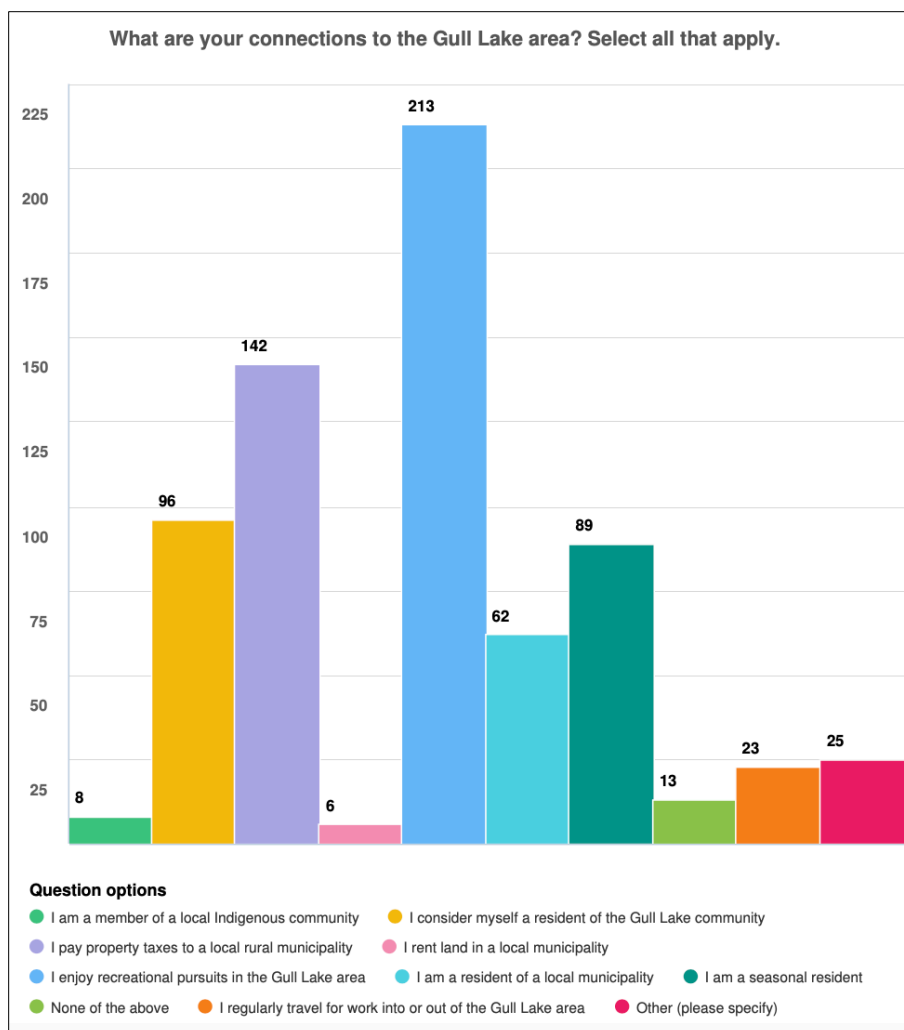


Figure 2: Survey Question Related to Personal Connections to Gull Lake Land Use.

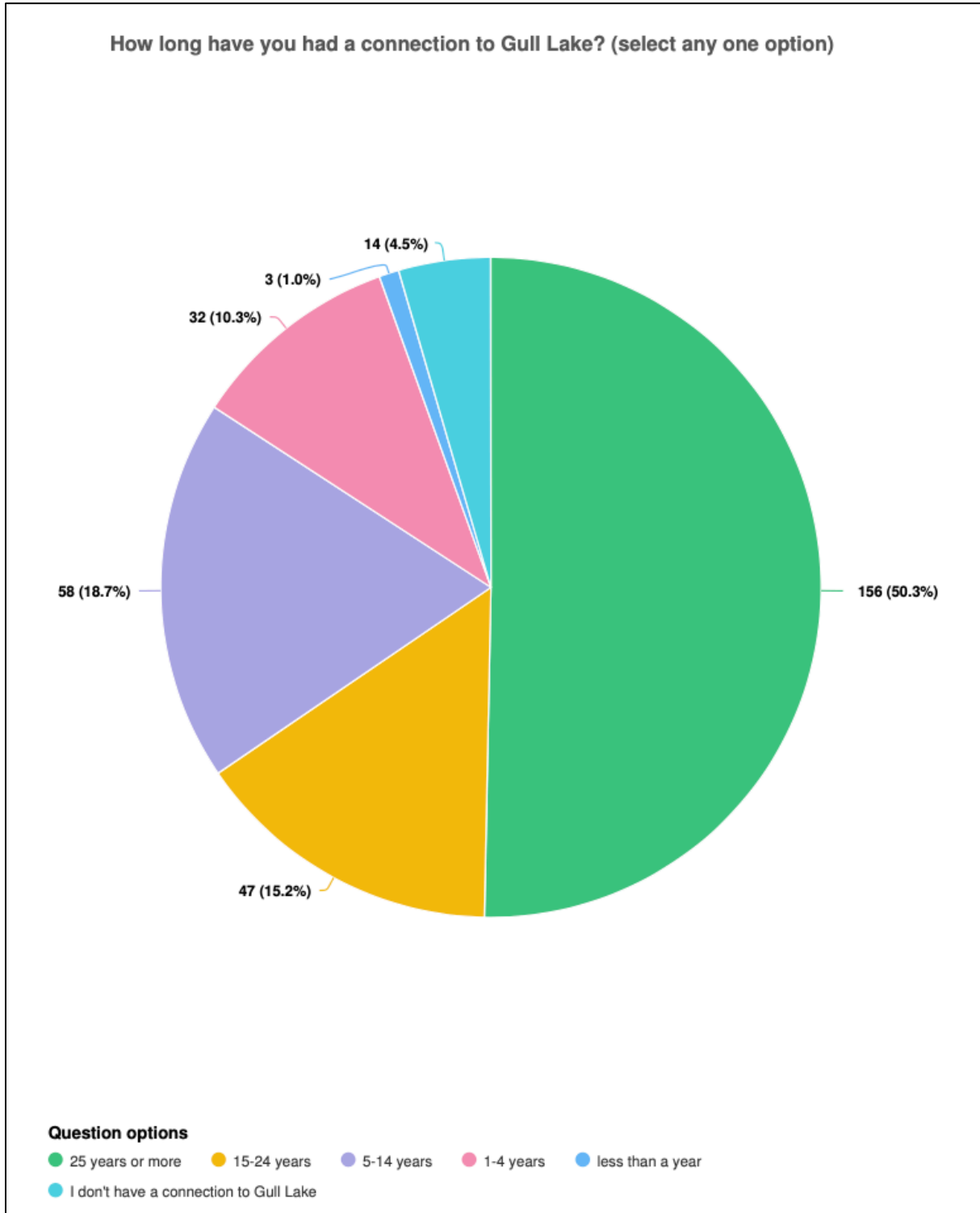


Figure 3: Survey Question Related to Personal Connections to Gull Lake Land Use.

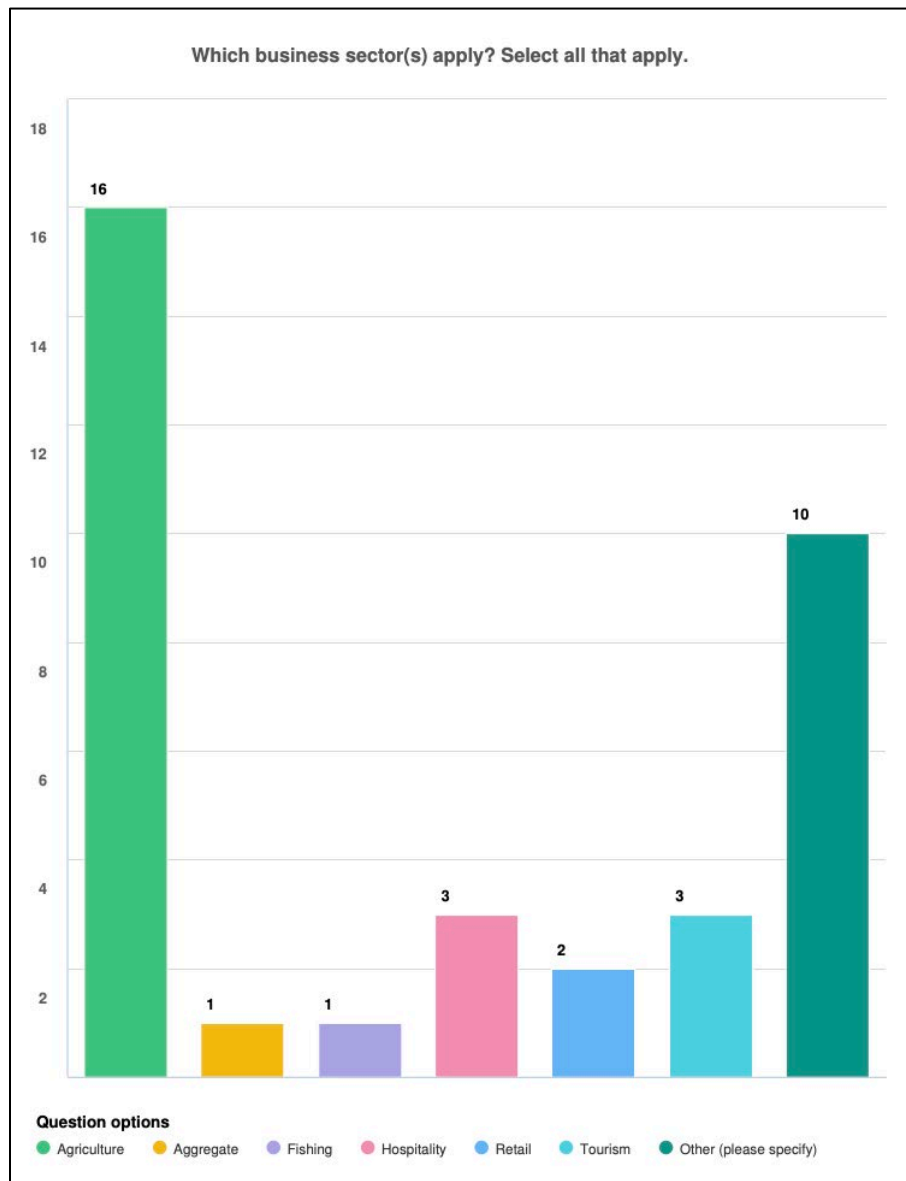


Business:

There were two questions related to business operations within and surrounding the local municipalities. When asked: **Do you operate a business in a local municipality? (e.g. Rural Municipality of St. Clements, Rural Municipality of Alexander)**, majority (90.6 per cent) respondents answered *no*.

If yes was the response, it was further asked: **Which business sectors apply? The majority (44 per cent) responded *Agriculture***. Some additional business sectors that were noted as other (please specify) included *construction, property management, education* and *automotive* (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Survey Question Related to Business Operations.



Water Health Concerns:

When asked: **Do you have concerns with the water health in the Gull Lake area?** The majority (76.1 per cent) of respondents selected yes as their response (Figure 5).

If yes was the response it was further asked: **What are your concerns?** (Figure 6). Respondents mentioned concerns regarding *Water Levels* the most (30 per cent). Specifically, that the water level of Gull Lake has been dropping in the last few years. Many respondents (20 per cent) mentioned that the lake is also at great risk for contamination of *Zebra Mussels* with its proximity to Lake Winnipeg and the Winnipeg River system. Respondents explained they are concerned about *Lake Water Quality* (20 per cent), and expansion of *Gravel Pits*, and other aggregate *Mining Operations* (18 per cent). Respondents also mentioned concerns regarding *Algae* (7 per cent) and *Boat Traffic* (5 per cent).

Figure 5: Survey Question Related to Water Health Concerns in Gull Lake area.

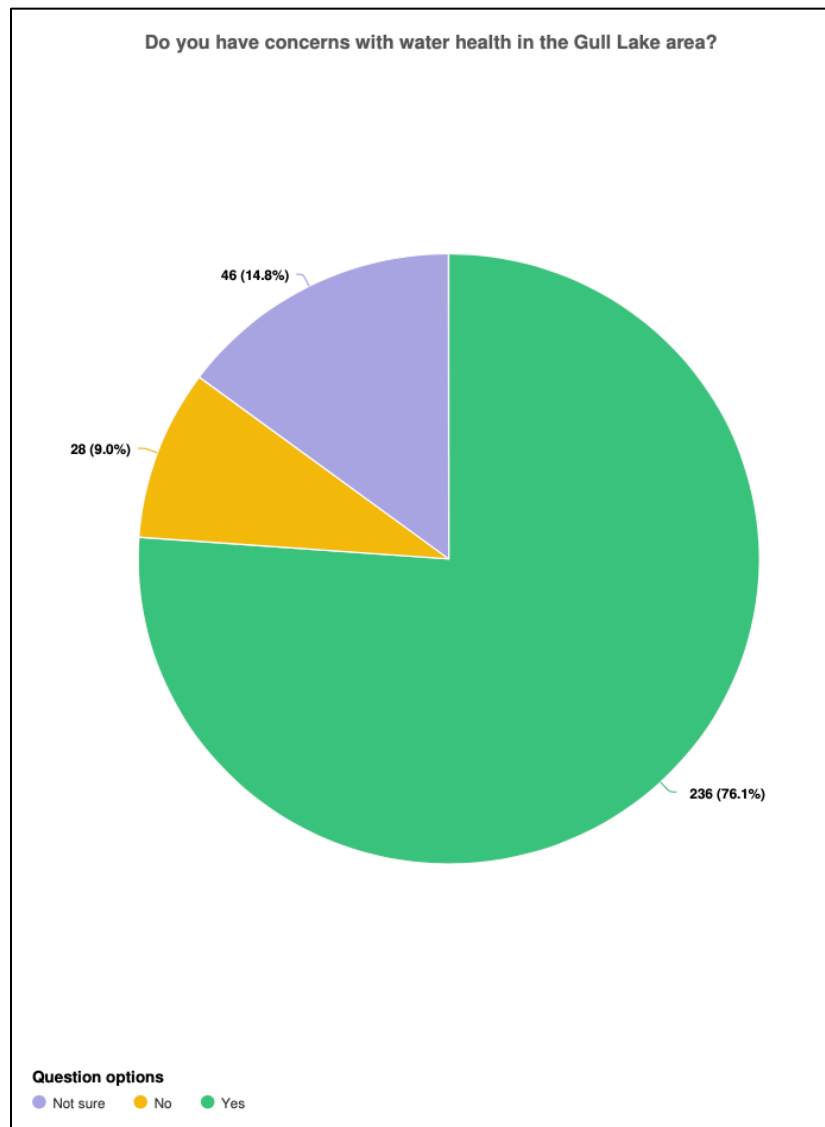
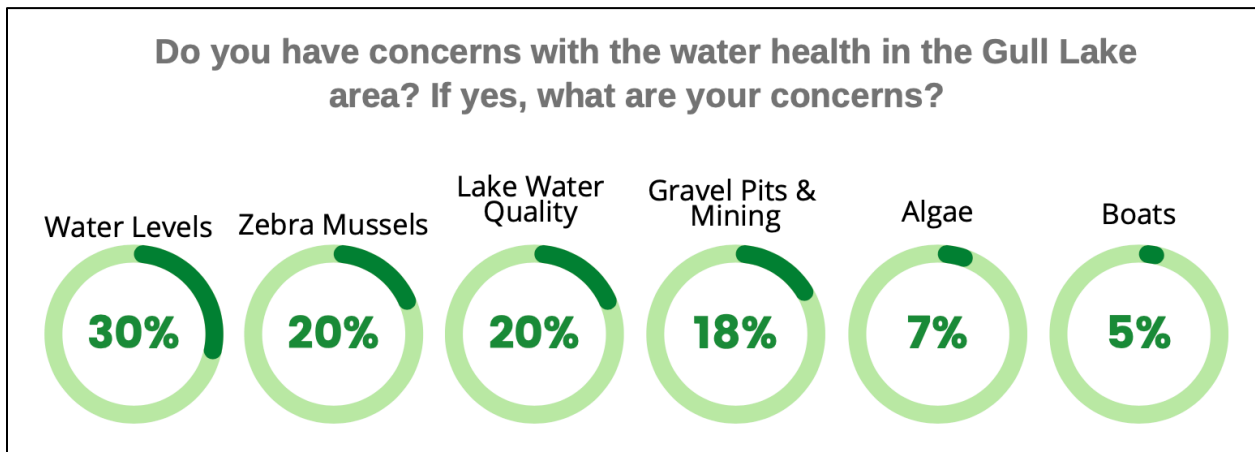


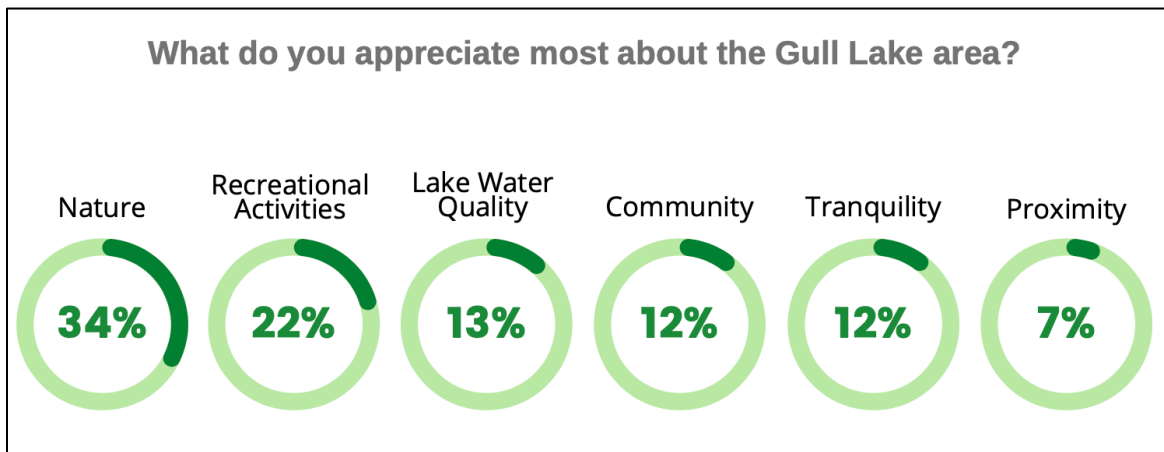
Figure 6: Survey Question Related to Water Health Concerns in Gull Lake area.



Appreciation:

When asked: **What do you appreciate most about the Gull Lake area?** The top answer (34 per cent) mentioned was *Nature* (Figure 7). Many individuals took the time to elaborate and say the rare and diverse ecosystem, wildlife and specifically the orchids and carnivorous plants in the Brokenhead Wetland. *Recreational Activities* (22 per cent) followed Nature, which included boating and hiking, including the Brokenhead Interpretive Trail. *Lake Water Quality* (13 per cent) followed Recreational Activities. Many specified how beautiful and clean Gull Lake is and that many are worried about Zebra Mussels. *Community* and *Tranquility* were tied for fourth (12 per cent) in terms of appreciation of the Gull Lake area. Many made mention of the wonderful and safe community in the Gull Lake area. Key words of peaceful, quiet, calm and tranquility were used to describe the Gull Lake area. Finally, individuals (7 per cent) appreciate the *Proximity* and accessibility Gull Lake area is to Winnipeg.

Figure 7: Survey Question Related to Appreciation of the Gull Lake area.



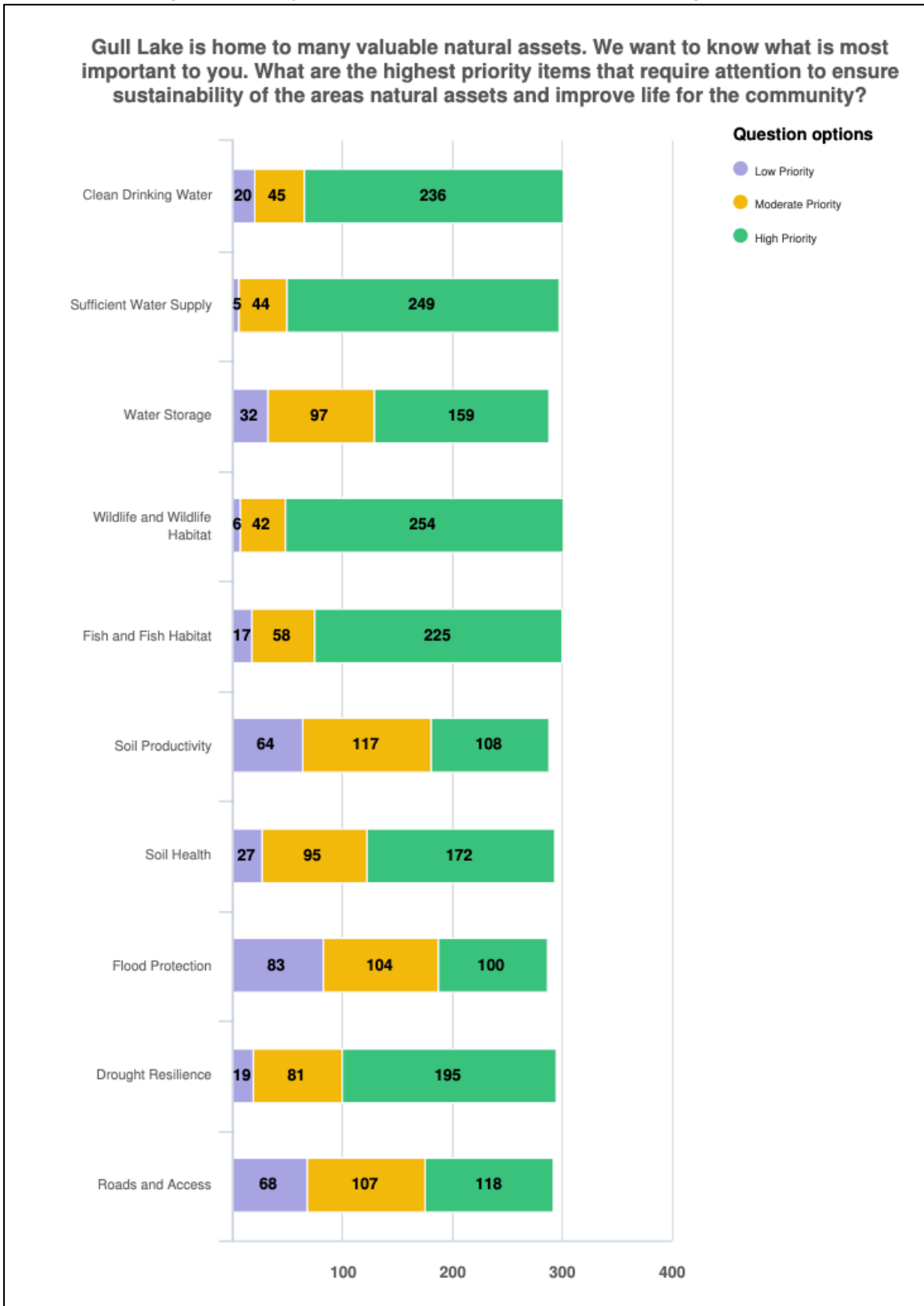
Importance:

When asked: **Gull Lake is home to many valuable natural assets. We want to know what is most important to you. What are the highest priority items that require attention to ensure sustainability of the area's natural assets and improve life for the community?** Respondents selected *Sufficient Water Supply* (84 per cent) and *Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat* (84 per cent) as high priorities (Figure 8). Other high priorities include *Clean Drinking Water* (78 per cent), *Fish and Fish Habitat* (75 per cent), and *Drought Resilience* (66 per cent).

When asked: **Are there any other areas of priority for the Gull Lake area?**

Respondents addressed concerns regarding the potential of *Zebra Mussels* contaminating Gull Lake and that the *Gravel Pits* may impact the natural beauty of the Gull Lake area.

Figure 8: Survey Question related to Gull Lake Land Use Importance.



Next Steps

The intent of this engagement is to gain an understanding of concerns and priorities from the Gull Lake community. The results of this engagement will inform future land use plans in the Gull Lake area.

Questions?

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact the Lands and Planning Branch, at Landsbranchadmin@gov.mb.ca.