



Minnesota Environmental Congress

Air · Water · Land · Energy · Climate: Our Voice, Our Future

Summary Report

Summary Report of the Events and Activities for
the 2013 Minnesota Environmental Congress

July 2013

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Executive Summary

Governor Dayton signed Executive Order 11-32 on November 16, 2011, charging the EQB to carry out four projects over approximately the next year. These projects included:

- An evaluation and the development of recommendations to improve environmental review;
- An evaluation and development of recommendations to improve environmental governance and coordination;
- The preparation of an environmental and energy report card; and
- The organization and hosting of an environmental congress focused on the current state of Minnesota's environment.

The 2012 Minnesota Environment and Energy Report Card – a collection of metrics measuring Minnesota's performance in water, land, air energy and climate – was developed by state agency staff and used as the starting point for a multi-pronged public outreach effort, which included six Citizen Forums around the state and an online forum hosted to collect citizen comments, additional comments gathered via e-mail, support for the Next Generation Environmental Congress, and hosting the Minnesota Environmental Congress.

At the Citizen Forums, Commissioners highlighted a few successes and challenges for each category found in the Report Card—Air, Water, Land, Energy, and Climate. Participants at each Forum were then asked to work in small groups to answer a series of questions related to the categories in the report card. Individual participants at the Forums represented a wide variety of sectors and interests. Over 1200 people participated in the forums.

The Next Generation Environmental Congress, held at the University of Minnesota in St. Paul, brought together youth from across Minnesota to collect the environmental concerns and priorities from the next generation. The conference consisted of breakout sessions, panelists, and workshops, and was attended by 150 youth.

The Minnesota Environmental Congress was designed as a working event where recognized experts and community leaders would synthesize the collected citizen input and develop issue statements to be presented to the EQB. The morning plenary session featured Governor Mark Dayton, polar explorer Will Steger, and several EQB members to provide context for the day, after which attendees moved to four breakout sessions featuring a panel of experts. Following the expert panel, attendees were asked to develop issue statements. In the afternoon session, attendees were tasked with sorting those issue statements to identify a few priorities for presentation at the final plenary session and ultimately to the EQB.

Following the Minnesota Environmental Congress, the EQB had the opportunity to work with the Governor's Institute on Community Design (GICD) to synthesize the feedback gathered throughout the events described and develop a list of prioritized actions for the Board.

Documents from the Citizen's Forum and Environmental Congress, including presentation materials and public comments, are available online at: <http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/index.html>.

Preface

What is the Environmental Quality Board (EQB)?

The Environmental Quality Board (EQB) was established in 1972 as the state's environmental coordinating body. The mission of the EQB is to lead Minnesota environmental policy by responding to key issues, providing appropriate review and coordination, serving as a public forum, and developing long-range strategies to enhance Minnesota's environmental quality. It comprises a Board as well as staff. The EQB brings together the Governor's Office (represented by the chair), five citizens, and the heads of nine state agencies that play a vital role in Minnesota's environment and development. Over the last forty years it has gone through many changes, including board membership changes, organizational changes, and agency size.

The EQB coordinates environmental policies that transcend individual agencies, creates strategic plans, and oversees review of proposed projects that would significantly influence Minnesota's environment. *Minnesota Statutes*, Chapters 103A, 103B, 116C, and 116D direct the EQB to:

- Ensure compliance with state environmental policy;
- Oversee the environmental review process;
- Coordinate agencies and programs that affect the environment;
- Study environmental issues, convene environmental congresses;
- Coordinate assessments of water resources;
- Develop water priorities and policy reports;
- Develop the state water plan;
- Administer critical areas designation and management;
- Coordinate development of an integrated state energy and environmental strategy report; and
- Advise the Governor and the Legislature.

While some of these activities occur only periodically, the EQB consistently has overseen the environmental review program, developed integrated state reports, and undertaken a broad range of environmental studies, including barge fleetings on the Mississippi, animal agriculture, forestry, urban development, copper-nickel mining, genetically modified organisms, land use management, pesticide management, water management, and sustainable development.

The membership of the EQB has fluctuated from 11 to 16 members. It currently consists of 14 members: nine state agency commissioners, one acting as EQB Chair, and five citizen members. The current list of member agencies includes the following:

- The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA);
- The Minnesota Department of Administration (Admin);
- The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA);
- The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED);
- The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH);
- The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR);
- The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT);
- The Minnesota Department of Commerce (Commerce); and
- The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR).

History of the EQB

Staff of the EQB has fluctuated from as many as twenty-six to as few as two full-time staff in recent years. Each member agency of the EQB provides a technical representative to serve as liaison between the EQB and the agencies. While staff numbers have fluctuated over the history of the EQB, for the course of the projects described in this report, there was significant additional staff support from the member agencies, including temporary staff and a half-time executive director. The executive director is currently provided by MDA, the MPCA currently provides the Board with staff to support its statutory responsibilities and additional staff resources are provided by all of the nine member agencies.

Major programmatic and organizational changes came to EQB as described in the following timeline:

- Ø 1980—Environmental review responsibilities are decentralized
- Ø 1983—Water planning duties are added to EQB responsibilities
- Ø 1987--Environmental review program and siting requirements for large natural gas and petroleum product pipelines are modified
- Ø 1991—Reporting on energy and environment strategies conducted
- Ø 1995—Development of rules regarding siting of large wind energy conversion systems
- Ø 2005—Energy facility siting duties transferred to Commerce and the Public Utilities Commission
- Ø 2009—Office of Minnesota Planning is eliminated and remaining EQB staff are moved from Admin to the MPCA

The EQB: Moving Forward

In light of budgetary cuts, the reorganization of the EQB, and a new Administration, the board members began a conversation in June 2011 about the EQB's future role. This dialogue built upon the [suggestions made by a separate EQB subcommittee](#) that tackled this question in 2010. At that time, the committee concluded that EQB is in a unique position, and is statutorily charged, to coordinate statewide environmental and strategic planning activities. No other forum provides this function, which is as important in today's era of budget constraints as ever. At EQB meetings in September and October 2011, the EQB received valuable [public comments](#) on the question from interested parties. Based on that input, a subcommittee formed to develop a plan for the future. This plan, which relied heavily on the public comments, was shared with the Governor's Office in November 2011. It then became the basis for Executive Order 11-32, in which Governor Dayton defined an aggressive 2012-2013 agenda that sought to unify Minnesota's efforts to address pressing environmental and economic needs and to effectively communicate benchmarks to the public.

Executive Order 11-32

Governor Dayton signed [Executive Order 11-32](#) on November 16, 2011, charging the EQB to fulfill its policy-making and coordination roles by carrying out four significant projects over approximately the next year. These projects included the following:

1. By November 15, 2012, evaluate and make recommendations on how to improve environmental review, given the changes made in Chapter 4, House File 1, and the recommendations contained in the [Office of the Legislative Auditor Environmental Review and Permitting Report](#);
2. By November 15, 2012, evaluate and make recommendations for improved environmental governance and coordination;
3. By November 15, 2012, prepare an environmental and energy report card that identifies metrics which the State of Minnesota can use to measure its performance and progress protecting Minnesota's valuable air, water and land resources. Once initially established, the environment and energy report card shall be an annual report with renewed priorities, initiatives, and goals and an updated report card; and
4. By January 15, 2013, organize and host an environmental congress focused on the current state of Minnesota's environment utilizing the elements in the report card.

Work plans for each of the projects were initiated in late 2011 and developed simultaneously. A guiding EQB subcommittee was created for each of the projects, and a project manager from member agency staff was identified for each of the projects. Work plans and updates on the project were provided to the EQB at scheduled board meetings, and subcommittee meetings were held for each project as needed.

The Environmental Review Improvement team started the project by cataloguing ideas that had historically been generated for improving environmental review and examining the regulatory landscape. The team then examined overlaps and gaps in the regulatory landscape and evaluated alternative recommendations. Based on feedback received from the EQB, the team conducted a series of ten focus groups to develop specific recommendations for improving the environmental review program. These focus groups represented a variety of stakeholders, including local government units, project proposers, environmental conservationists, academicians and administrators. The report developed by a staff facilitator from the Management Analysis and Development (MAD) section of Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) was included in the final report, [“Evaluation and Recommendations for Improving Environmental Review”](#). Other recommendations included in the report were generated from historical efforts to improve environmental review, a comparison of other states’ environmental review processes, an in-depth comparative analysis between environmental review and permitting processes, and comments received as part of a 30-day public review of the completed report. The finalized report identified six prioritized recommendations to improve the environmental review program, and the Board approved the report and recommendations on November 14, 2012. The finalized document was published on the EQB website.

The Environmental Governance and Coordination team and the EQB considered how best to address the second requirement in Executive Order 11-32. They concluded that an examination of alternatives to the makeup and roles of the EQB itself was most appropriate and developed several alternatives to analyze. In the interim, the Legislature mandated the effort to include an examination of the roles of the MPCA Citizens’ Board. The result was a report titled, “Analysis of Alternatives for Environmental Governance

and Coordination and the Role of the MPCA Citizens' Board". This report formed the basis of recommendations that the Board adopted on November 14, 2012. Both the [report and the recommendations](#) were published on the EQB website.

The Environment and Energy Report Card team first defined the structure and layout of the proposed report card and the metrics that could be included. It reviewed a number of report cards, dashboards, and other 'indicator'-type projects, ranging from simple to complex, and decided a simplified report card model was preferable. Staff compiled feasible metrics proposed from the EQB member agencies based on existing information. Two webinars were held for stakeholders to comment on the draft Report Card, and these comments were considered in its finalization. [The 2012 Minnesota Environment and Energy Report Card](#) was completed on November 15, 2012. The finalized document was published on the EQB website. In developing a plan for the Environmental Congress events, the team first reviewed the three previous EQB congresses, the most recent of which occurred over 15 years ago. The EQB decided to start the Congress with a series of regional forums. The Citizen Forums were to be free and accessible to a broad range of Minnesotans. They were designed to introduce the final 2012 Minnesota Environment and Energy Report Card to members of the public and to get participants thinking about the metrics in the Report Card, the issues raised by the metrics, and the future of Minnesota's environment. The team hoped that as many as 100 participants might attend each forum. Attendance at the six forums ranged from seventy to over four hundred.

The Environmental Congress itself occurred on March 15, 2013. Details regarding the planning and execution of this and its associated events are included in the following sections.

Citizen Forums

Governor Dayton's [Executive Order 11-32](#) required that the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) "organize and host an environmental congress focused on the current state of Minnesota's environment, utilizing the elements in the report card." Members of the EQB decided that input from citizens was critical to having a comprehensive discussion about the state of the environment in Minnesota, and therefore held six listening sessions, known as the Citizen Forums, around the state prior to the 2013 Minnesota Environmental Congress event. The date, location, and time of the Forums are listed below.

- November 27 – Rochester, Wood Lake Meeting Center [9:30am – 12:00pm]
- November 27 – Bloomington, Normandale Community College [6:30pm – 9:00pm]
- November 28 – Duluth, Lake Superior College [5:30pm – 8:00pm]
- December 10 – Worthington, Worthington High School [3:30pm – 6:00pm]
- December 12 – St. Cloud, St. Cloud State University, Atwood Memorial Center [5:30pm – 8:00pm]
- December 14 – Moorhead, Minnesota State University [3:00pm – 5:30pm]

Outreach for the Citizen Forums

The EQB had a strong desire to involve a diverse group of Minnesotans in this series of conversations and to bring as many citizens as possible to the table. Therefore, outreach and communications took a multi-faceted approach.

Citizen Forum Postcards

Postcards with the Forum's purpose, location, date and time were distributed at various venues throughout the state. Thousands of postcards were available at many of the booths and buildings hosted by EQB member agencies at the 2012 Minnesota State Fair. In addition, postcards were distributed at other events prior to the Citizen Forums, including the Minnesota Agri-Growth Conference and the "Clean Energy, Climate, and Health" public forums co-hosted by the Will Steger Foundation and Fresh Energy, local non-profit organizations.

Stakeholder Letter

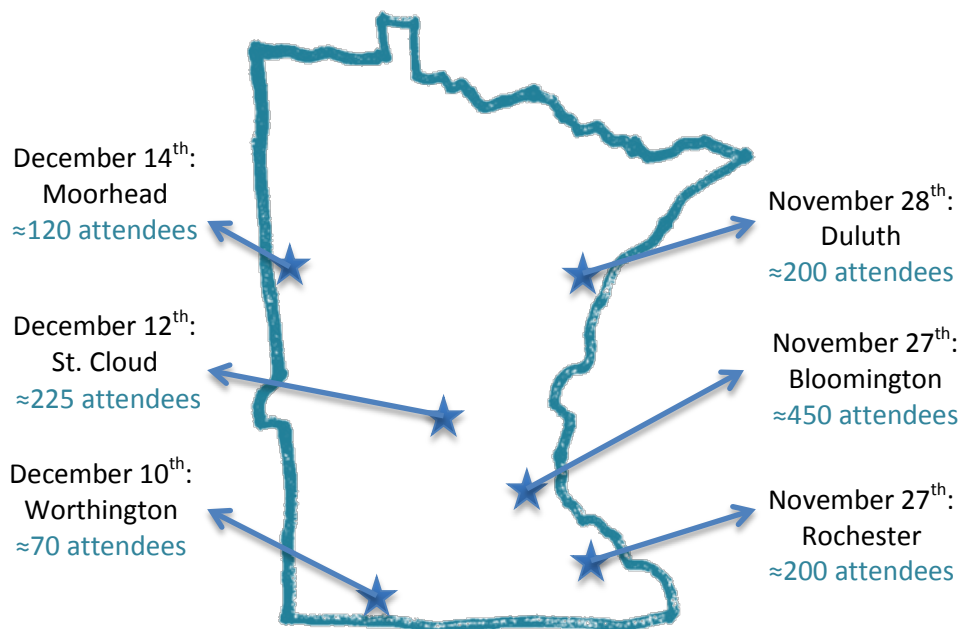
A [stakeholder letter](#) was drafted to invite all EQB member agencies' stakeholders to take part in the Citizen Forums. The letter was signed by all nine member agency leaders and sent to each member agency's stakeholder distribution lists via e-mail. EQB citizen members were also asked to share the invitation with stakeholders. This letter was emailed to more than 23,000 people from various sectors, and many of the individuals and groups who received the letter were able to spread the word to their colleagues.

Social Media & Press Releases

In the weeks leading up to the Citizen Forums, communications staff from EQB member agencies sent press releases to major media outlets, as well as to local media outlets in the areas where the Forums were to be held. In addition, the Forums were promoted online by individual EQB member agencies via Twitter and Facebook and through the designated Environmental Congress Twitter handle, @MNEnvCongress.

Attendance at the Citizen Forums

Over 1200 citizens attended the six Forums held around the state in November and December 2012. Estimated attendance at each of the Forums is as follows: Rochester, 200 attendees; Bloomington, 450 attendees; Duluth, 200 attendees; Worthington, 70 attendees; St. Cloud, 225 attendees; Moorhead, 120 attendees. Participants represented a diverse group of sectors, backgrounds, and perspectives. Registration sheets from each of the Forums can be found online at: <http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/forum.html>!



Citizen Forum Presentation

Commissioners Frederickson (MDA), Stine (MPCA), and/or Landwehr (DNR) opened each Citizen Forum with an introduction of Executive Order 11-32, the role of the Citizen Forums in informing the Minnesota Environmental Congress, and the 2012 Minnesota Environment and Energy Report Card. The Commissioners also asked basic demographic and interest questions.

Individual polling technology – hand-held devices that allow participants to send their responses to multiple choice questions to a receiver connected to the presenter's laptop computer – was utilized throughout the presentations. This allowed attendees to see real-time information about the opinions of many of the participants in the room. However, with only 185 hand-held devices available, attendance at some of the Forums exceeded the number of available devices.

Commissioners highlighted a few successes and challenges that came to light in each section of the 2012 Minnesota Environment and Energy Report Card. These “successes” and “challenges”, which are listed below, were meant to get attendees thinking about the complex nature of environmental issues we face as a state.

Interactive questions were incorporated into each section of the [Citizen Forum presentation](#). For those questions with a series of choices that illustrated a spectrum, such as between Strongly Agree and

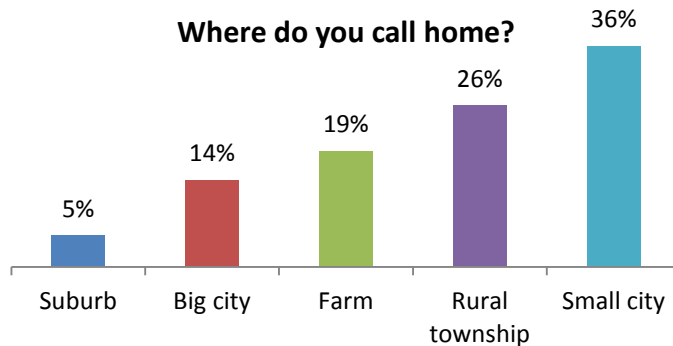
Strongly Disagree, participants were able to register a single response. For those questions with a series of multiple choice answers to rank, participants were able to register more than one response in order of their preference.

The charts below show participants' responses via the hand-held devices. They are aggregated across all Citizen Forums, with the exception of Bloomington. Unfortunately due to technical difficulties, Bloomington results were not preserved. For non-aggregated participant responses from each Forum location, see Appendix A.ⁱⁱ

It is important to note that the attendees who participated in the forums and this polling were self-selected and therefore not representative of Minnesotans as a whole. These numbers do not represent scientific polling data, but they do provide a cumulative snapshot of the opinions of those who attended five of the Forums (and had access to a hand-held device) and some of the common themes that emerged across the state. The views expressed through this poll only represent those who participated in the Forums and do not reflect the views of the EQB or the Dayton Administration.

Demographic questions

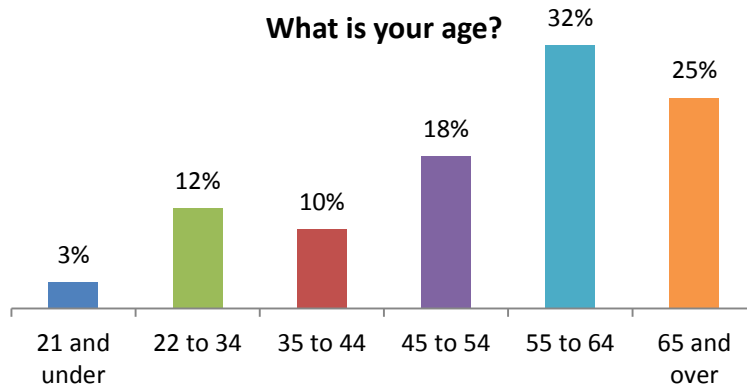
- **Question:** Where do you call home?
Multiple choice options:
 - a) A farm
 - b) A small city
 - c) A suburb
 - d) A rural township
 - e) A big city



· **Question:** What is your age?

Multiple choice options:

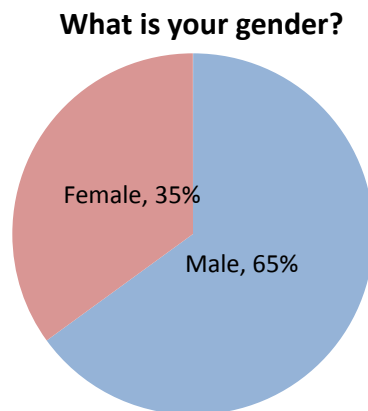
- a) 21 and under
- b) 22 to 34
- c) 35 to 44
- d) 45 to 54
- e) 55 to 64
- f) 65 and over



· **Question:** What is your gender?

Multiple choice options:

- a) Male
- b) Female

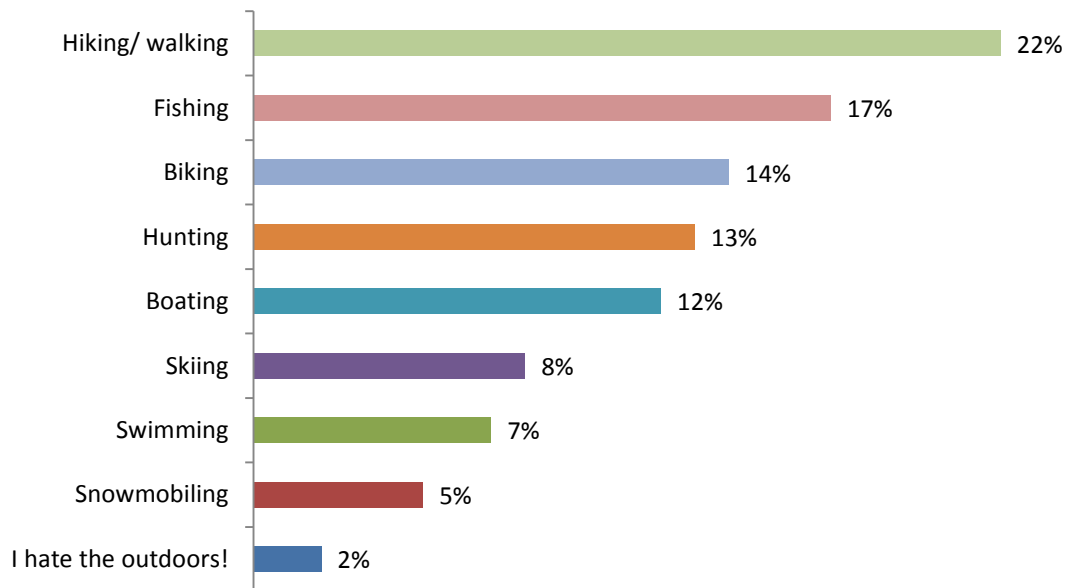


- **Ranking question:** What is your favorite recreational outdoor activity? (Attendees were asked to rank their top three answers, where their number one answer would receive the highest weight, and their third option would receive the lowest weight.)

Ranking choice options:

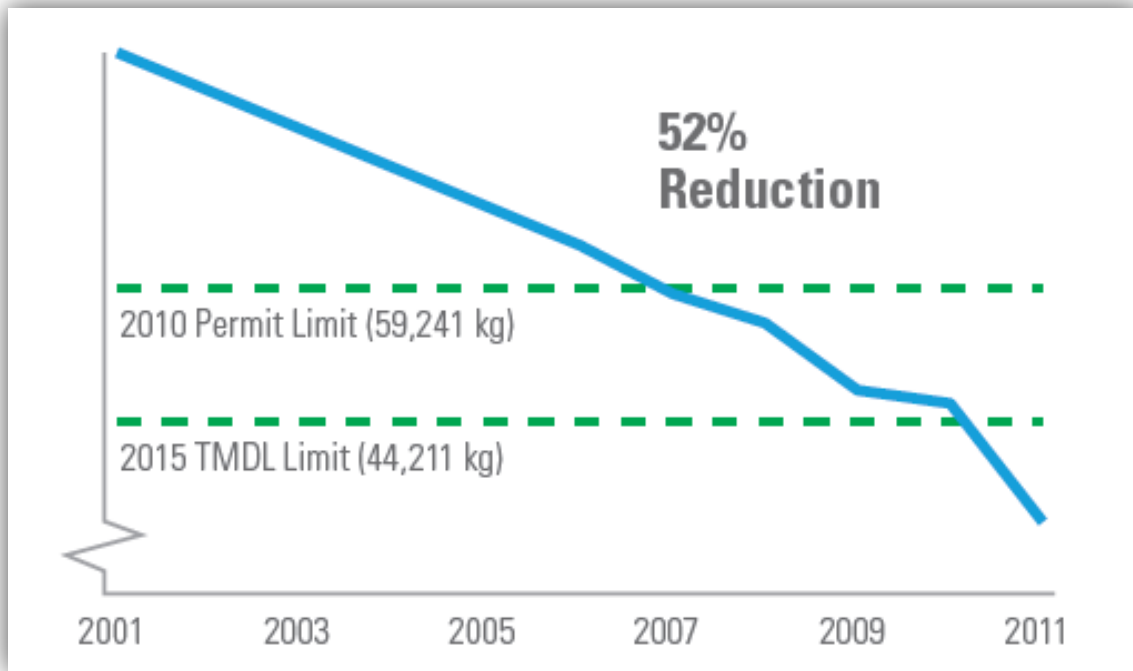
- a) Fishing
- b) Snowmobiling
- c) Hiking/ walking
- d) Boating
- e) Skiing
- f) Hunting
- g) Swimming
- h) Biking
- i) I hate the outdoors!

What's your favorite recreational outdoor activity?



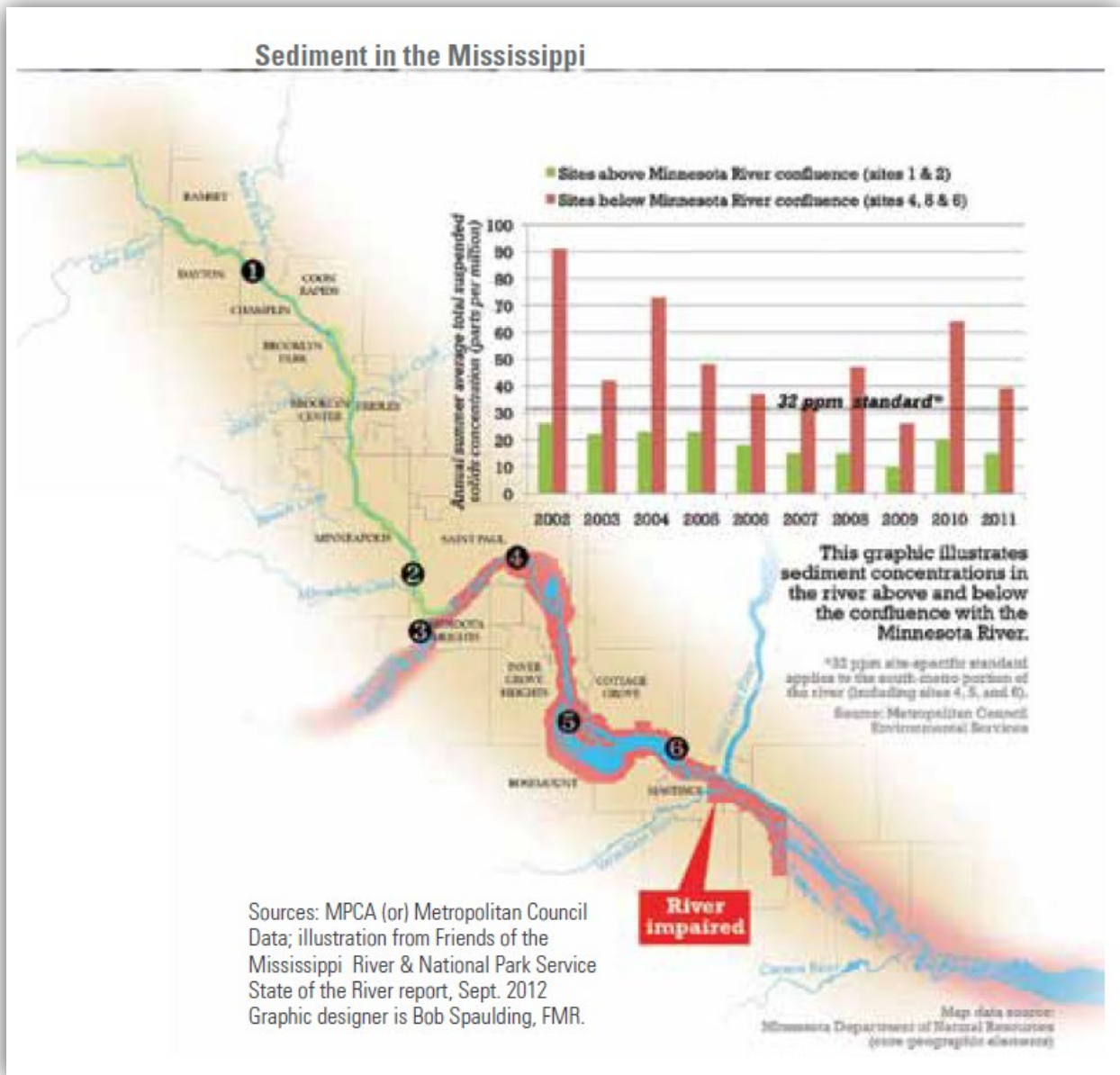
WATER

- **Metric:** “Success” Metric Depicting Phosphorous reduction in the Minnesota River, (located on page 4 of the Report Card).



Phosphorus in the Minnesota River has been greatly reduced, which has been driven in large part by tighter permit limits and good compliance from community wastewater treatment plants.

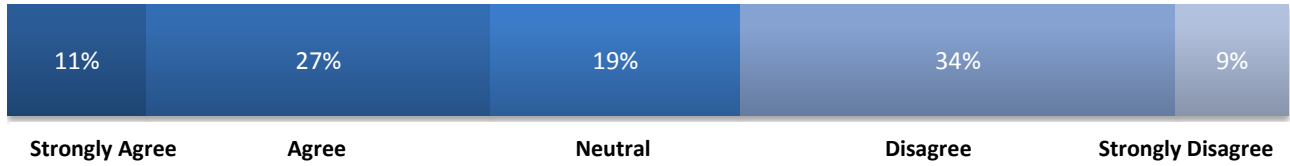
- **Metric:** “Challenge” Metric Depicting Nonpoint source pollution, demonstrated at the confluence of the Minnesota and the Mississippi River (located page 4 of the Report Card).



Above where the rivers meet, Mississippi River sediment levels are well below federal standards for Total Suspended Solids of 32 parts per million. At the confluence, sediment levels rise dramatically. The Minnesota River degrades Mississippi water quality downstream, especially in Lake Pepin.

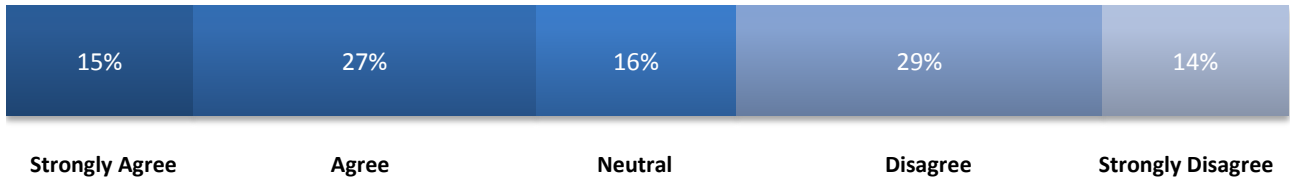
- **Question:** The lakes and rivers around the state are clean.
Multiple choice options: Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree

**Water quality in Minnesota:
The lakes and rivers around the state are clean.**



- **Question:** The lakes and rivers near where I live are becoming cleaner.
Multiple choice options: Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree

The lakes and rivers near where I live are becoming cleaner.

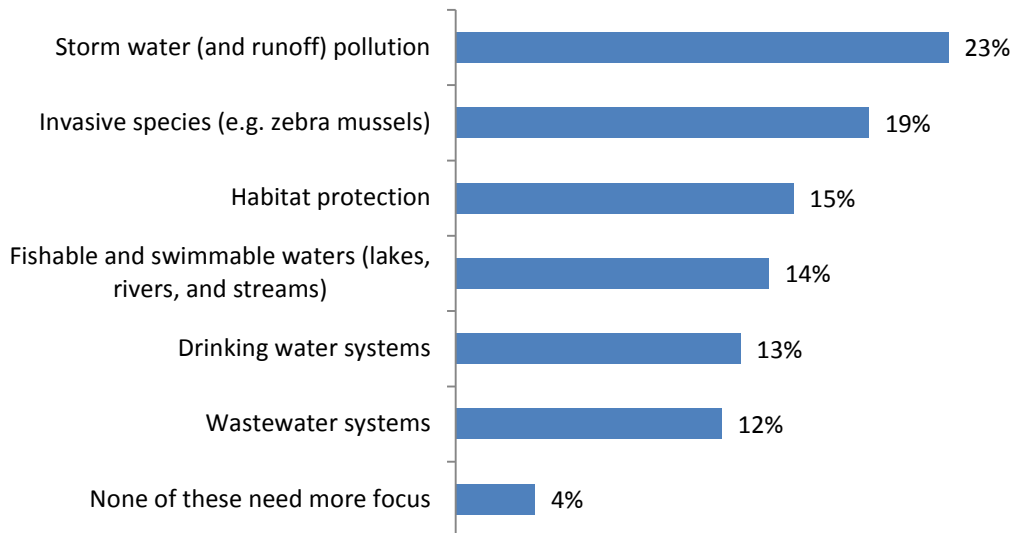


- **Ranking question:** Which of the following water-related issues do you believe needs more focus in Minnesota? (Attendees were asked to rank their top three answers, where their number one answer would receive the highest weight, and their third option would receive the lowest weight.)

Ranking choice options:

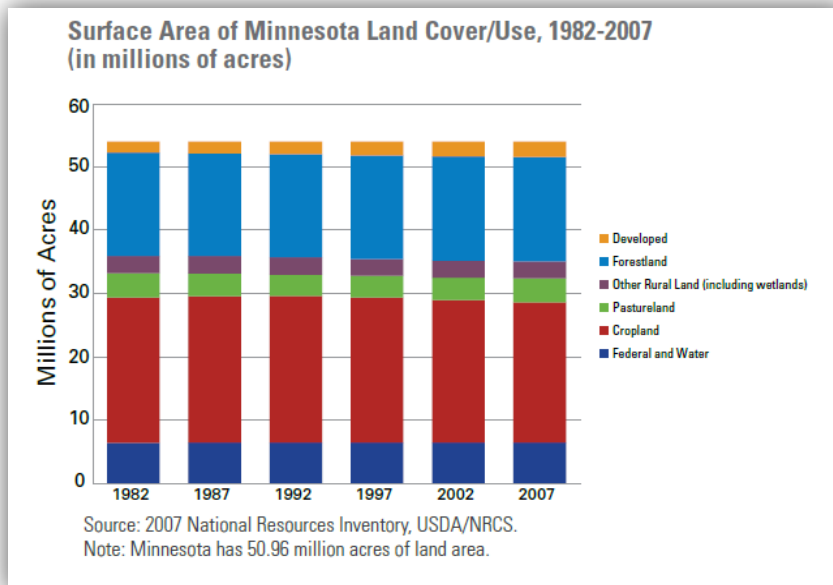
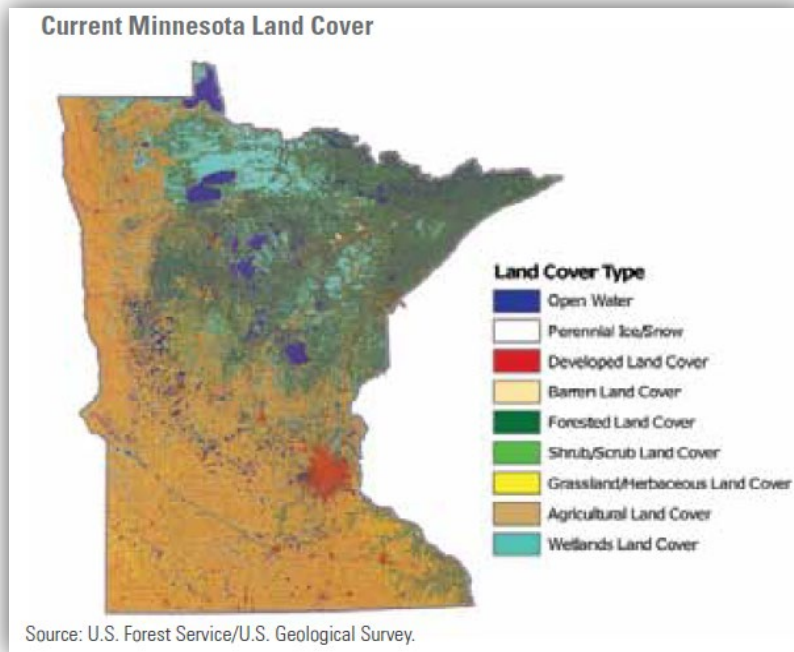
- a) Drinking water systems
- b) Storm water (and runoff) pollution
- c) Invasive species (e.g. zebra mussels)
- d) Fishable and swimmable waters (lakes, rivers, and streams)
- e) Habitat protection
- f) Wastewater systems
- g) None of these need more focus

Which of the following water-related issues do you believe needs more focus in Minnesota?



LAND

- **Metrics:** Depictions of Minnesota Land Cover and Use (Minnesota map and Land Cover/Use bar graph: 1982 – 2007 is located on page 7 of the Report Card).



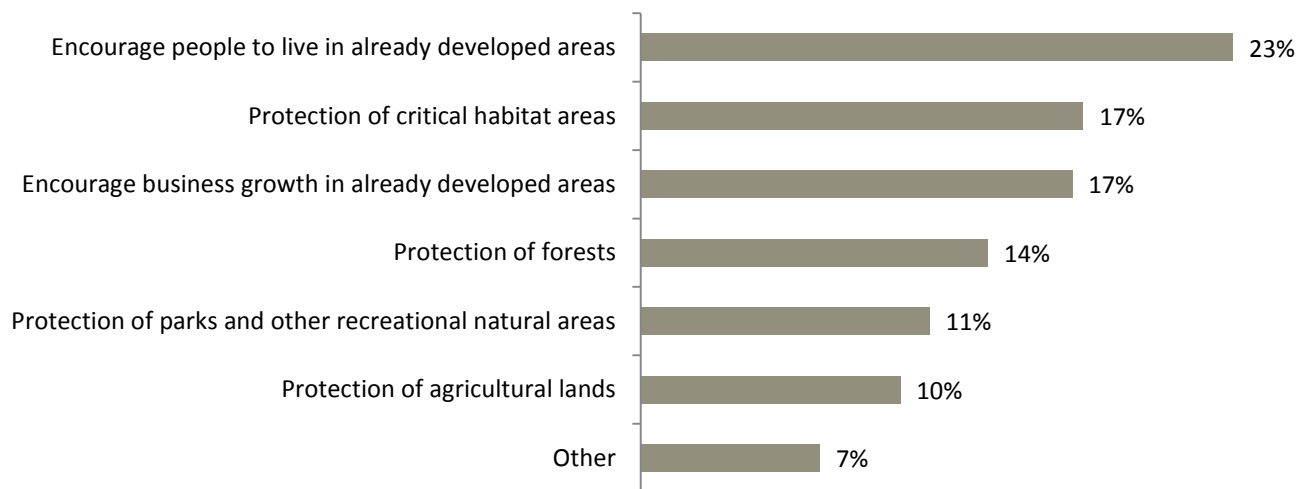
Land use has changed dramatically over the past last 150 years; over the past three decades, however, land use and cover change has not been significant at the state scale. As Minnesota's population grows, there will be a greater demand for land to be used for commercial, industrial, residential, and institutional development.

- **Question:** By 2035, Minnesota’s population is expected to grow by nearly a million people. In the face of development pressures, which would be your highest priority? (Attendees were asked to choose two.)

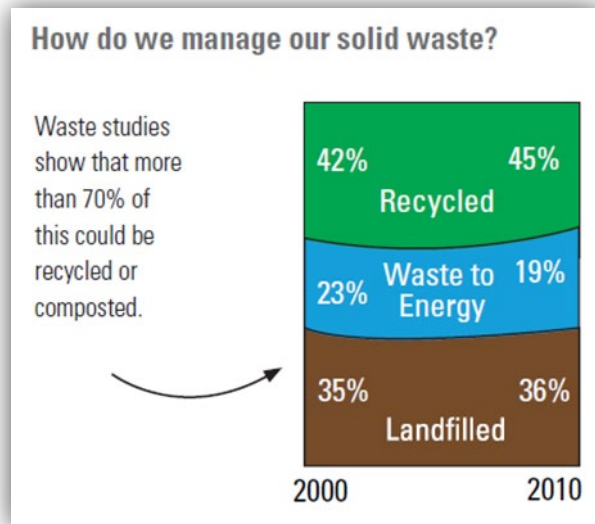
Multiple choice options:

- a) Protection of critical habitat areas
- b) Protection of agricultural lands
- c) Protection of forests
- d) Protection of parks and other recreational natural areas
- e) Encourage people to live in already developed areas
- f) Encourage business growth in already developed areas
- g) Other

In the face of development pressures, which would be your highest priority?



- **Metric:** Depiction of Solid Waste Management in Minnesota (located on page 9 of the Report Card).



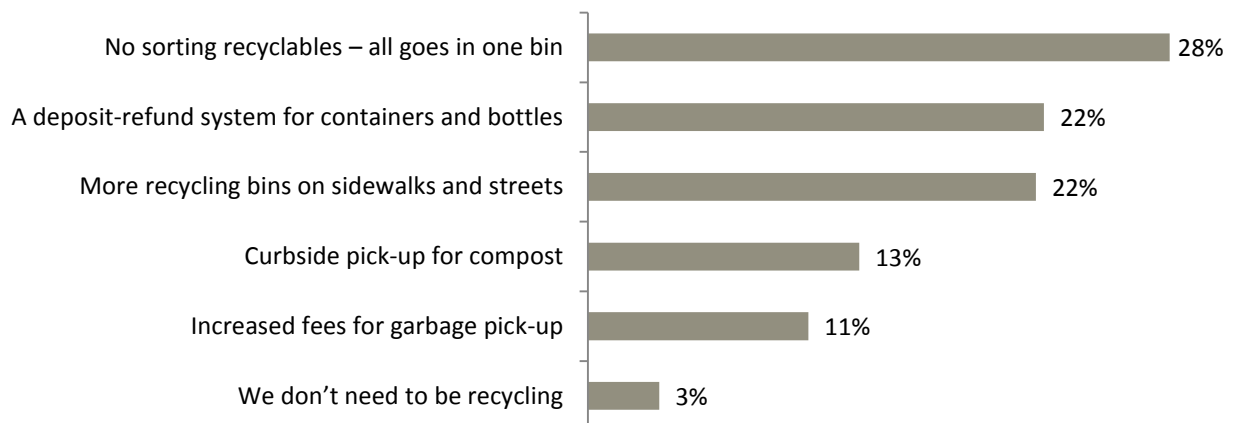
Landfills consume large tracts of land, yet recycling and composting rates have not changed much in Minnesota. Recycling and composting more would preserve landfill capacity.

- **Ranking question:** Which of the following would make you more likely to recycle more? (Attendees were asked to rank their top three answers, where their number one answer would receive the highest weight, and their third option would receive the lowest weight.)

Ranking choice options:

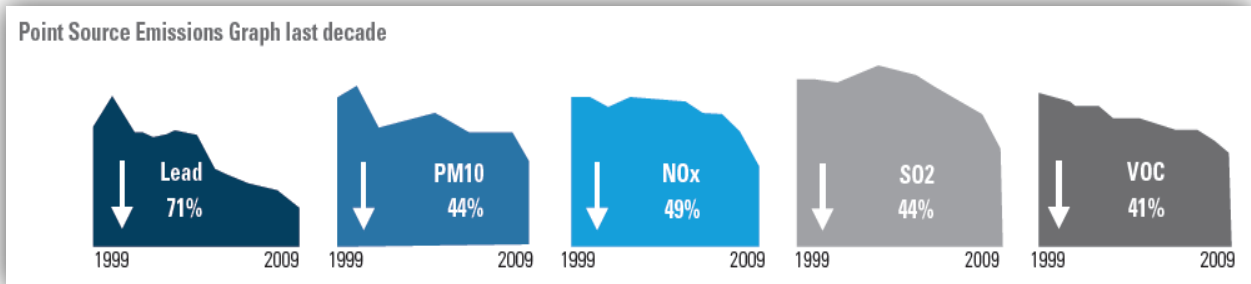
- More recycling bins on sidewalks and streets
- No sorting recyclables – all goes in one bin
- Increased fees for garbage pick-up
- A deposit-refund system for containers and bottles
- Curbside pick-up for compost
- We don't need to be recycling

Which of the following would make you likely to recycle more?



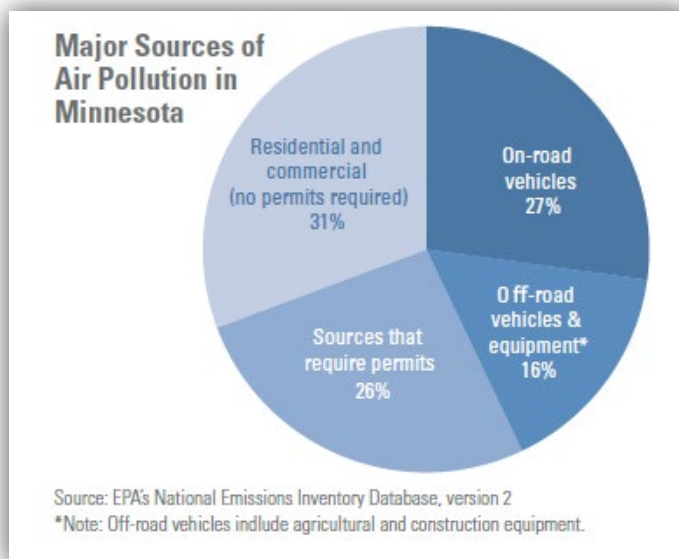
AIR

- **Metric:** “Success” Depiction of Point Source Emissions over the last decade (located on page 12 of the Report Card).



Industrial facilities, coal-fired power plants, chemical plants, oil refineries, et cetera are known as point sources. Emissions from these sources have decreased significantly, largely due to government regulation and industry efforts to reduce smokestack emissions.

- **Metric:** “Challenge” Depiction of the Current Major Sources of Air Pollution (located on page 12 of the Report Card).



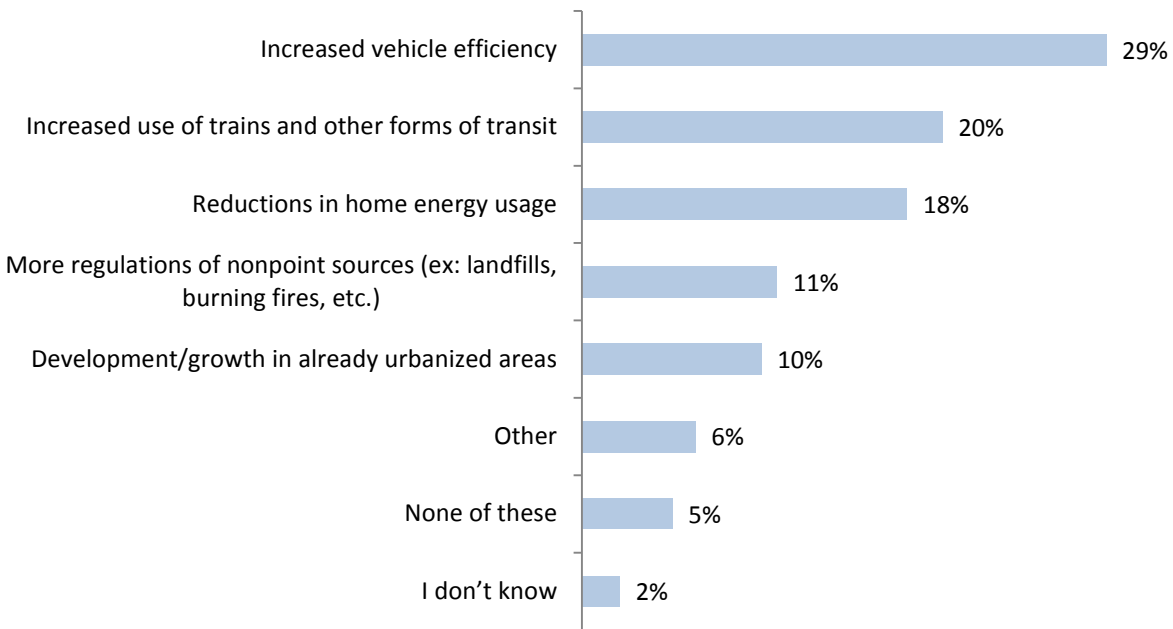
Most air pollution today comes from mobile sources, examples of which are: on-road vehicles such as cars, trucks, trains, and buses; off-road vehicles such as tractors and bulldozers, and recreational equipment; and fuel combustion for things like home heating. Less than one third of air emissions sources are regulated (requiring permits).

Ranking question: Which of the following do you believe will have the most positive impact on air quality in the years to come? (Attendees were asked to rank their top three answers, where their number one answer would receive the highest weight, and their third option would receive the lowest weight.)

Ranking choice options:

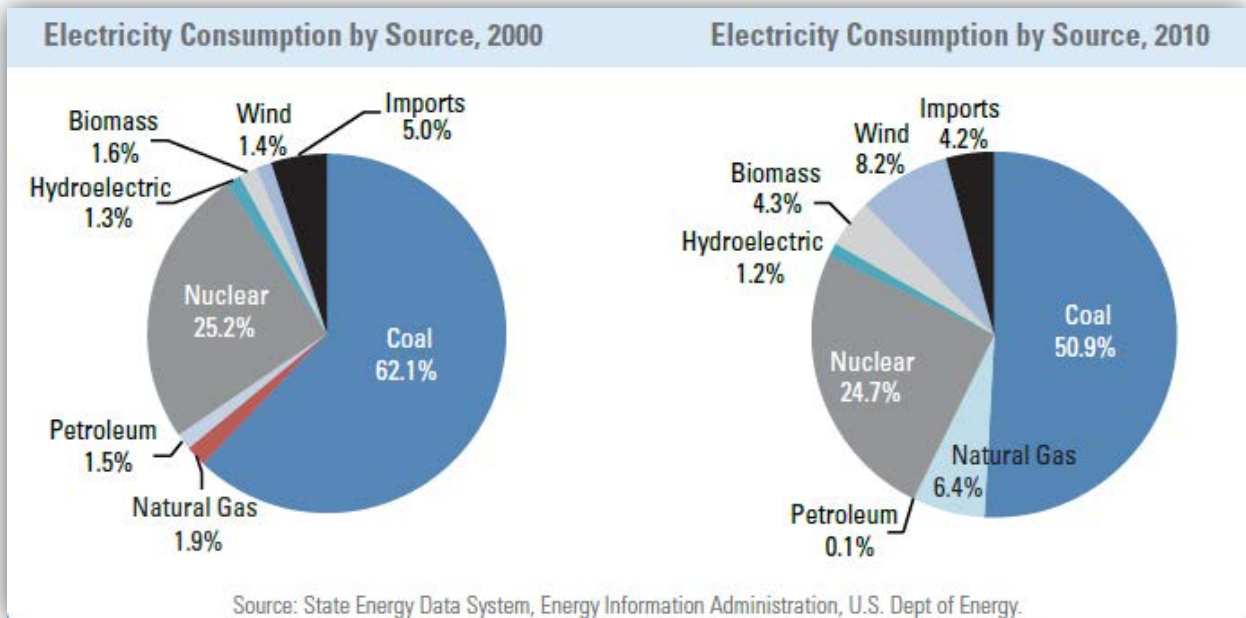
- a) Increased vehicle efficiency
- b) Increased use of trains and other forms of transit
- c) More regulations of nonpoint sources (ex: landfills, burning fires, etc.)
- d) Reductions in home energy usage
- e) Development/growth in already urbanized areas
- f) None of these
- g) I don't know
- h) Other

Which of the following do you believe will have the most positive impact on air quality in the years to come?



ENERGY

- **Metric:** “Success” and “Challenge” Depiction of Electricity Consumption in Minnesota by Energy Source between the years 2000 and 2010, (located on page 16 of the Report Card).



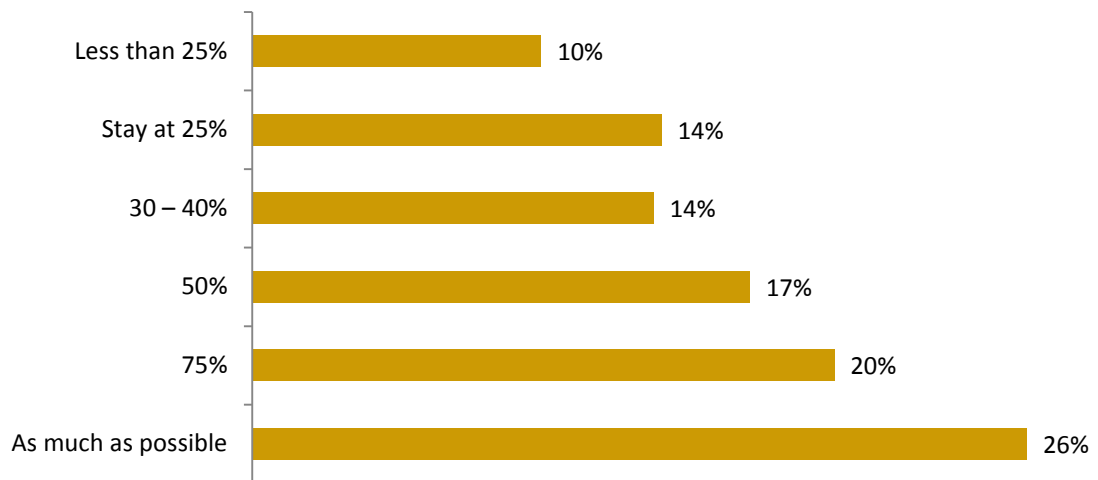
Coal makes up a lower percentage of our total energy consumption than in the past, while renewable energy and natural gas have increased in percentage compared to Minnesota’s total energy consumption. Today, slightly more than half of our electricity is generated by coal-fired power plants and nearly one-fourth by nuclear power plants.

- **Question:** Minnesota law requires that at least 25% of our electricity come from renewable sources like wind, solar, and biomass by 2025. What percent should be from renewable sources by 2050? (Attendees were asked to pick one.)

Multiple choice options:

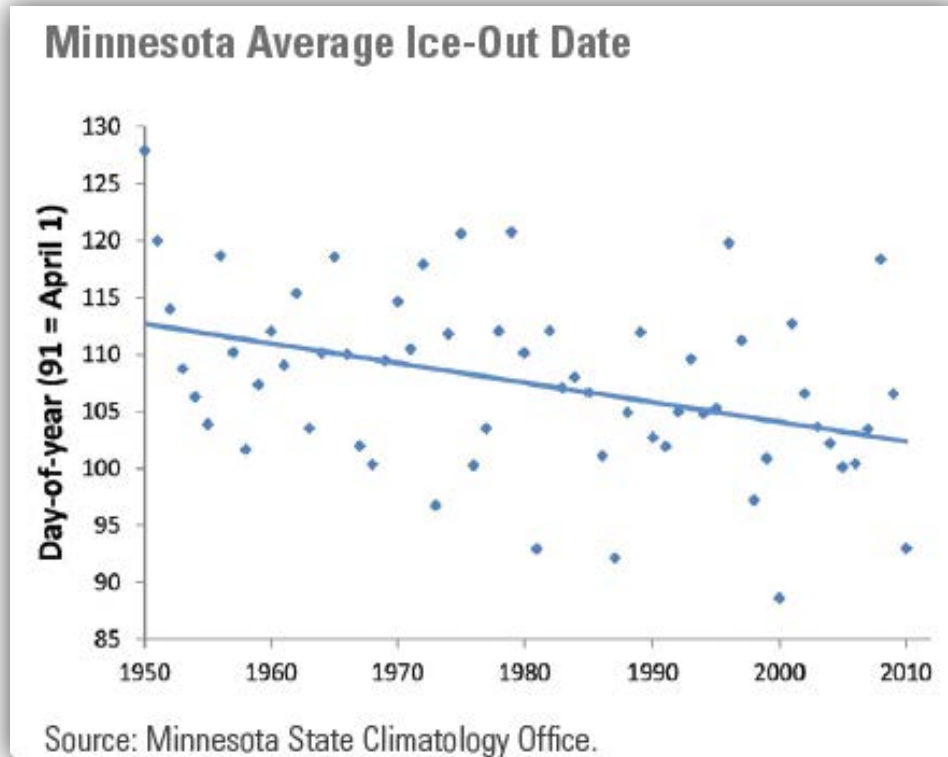
- a) Less than 25%
- b) Stay at 25%
- c) 30 – 40%
- d) 50%
- e) 75%
- f) As much as possible

What percent of Minnesota's electricity do you think should come from renewable sources by 2050?



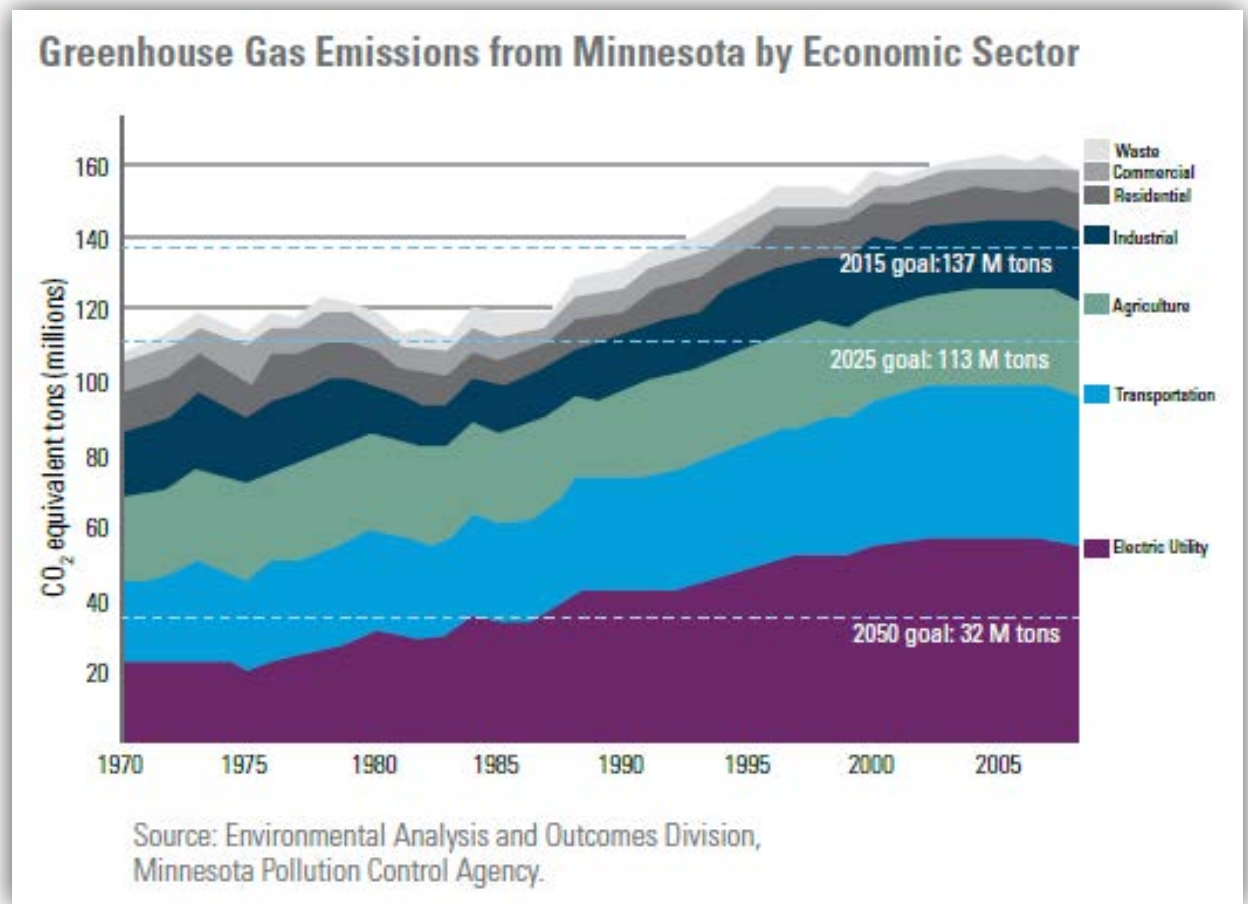
CLIMATE

- **Metric:** “Challenge” Depiction of the Average Ice-Out Dates in Minnesota since 1950, (located on page 21 of the Report Card).



There are early signs that climate change has had an impact on Minnesota. One example of long-term information that the State of Minnesota has is average ‘Ice-In’ and ‘Ice-Out’ dates, the dates when Minnesota lakes are entirely frozen, and when the ice has thawed, respectively. This metric shows the average ice-out dates, and illustrates an emerging trend: Minnesota lakes on average are thawing sooner in more recent calendar years. The average date of ice-in is occurring later in the calendar year as well. Between these two dates, the total number of days that Minnesota lakes are covered with ice is fewer, which affects fish populations, wildlife, and how Minnesotans work and play.

- **Metric:** Depiction of greenhouse gas emissions from Minnesota by economic sector (located on page 20 of the Report Card).



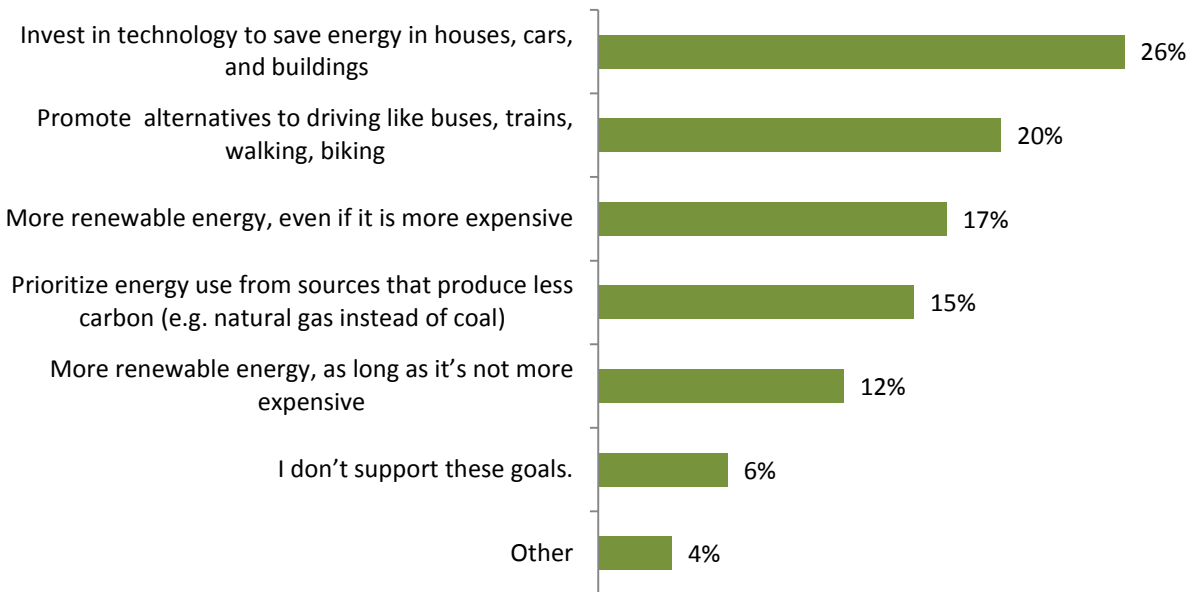
Greenhouse gases keep heat in our atmosphere to regulate conditions, but they have also been linked to climate change. Minnesota state law currently sets goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, (goals are indicated on the graph by the dotted horizontal lines). The year 2015 isn't too far away, and if total greenhouse gas emissions stay on the current trajectory, Minnesota likely won't meet that goal established in the law. The state goals associated with the years 2025 and 2050 are considerably more aggressive.

- **Question:** Which of the following statements best represents your feelings about how Minnesota should achieve these emissions goals? (Attendees were asked to choose up to three.)

Multiple choice options:

- a) Promote alternatives to driving like buses, trains, walking, biking
- b) Invest in technology to save energy in houses, cars, and buildings
- c) More renewable energy, as long as it's not more expensive
- d) More renewable energy, even if it is more expensive
- e) Prioritize energy use from sources that produce less carbon (e.g. natural gas instead of coal)
- f) I don't support these goals.
- g) Other

Which of the following statements best represents your feelings about how Minnesota should achieve these emissions goals?



Small Group Discussion

After the Commissioners completed the presentation, attendees moved into facilitated small group discussions, where they were asked to answer three questions for each of the Report Card topic areas (water, land, air, energy, and climate), which are listed below. The discussions that took place were often more free-form and related to cross-cutting issues that did not necessarily fit into one of the Report Card categories. State agency staff members facilitated many of the small group discussions. At the Forums with larger attendance numbers, participants were asked to self-facilitate their small group if there wasn't a staff member available. Facilitators recorded the discussions on table-top flip charts so that results could be compiled at a later date.

Small group discussion questions:

1. What **concerns** do you have related to quality of life now and in the years to come? (Think in terms of your children and grandchildren.)
2. Given these concerns about the next generation's quality of life, can you envision a **better scenario**? What does your vision for an ideal future quality of life look like?
3. What **actions** do you propose we take (as individual citizens or as a state) to address these issues in the years to come?

Discussions varied widely in both topic and opinions represented. At the end of the Forums each small group was asked to report out a few of the main points of their discussion to the audience as a whole. A compilation of the small group discussions for each of the Citizen Forums is available online at: <http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/forum.html>.ⁱⁱⁱ

Individual comment cards were also accepted during the Forums to ensure that unique observations that may not have been addressed in the small group discussions were considered. These comments are available online at: <http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/forum.html>.^{iv}

Your Voice Online Forum

In addition to the input collected at the Citizen Forums, people were able to submit comments online between November 20, 2012, and January 15, 2013, via the Minnesota Environmental Congress website. The "Your Voice Online Forum" was designed as an online comment submission form, which asked participants three questions, with room for additional comments:

1. What concerns, if any, do you have related to quality of life now and in the years to come? (Think in terms of a next generation timeframe – such as for the next generation of children or grandchildren.)
2. If you have concerns about the next generation's quality of life, can you envision a better scenario? What does your vision for an ideal future quality of life look like?
3. What actions do you propose we take (as individual citizens or as a state) to address these issues in the years to come?
4. Please enter any additional comments, questions, or concerns here:

Table 1: Common Themes from MN Environmental Congress Citizen Forums

Topics	Values, Interests	Concerns, Issues, Threats
Water:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water is very much tied to quality of life in MN Minnesotans value clean water- for drinking, fishing and recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overuse, shortages - concern about the future availability of water due to overuse, mismanagement, competing uses, pollution, and climate change Pollutants/contaminants Impacts of urban & agricultural land use Invasive species - anger, frustration around this issue Lack of understanding of/data about groundwater
Land:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value protecting natural habitat, Minnesota wildlife, wilderness, and public areas Interest in less auto dependent development, more transit options Urban areas that are bikeable, walkable & have green space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerned about loss of farm and natural lands due to urban/suburban sprawl Impacts of agricultural practices- soil erosion, increased runoff & flooding, loss of wetlands Call for more sustainable farming practices & local food production Mining: Emerging concerns over land, air and water impacts
Air: *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value clean air, air quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concern about impact of burning fossil fuels Connection between air quality and health
Energy:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interest in reducing energy consumption and increasing resiliency through diverse renewable energy sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some concern about reliability and cost of energy infrastructure and transmission Varying opinions on what is the appropriate role of government in influencing energy choices & production Costs associated with various energy options
Climate:**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value the current MN climate, how it enables citizens to enjoy the outdoors year-round 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severe weather events, impact on habitat, land, costs of clean-up/response Seeing and feeling more of the impacts, want to see more action
Additional:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning for long-term Economic system that accounts for value of environment and ecological services Varying options about gov't role: regulations, incentives, and impacts on property rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns for the next generation- need for more environmental education, relationship to and appreciation of the outdoors/nature Impacts of pollution on human health Concern about change in wildlife management, specifically in wolf and moose populations Minnesotans want to see action on these issues- at all levels- individual, local/city/county, state

**Fewer comments related to air than the other categories*

*** Very common theme throughout, connecting many other environmental issues*

Next Generation Environmental Congress

In an effort to further include young people in the events leading to the Minnesota Environmental Congress, the EQB, in partnership with the University of Minnesota Institute on the Environment, supported student-led coordination of the Next Generation Congress. The planning team for the Next Generation Environmental Congress was composed of members of Minnesota Youth Environmental Network (MNYEN), Youth Environmental Activists of Minnesota (YEAMN) members, Minnesota Public Interest Research Group (MPIRG) staff, and EQB intern staff. The event had two major goals:

- Collect the youth voice of Minnesota in a way that could be presented to the EQB at the Minnesota Environmental Congress on March 15th.
- Use the Next Generation Congress as an event where young leaders from across the state could network and learn from each other's initiatives.

In order to achieve both goals, the team structured the day to include multiple workshops and discussions.

Outreach for the Event

To reach a diverse audience from around the state, the team utilized connections with the University of Minnesota sustainability offices, MPIRG, YEAMN, the Will Steger foundation, Future Farmers of America (FFA), and Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center (Wolf Ridge). The team shared contacts and obtained registration sheets and email lists from events held by MN350, a local non-profit organization focused on climate change issues, "The Climate Math That Works" conference sponsored by MNYEN, and the University of Minnesota's "SEFsustain" event, a University-wide student conference on sustainability issues. The team sent invitation emails to many groups and schools and included in these invitation emails the polling questions used at the Citizen Forums. Invitations also included an opportunity to contribute to photo petitions, which asked citizens to stand with a piece of paper stating their main concerns about Minnesota's environment. Recipients of invitations were encouraged to share them with others who might be interested.

In addition to this email canvassing, the team spent three days walking through the University of Minnesota Twin Cities and Morris campuses asking students and other pedestrians to participate in the photo petition and attend the upcoming conference. The initial responses and photos we received from these invitations helped the team to tailor workshops to the anticipated Next Generation Congress



Figure 2: Next Generation Environmental Congress Flyer

audience. The team designed a poster and postcards that we sent with emails and posted throughout Facebook. The event had a website that was linked to the Environmental Congress's website and the Will Steger Foundation's website. The University of Minnesota also [published a story](#) on the event.

Approximately 150 young people attended the Next Generation Congress. Ten percent of attendees were high school age, and fifteen percent came from outside of the metro area. Most attendees heard about the event from connections with MPIRG, MNYEN, YEAMN, or from a teacher or professor.

Process for the Day

The day began with a panel speaking about the importance of youth involvement in environmental issues. The panel featured Ellen Anderson, Senior Advisor to the Governor on Energy and the Environment, Kate Knuth, former Minnesota State Representative and current EQB citizen member, Timothy Denherder Thomas, founder of Grand Aspirations, a non-profit organization emphasizing youth leadership, and Abby Fenton, Youth Programs Director for the Will Steger Foundation. These experts were chosen due to their unique perspectives on youth involvement in environmental issues.

Attendees were then broken up into groups of ten to twelve people and presented with a general overview of the EQB, the Executive Order 11-32, and the Citizen Forums. Attendees were then asked three questions:

- Why do you care about what happens to Minnesota's environment?
- What are you personally doing about it?
- How do you want legislators and policymakers to help you achieve your goals?

A few topics came up consistently in many group discussions. Some of the common topics included both fearfulness and hope about what is to come. Attendees feared that the world they grew up in will be drastically different within the next few decades and that their children will never experience the outdoors the way that they have. However, they were also very hopeful because they are surrounded by motivated and inspiring people who have shown them that meaningful action and progress are possible. Finally, they are tired of hearing about sustainability and the problems we face with our environment and seeing little response. In every group, attendees said that they often hear sustainability and conservation spoken about in grand terms, but practical, concrete solutions are almost always ignored on a policy level.

Following the breakout sessions, the day was structured so attendees could choose to participate in an activity related to preparation for the March 15 Minnesota Environmental Congress. The activity options included completing photo petitions and polls, creating art to present at the Minnesota Environmental Congress event, writing a song to sing at the capitol the following day for MPIRG's lobby day, or reviewing the 2012 Environment and Energy Report Card. The primary criticism of the report card was that it did not provide a context for comparison. Readers wanted to see how Minnesota compared to other states, how far along the state is at reaching proposed goals, and more information about legislative and policy progress. Furthermore, attendees felt there could be more technical graphs, data, and information in the report in addition to the easy-to-read narrative.

The final session of the conference was four workshops. MNYEN hosted a workshop informing participants about current clean energy legislation and how to get involved in local clean energy campaigns. Clean Water Action held a “Grassroots Organizing 101” workshop that provided a framework for starting or joining community organizations and strategies for those organizations to use in lobbying for local issues such as clean water availability. MN350 held a workshop on their divestment campaign to help interested student groups bring the conversation to their universities regarding financial investments in companies that are harming the environment. Finally, the University of Minnesota—Morris held a workshop on community gardening and creating local foods initiatives.

Outcomes of the Next Generation Environmental Congress

From the group responses, three main issues emerged:

1. The desire for more sustainable agriculture to reinvigorate rural Minnesota. Mechanisms suggested included partnerships with local communities to support the availability of diverse, healthy, and local crops, and renewable energy sources to power this agricultural system.
2. The desire for a modern transportation system that eliminates the need for cars by implementing alternatives such as more public transportation and bike trails.
3. The desire for a clean energy economy based on community economic development, energy efficiency, and renewable energy.

Following the conference, members of the planning team analyzed the results, personal statements, and stories heard at the Next Generation Environmental Congress. The team created a [video](#) to showcase the conference, and identified six speakers to present at the Minnesota Environmental Congress on March 15, 2013, three of which would discuss the three questions asked at the Next Generation Environmental Congress.

Minnesota Environmental Congress

Plenary Summary

According to Executive Order 11-32, the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) was tasked with organizing and hosting an Environmental Congress focused on the current state of Minnesota's environment, utilizing the elements in the 2012 Minnesota Environmental and Energy Report Card. The EQB invited a broad cross-section of experts, including stakeholders and community leaders from environmental, conservation and agricultural organizations, chambers of commerce, universities, government and tribal agencies, and business, student, and faith communities to participate in the conversation.

The Minnesota Environmental Congress was held on March 15th, 2013 at the Ramada Bloomington Hotel. The event attracted nearly 345 attendees, including invited guests and members of the public. The Congress culminated a process of public participation that included the Citizen Forums, submission of individual written and e-mailed comments, and the Your Voice online forum. It was intended to build on the information gathered for the Report Card and through the citizen input process, to help the EQB shape a vision for the future that addresses Minnesota's environment and energy challenges and opportunities. At the end of the day the goal was to have a prioritized list of recommendations for the EQB to help Minnesota achieve a long-term vision for the environment.

"The most valuable part of the [Congress] was the representation from different sectors of Minnesota. There were students, community activists, legislators and other government employees, professors, representatives of private industries, and nonprofit representatives."

- Congress attendee, from evaluation comments

"The most important work of the day was helping to prioritize the top issues for the EQB and Dayton Administration."

- Congress attendee, from evaluation comments

The Congress was designed as a working session, where recognized experts and community leaders synthesized citizen input to develop recommendations to the EQB (Figure 1). The morning plenary session provided context for the day via a series of presentations reviewing the organization and members of the EQB, the Report Card, the Citizen Forums, and the Next Generation Environmental Congress. The [full agenda and program](#) for the event are available online.

Commissioner Dave Frederickson, Chair of the EQB, gave the welcome and set the stage for the day. He was followed by Will Steger, polar explorer and educator from Minnesota, who has been committed to addressing climate change through his work and foundation. In his comments, Will gave a brief testimony of his experience witnessing the impact of climate change on his polar explorations and the importance of acting on this issue. He also provided an introduction for Governor Dayton, a longtime friend and supporter of Steger's work. [Will Steger's presentation](#) can be viewed on the Minnesota Environmental Congress website.

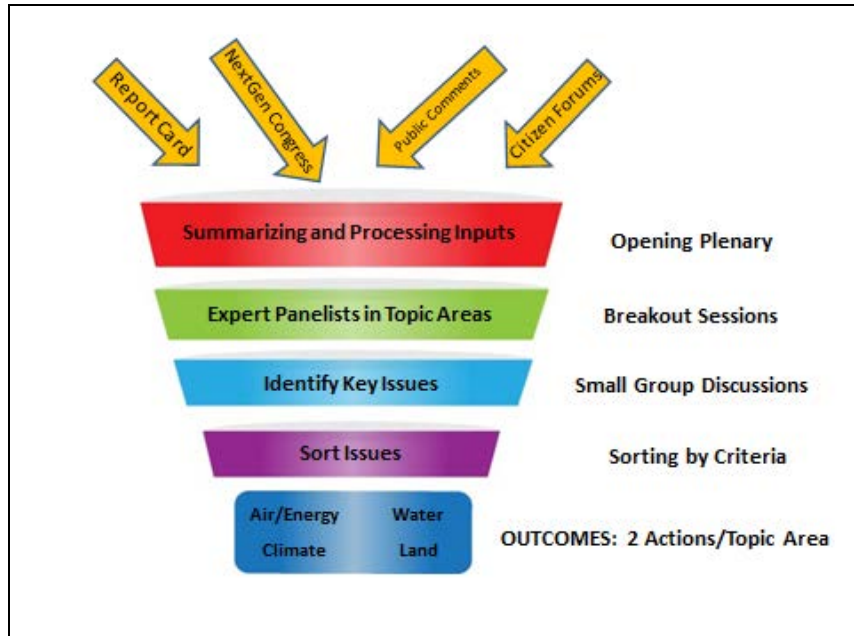


Figure 3: Process for the Day
 Graphic illustrating the process of the Minnesota Environmental Congress, to synthesize citizen input and identify top issue statements in 4 topic areas for the Environmental Quality Board.

Governor Dayton applauded the assembled crowd for participating in the important work of the Congress and encouraged strong leadership on environmental issues in Minnesota. He spoke of his commitment to and investment in the EQB to provide leadership and coordination on environmental issues in the state, telling attendees, “We can, we should, and we will make Minnesota an environmental leader.”

Following the Governor’s address, EQB members John Linc Stine, Commissioner of the MPCA, and Mike Rothman, Commissioner of Commerce, gave an overview of the EQB

and its role. Many attendees appeared to appreciate the Administration’s visible commitment to this process and their accessibility to attendees.

“The most valuable part of the Summit was that the Dayton administration and MN state agencies made themselves available for input from constituents. My take away was that the administration really is looking for input and is looking for ways to move forward on environmental issues.”

- Congress attendee, from evaluation comments

EQB citizen member and former Minnesota House of Representatives member Kate Knuth then gave an [overview presentation](#) of the top findings from the statewide Citizen Forums. Knuth summarized the common themes that emerged from the more than 2,200 comments submitted through various mediums. Comments were organized into categories corresponding to the Environmental and Energy Report Card (water, land, air, energy and climate), illustrated in Table 1 above. The summary also included a number of comments that dealt with issues outside those categories or were cross-cutting in nature. The full presentation can also be viewed at the Minnesota Environmental Congress website.

The last presentation of the morning plenary session was by a group of youth representatives from the Minnesota Next Generation Environmental Congress.

The youth shared findings and comments from the Next Generation Environmental Congress held on February 24, 2013. Five representatives from the Next Generation delegation gave testimonies on why they are concerned about environmental and climate change issues, and what they hoped to see as a

result of the Environmental Congress. Several other youth read excerpts from comments collected from students around the state through the Minnesota Youth Environmental Network (MNYEN). MNYEN also shared a [video summary](#) from the Next Generation Environmental Congress, which can be viewed online.

"The youth presentation was a really empowering experience. I felt they had a wide range of youth representatives, and they all spoke eloquently and demonstrated their passion for this issue. Seeing such a well-composed group of young adults with the passion and ability to take large strides in environmental policy gives me hope for the future of generations to come."

- Congress attendee, from evaluation comments

Having set the stage for the day, attendees then moved to four breakout sessions organized similarly to the Report Card categories: Water, Land, Climate, and Air/Energy. The breakout sessions are discussed below.

Patrick Hamilton, representing the Global Change Initiative at the Science Museum of Minnesota and Future Earth, gave the keynote address over lunch. His [presentation](#)^{vii} illustrated three major themes:

1. Humans dominate the planet.
2. We have tremendous assets.
3. We must innovate now.

"I liked Pat Hamilton's keynote presentation. It offered a great way to visualize human impact on the environment at a global scale."

- Congress attendee, from evaluation comments

After lunch participants returned to their breakout sessions to begin prioritizing the issue statements from their morning sessions. This process is addressed in more detail below.

At the end of the day, Commissioner Frederickson shared the top issues identified in each breakout session. United States Senator Amy Klobuchar also provided an update on federal environmental and agricultural policy. She expressed pride and admiration for the work of Congress attendees in setting a forward-looking environmental agenda for Minnesota.

Breakout Session Summary

Each morning breakout session featured a panel of experts speaking on a topic related to one of the Report Card categories, followed by a brief opportunity for questions. Following this, attendees were asked to develop issue statements related to topics discussed within the session. These issue statements were developed among those at each table and shared with the rest of the group. Each session had a moderator to guide participants through the day's process, as well as several agency staff to assist.

In the afternoon session, attendees sorted the issue statements they had developed through a two-step process that used the following criteria:

First sort-

- likelihood of the action yielding multiple environmental benefits
- likelihood that progress could be made in the next five years

Second sort-

- Whether the action would require collaboration among multiple state agencies
- Where it required new regulations, policies and incentives to be implemented

Attendees ranked the issue statements that were developed in the morning session as "high" or "low" for each criterion. Issue statements that were ranked "high" in both categories were weighted with more points, thus emerging as the top issue statements.

This sorting process was intended to identify a few priorities for presentation to the final plenary session and ultimately to the EQB. Moderators had a basic facilitation outline that provided structure for the day and the sorting process. While this outline laid out the intentions for the morning and afternoon sessions, there were modifications in each breakout to accommodate the attendees and the process. The summaries below explain the process that occurred in each of the breakout sessions to develop priority issues.

A full list of issue statements that were developed in the breakout sessions is included below.

CLIMATE:

Number of Attendees: 79

Expert Panelists and links to their Presentation Slides:

- Shalini Gupta- Executive Director, Center for Earth, Energy and Democracy
 - http://mn.gov/environmentalcongress/Climate_MN%20Env%20Congress_Gupta_March_15_2013.pdf
- Bob Johnson- President, Insurance Federation of Minnesota
 - http://mn.gov/environmentalcongress/Climate_Bob%20Johnson_HO-Market-Minn-EnvCongress-Mar2013.pdf
- Dr. Mark Seeley- Extension Climatologist/Meteorologist, University of Minnesota
 - http://mn.gov/environmentalcongress/Climate_Seeley_Envir_Congress_2013.pdf

Process Summary:

The Climate session followed the basic facilitation outline with two exceptions. First, at the end of the morning session staff shortened the full statements to a headline statement to facilitate the second sort of the issue statements and provide issue statements that would effectively communicate the essence of each statement to the full Congress in the closing session. The second exception was to allow the full group to combine and revise issue statements where they felt, as a group, it made sense and would help communicate the essence of the issue statements to the full Congress.

Allowing some additional discussion time with the entire group on the benefits and challenges of the process itself helped relieve some frustration with the process and, following this discussion, most participants seemed far more satisfied that the issue statements were a reflection of their preferences.

Top Issue Statements:

1. Minnesota is sustainably carbon neutral by 2050 (reduces fossil fuel, revitalizes ecosystems/communities, and develops renewable energy).
2. Bold government leadership for immediate change, including implementing MCCAG recommendations.

ENERGY/AIR:

Number of Attendees: 86

Expert Panelists and links to their Presentation Slides:

- Dr. Massoud Amin- Professor and Director, Technological Leadership Institute, University of Minnesota
 - http://mn.gov/environmentalcongress/Energy&Air_MNEC_Massoud%20Amin-03-15-13.pdf
- Michael Noble- Executive Director, Fresh Energy
 - No slides were presented.
- Judy Poferl- President and Chief Executive Office, Northern States Power- Minnesota
 - http://mn.gov/environmentalcongress/Energy&Air_MN%20Environment%20Panel%20Poferl%203-15-13.pdf

Process Summary:

The Energy/Air session modified the basic facilitation outline slightly to allow for additional comment and discussion of the issue statements. In the afternoon session, several tables had time to negotiate as a group which statements they wanted to pass on to the second sort. During the discussion between the two sorting steps, the entire group discussed the results together (rather than only among the table groups) and the moderator allowed participants to suggest alternative strategies and identify the limitations they saw with the process. Consequently, in the second sort most tables offered modifications to the issue statements that had passed through the first sort. Then the entire group discussed which issue statements to move forward to the Congress, and ended up voting by table on their preferred issue statements. Additionally, the group identified elements that were in issue statements not being moved forward that could be combined into a third issue statement.

Allowing additional discussion time with the entire group on the benefits and challenges of the process itself helped relieve some frustration with the process, and most participants seemed to be far more satisfied that the statements were a reflection of their preferences.

Top Issue Statements:

1. EQB should develop full cost accounting principles for use in energy and environmental decision making promoting and/or promulgating their use.
2. Develop policies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging development of renewable energy and smart grid infrastructure.
3. EQB should undertake a formal study of achieving 90% renewable energy use/generation and use of storage technologies.

WATER:

Number of Attendees: 112

Expert Panelists and links to their Presentation Slides (?):

- David Minge- Former U.S. Congressman
 - Minnesota Agriculture Water Quality Certification Program Fact Sheet [PDF]: http://mn.gov/environmentalcongress/Water_2013MAWQCP-Final.pdf
- Dr. Peter Sorensen- Director, Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center, University of Minnesota
 - Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center Brochure [PDF]: http://mn.gov/environmentalcongress/Water_MAIS%20BrochureV3%20PRINTED.pdf
- Dr. Deborah Swackhamer- Professor and Co-Director, Water Resources Center, University of Minnesota
 - http://mn.gov/environmentalcongress/Water_Swackhamer%20Environmental%20Congress%20morning%20breakout%20031513.pdf

Process Summary:

The Water session was the largest breakout session, with 13 tables, which made the discussion and sorting process more challenging. The session was pressed for time in the morning, due to a delayed start and an engaged question and answer period with the panelists. Though the panelists were very respectful of their allotted time limits, this discussion still utilized a significant portion of the morning session. This meant that table groups were pressed to come up with their issue statements with limited time for discussion. There was some frustration and feeling that insufficient time had been invested in the morning deliberations, on which the rest of the session process depended.

In the afternoon, several participants suggested adding another discussion opportunity to give advice and feedback to the EQB. This addition functioned as a constructive release valve for the frustration about process constraints. Participants expressed interest in more communication about the EQB's roles and mission, and an interest in building on the past experience and research of the EQB to work across agencies to create enforceable standards and policies for water sustainability.

Although the resulting top issues were more general than other sessions, there are some consistent themes across them that may also correspond with perceived notions of what the EQB's niche of responsibility is, including: sustainability, prioritizing, information needs, a science-based call for action and coordination across agencies and organizations.

Top Issue Statements:

1. Manage across all the various regulations and competing priorities to have more effective and efficient management of water resources
2. Comprehensive water quantity and quality management system integrated across levels of jurisdiction focused on understanding supply and demand and roles and responsibilities
3. Accelerated and continuous improvement on water quality and quantity (using science, technology, education and enforcement of existing regulations)

LAND:

Number of Attendees: 58

Expert Panelists and links to their Presentation Slides:

- Dr. Lee Frelich- Director, Center for Forest Ecology, University of Minnesota
 - http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Land_Frelich-Environmental%20congress%202013.pdf
- Susan Haigh- Chair, Metropolitan Council
 - http://mn.gov/environmentalcongress/Land_Sue%20Haigh's%20EQC%20Remarks_3-15-13.pdf
- Dr. Olga Selifonova- Chief Executive Officer and Founder, Reluceo
 - http://mn.gov/environmentalcongress/Land_Reluceo_XLTerra_MN_Environmental_Congress_March15_2013.pdf

Process Summary:

The Land session followed the basic facilitation outline with two exceptions. First, the moderator allowed each table to submit one or two issue statements during the morning table group work. Therefore, tables with vastly divergent opinions were not required to negotiate a single statement during the short morning session. This seems to have resulted in more discrete statements rather than the composite type statements generated by other breakout sessions. Second, after each of the two sorting steps, the entire group discussed the results at length rather than discussion occurring only among the table groups. The generous discussion time spent with the entire group resulted in a sense that all participants were working as a single group rather than the session being a collection of small table group discussions. Both of the facilitation divergences were possible because of the relatively small number of participants in the Land session as compared to the other sessions.

After the rankings were compiled and presented, participants discussed them. Several people were surprised that the statement directly addressing agriculture (which was ranked highest in the first sort) did not make the top three in the second sort (see Appendix B). Other comments from the session included the observation that there should be coordinated data available to all agencies and levels of government so they are working from “the same play book.” Many participants agreed that the number of levels of government with some role in land use planning and management produces a disjointed system that does not necessarily produce optimal outcomes for natural resources.

Top Issue Statements:

1. We need better management practices and decision-making for land to protect and conserve water through healthy watersheds and to protect threatened wildlife
2. Land use planning and management- working together and using a mix of incentives and regulation
3. The 20th Century was the hydrocarbon economy- the 21st century needs to be the carbohydrate economy¹.

¹ The meaning of “carbohydrate economy” was not clear to everyone in the session or the broader Congress attendees. Participants from the table that generated the statement explained that it means moving towards a plant-based economy for fuels and consumer products and moving away from reliance on fossil fuels and petroleum-based products. It can also include solar and wind energy.

EQB Follow-up Workshop

Following the Minnesota Environmental Congress, the EQB had the opportunity to work with the Governor's Institute on Community Design (GICD) to synthesize the feedback gathered throughout the events described and develop a list of prioritized actions.

About the Governor's Institute on Community Design

GICD provides expert advice and technical assistance to help guide governors and state leaders in finding cost-effective and environmentally sustainable solutions for growth and economic development. GICD experts include a bipartisan group of former governors and former state-level cabinet members who serve as technical advisers. GICD focuses in particular on supporting coordination among state agencies. GICD is funded by the federal HUD-DOT-EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities, and their team facilitated the meetings at no charge to Minnesota.

The GICD experts and staff who led the planning workshops included:

- Paris Glendening, Former Governor of Maryland;
- Bill Fulton, GICD Vice President for Policy; former Mayor of Ventura, California;
- Douglas Foy, Former Super Secretary, Massachusetts Office of Commonwealth Development; President, Serrafix, Inc.;
- Stephen H. Burrington, Former Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation; Former Undersecretary, Massachusetts Office of Commonwealth Development;
- Shari Wilson, Former Secretary, Maryland Department of Environment;
- Ron Sims, Former Deputy Secretary, US Department of Housing and Urban Development; Former County Executive, King County, Washington; and
- Other key staff.

Workshop Objectives and Process

The workshop consisted of two meetings with EQB members, staff, GICD experts, and members of the public. The objectives of the two-day workshop facilitated by the GICD were to assist the EQB in the following:

1. establishing actionable priority goals following recommendations from each phase of Executive Order 11-32—including the Environmental Review Improvement Report*, the Governance and Coordination Report**, insights from the Environment and Energy Report Card, and findings from the Citizen Forums and Environmental Congress—within the context of the EQB's current commitments and available resources;
2. creating an action-oriented implementation plan for these goals; and

3. measuring outcomes to demonstrate progress toward these goals.

The first day of the workshop occurred on May 2, 2013. Governor Glendening and other GICD experts and staff led a discussion with the Board members. The day's discussion began with a presentation by EQB staff about past and present EQB responsibilities and activities, as well as a summary of public input received through the Environmental Congress and the Citizen Forums. There was a robust discussion about the opportunities for better coordination of policies related to air, water, land, energy and climate. GICD experts discussed examples of best practices in other states for aligning environmental goals, measuring and tracking progress, and coordinating policy goals with state investment strategies.

GICD Recommendations

At the second day of the workshop, which occurred on June 20, 2013, GICD staff presented a series of nine recommendations for the EQB based on the first day's discussion. The following list of recommendations was presented:

1. Integrate and coordinate certain strategic and long-range planning authorities.
2. Establish the EQB as the central point for implementing and tracking the State's climate change efforts.
3. Manage across all the various regulations and competing priorities to have more effective and efficient management of water resources.
4. Institutionalize cross-agency collaboration.
5. Capitalize on citizen members.
6. Add the metropolitan Council to the EQB.
7. Strengthen public and legislative engagement.
8. Track and report on the State's environmental progress.
9. Develop and implement an integrated, multi-agency investment strategy.

The EQB, by consensus, accepted the recommendations. Any future actions based on the recommendations will be discussed at regular EQB meetings. The full GICD report with recommendations to EQB is available online.

APPENDIX A: CITIZEN FORUM DATA

ⁱCitizen Forum Registration Sheets

- Rochester: <http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Rochester%20Registration.pdf>
- Bloomington: <http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Bloomington%20Registration.pdf>
- Duluth: <http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Duluth%20Registration.pdf>
- Worthington: <http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Worthington%20Registration.pdf>
- St. Cloud: <http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/St%20Cloud%20Registration.pdf>
- Moorhead: <http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Moorhead%20Registration.pdf>

ⁱⁱCitizen Forum Polling Results

- Rochester:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Citizen%20Forum%20Polling%20Results%20Rochester.pdf>
- Duluth:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Citizen%20Forum%20Polling%20Results%20Duluth.pdf>
- Worthington:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Citizen%20Forum%20Polling%20Results%20Worthington.pdf>
- St. Cloud:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Citizen%20Forum%20Polling%20Results%20St.%20Cloud.pdf>
- Moorhead:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Citizen%20Forum%20Polling%20Results%20Moorhead.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱCitizen Forum Small Group Discussion Summaries

- Rochester:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Rochester%20table%20notes%20Final.pdf>
- Bloomington:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Bloomington%20table%20notes%20Final.pdf>
- Duluth: <http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Duluth%20table%20notes%20Final.pdf>
- Worthington:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Worthington%20table%20notes%20Final.pdf>
- St. Cloud:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/St%20Cloud%20table%20notes%20Final.pdf>
- Moorhead:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Moorhead%20table%20notes%20Final.pdf>

^{iv}Citizen Forum Individual Comment Cards

- Rochester:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Rochester%20Individual%20Comments.pdf>

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- Bloomington:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Bloomington%20Individual%20Comments.pdf>
 - Duluth: <http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Duluth%20Individual%20Comments.pdf>
 - Worthington:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Worthington%20Individual%20Comments.pdf>
 - St. Cloud:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/St%20%20Cloud%20Individual%20Comments.pdf>
 - Moorhead:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Moorhead%20Individual%20Comments.pdf>

^vYour Voice Online Forum

- November 20-30, 2012:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Your%20Voice%20Online%20Forum%20-%20November%2020-30%20FINAL.pdf>
- December 1-10, 2012:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Your%20Voice%20Online%20Forum%20-%20December%201-10%20FINAL.pdf>
- December 11-31, 2012:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Your%20Voice%20Online%20Forum%20-%20December%2011-31%20FINAL.pdf>
- January 1-13, 2013:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Your%20Voice%20Online%20Forum%20-%20January%201-13%20FINAL.pdf>
- January 14-16, 2013:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Your%20Voice%20Online%20Forum%20-%20January%2014-16%20FINAL.pdf>

^{vi}Email submissions

- Individual email comments:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Your%20Voice%20Online%20Forum%20-%20January%2014-16%20FINAL.pdf>
- “Revise the 2012 Environmental Report Card” form emails:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Revise%20the%202012%20Environmental%20Report%20Card.pdf>
- “Strengthen Citizen Input to Environmental Decisions” form emails:
<http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/Strengthen%20Citizen%20Input%20to%20Environmental%20Decisions.pdf>

APPENDIX B: FULL LIST OF STATEMENTS FROM BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Climate

Based on individual reflections, participants at each table in the Climate session generated issue statements about climate change. The goal was to create issue statements that could provide direction to the EQB in setting strategic priorities for the state. The full list of issue statements generated in the Climate session is listed below.

A total of eight issue statements, one from each table, came out of the morning session. The issue statements accurately reflect the range of climate change concerns that arose during group discussions. The list below includes the “headline” issue statement that was used to facilitate the sorting process and the full original issue statements as crafted by the small groups. The issue statements are listed by table number, not priority.

1. Implement true cost economic system (*Full statement: Develop and implement true cost economic system that disincentives negative consumer and investment behavior while incentivizing activities that improve sustainable outcomes.*)
2. Bold government leadership for immediate change. (*Full statement: Bold leadership at the state and federal policy levels for immediate changes in the areas of energy [renewable and transportation] to implement readily available solutions at the local level.*)
3. Public/Private partnership to address climate change challenge including historic injustices. (*Full statement: Development and rapid roll-out of a comprehensive public-private effort to educate, assist, and actively involve all MN citizens and communities where they are and in acknowledgement of historic injustices, in on-the-ground and policy responses to climate change from adaptive and mitigative.*)
4. MN is carbon neutral (reduces fossil fuel, revitalizes ecosystems/communities). (*Full statement: Minnesota is carbon neutral by reducing fossil fuel use in a way that revitalizes our natural ecosystems and communities.*)
5. Develop alternative energy (net zero carbon emissions by 2050). (*Full statement: Create public awareness and urgency around the development of alternative energy so that we reach the goal of net zero by 2050.*)
6. Educate public on personal impact and action they can make. (*Full statement: We should use public education to show individuals how they can have an impact on climate change. And facilitate small groups of Minnesotans to learn what action this can take.*)
7. MN must implement fossil fuel tax. (*Full statement: Minnesota must take a leadership role in bringing carbon below 350 ppm. Implementation of a fossil fuel tax is a necessary step for other actions to take hold.*)
8. Highlight iconic MN examples that include external costs of climate change. (*Full statement: We need iconic MN examples that include external costs of climate change, to be inserted into people’s finite pool of worry.*)

Energy/Air

Based on individual reflections, participants at each table generated issue statements about energy and air concerns. The goal was to create issue statements that could provide direction to EQB in setting strategic priorities. The full list of key statements generated in the Energy/Air session is listed below.

A total of 12 issue statements, one from each table, came out of the morning session. The issue statements accurately reflect the range of energy issues that arose during group discussions. Issue statements are listed by table number, not priority.

1. Develop policies that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by encouraging development of renewable energy and smart grid infrastructure.
2. We need a more intensive community-based, cross-sector approach to energy-related education, incentives and step-by-step actions that look at efficiency, cogeneration, and renewable energy system integration.
3. Simplify the process to acquiring alternative energy for individuals, groups and communities.
4. The EQB/State should undertake a formal study of achieving a 90% renewable energy system by 2050 (costs, benefits, rate impacts, etc.) (see State of Utah, Germany: NREL study for precedents) + Denmark study.
5. Policies that require full cost accounting in energy and other environmental decision making by 2014.
6. Encourage and support local community actions to air quality and energy issues that also have multiple environmental benefits and improve public health.
7. We want the public (expressed in our legislative and regulatory bodies) to have the key interest in shaping our energy policy--more stakeholder involvement and less shareholder involvement.
8. We are throwing away a lot of the energy we could be using and our efficient use has barriers in the means of distributing energy source to the best use to not lose sight of thermal energy.
9. Move to efficient pricing system reflecting externalities.
10. Need the urgency of a Manhattan Project to facilitate more research and development of energy storage technologies.
11. What would a carbon goal look like if it incorporated full cost accounting (including, but not limited to loss, efficiency, distribution, affordability, and human health impacts)?
12. Create a 50-year master plan leveraging incentives for efficiencies in our energy system and removing barriers for storage and transmission to allow increased renewable energy.

Water

The Water session yielded some very general issue statements, likely due to both the complexity of water issues as well as an artifact of the process that asked table groups to quickly develop a these issue statements. Session participants were not given instructions about scale or scope of the issue statements or the sorting process to follow, so table groups tended to lump issues together into single, complex, statements.

Some participants probably thought the general nature of the statements reflected a genuine complexity in natural and political environments. Others may have found it hard to find their particular issue or interest in those statements.

The Water session generated a total of 13 issue statements, which are listed by table number, not priority.

1. Manage across all the various regulations and competing priorities to have more effective and efficient management of water resources.
2. Comprehensive water quantity and quality management system integrated across levels of jurisdiction focused on understanding supply and demand roles and responsibilities.
3. Prioritize limited resources to make smart investments on a wide range of water issues, but also balance the need for more study with the need for immediate action.
4. Use education and policy to drive systems and behavior change regarding non-point pollution.
5. We need a paradigm shift from modifying our environment to meet our needs to change our behavior and institutions to meet ecosystem and environmental needs.
6. Poor practices, economic incentives and lack of consistent enforcement in agriculture, mining and crude oil pipelines prevent conservation of ground water, contaminate drinking water, surface water and harms public health ecosystems.
7. Monitor, allocate and prioritize surface and groundwater use through a sustainable data-driven system.
8. Create the cultural and political conditions for widespread reverence for a sustainable relationship with water both as individuals and as a society.
9. Understanding our groundwater resources and developing incentives to use them sustainably.
10. Accelerated and continuous improvement on water quality and quantity (using science, technology, education and enforcement of existing regulations).
11. Identify data gaps, filling those gaps with credible data to assist decision makes in making informed decisions when regulating industry.
12. The lack of enforceable standards- the need to seek criteria for nutrients (nitrates), water withdrawal, hydrologic changes (urban/rural), this can drive policy.
13. There is an inequity in how we address non-point issues and their impacts on both water quality and quantity: governance/policy systems are not adequate, not accountable.

Land

Based on individual reflections, participants at each table group generated issue statements about land resources. The goal was to create issue statements that could provide direction to EQB in setting strategic priorities. The Land Forum generated the issue statements listed below. The issue statements accurately reflect the range of land use issues that arose during group discussions. The issue statements also touch on the range of land use issues identified by Citizen Forum participants: habitat loss, the relationship between land and water, invasive species, the impact of land use choices on natural resources, the relationship between energy and land use, uncoordinated land use planning, sustainability as a decision-making framework, and human consumption and waste impacts on natural resources.

The Land session generated a total of 17 issue statements. Issue statements 12-17 were accidentally not preserved after the Congress. They were issue statements that were ranked in the first sorting exercise as having low likelihood to result in multiple environmental benefits. Issue statements are listed by table number, not priority.

1. We need better management practices and decision-making for land to protect and conserve water through healthy watersheds and to protect threatened wildlife.
2. Greater political and financial resources for invasive species management for the conservation of native eco systems.
3. Land use planning and management - working together and using a mix of incentives and regulation.
4. Address the issue of preserving and managing agricultural land.
5. Provide information about resource consumption - provide incentives for people or towns to do the right things.
6. Sustainable agricultural, consumption and waste management should be key priority areas due to their large multifaceted impacts.
7. The 20th century was the hydrocarbon economy . . . the 21st century needs to be the carbohydrate economy.
8. Create an intentional long-term plan that results in high-quality, resilient and adaptable places (urban, rural, wilderness) that involves and engages communities.
9. Encourage (outreach and education) and provide/respond to lifestyle changes towards sustainability while allowing for lifestyle differences.
10. Sustainable practices need to be the model for all decision-making.
11. Need for clear land distinctions and expectations (allowable uses, etc.).

All of the information from the Minnesota Environmental Congress, including the agenda and presentations, are available online at: www.mn.gov/environmentalcongress.