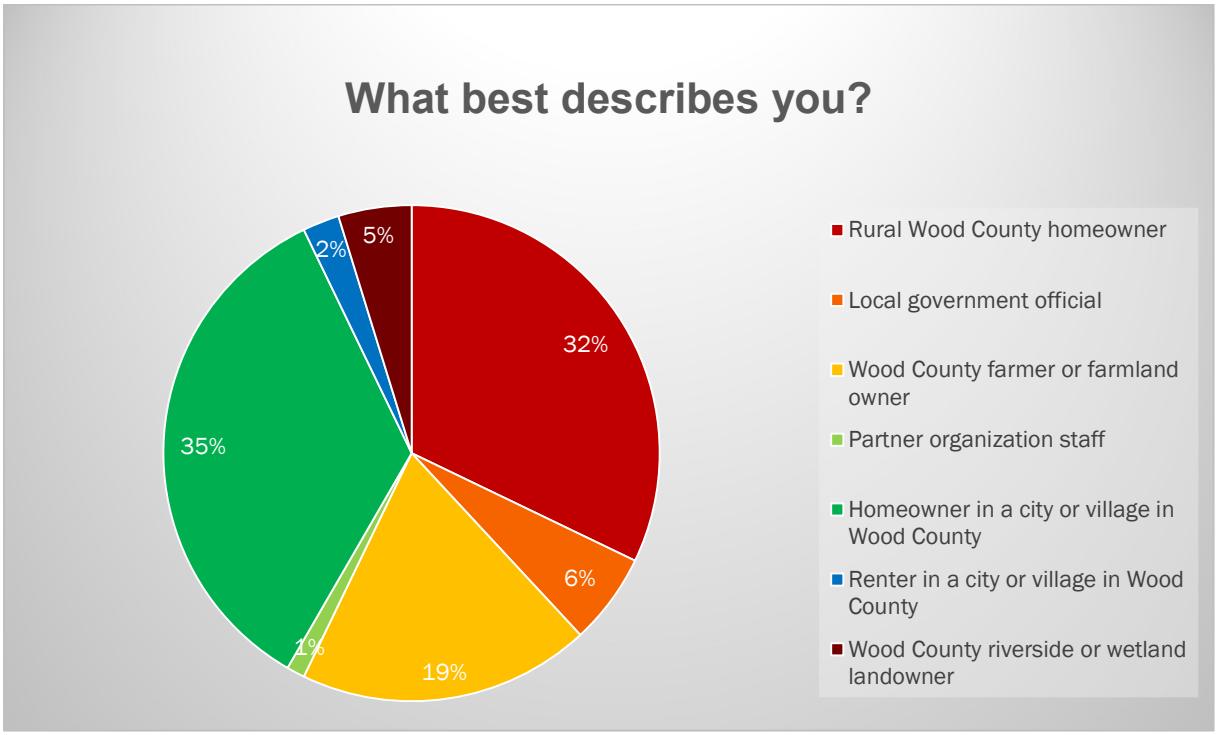
# Wood Soil and Water Conservation District

Conservation and Water Quality Needs Assessment, 2026

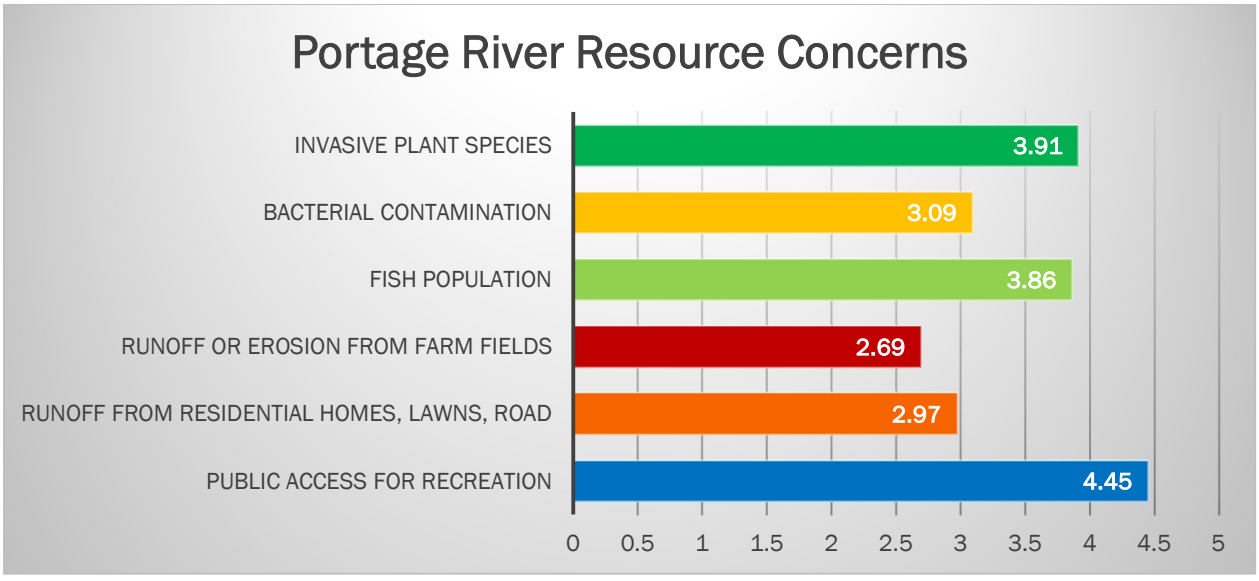
Wood SWCD received 84 responses to our community survey between June 9 and Sept 12, 2026. The survey was promoted:

- NRCS Local Work Group meeting
- Wood SWCD newsletter
- Postcards placed at 1616 E Wooster St
- Facebook posts
- Wood County Fair
- Ag-Venture
- Middleton Township newsletter
- Washington Township trustees meeting
- Wood County Township Association
- Wood County Department Head meeting
- WLEB Water Quality meeting
- Mailings to 5000 randomly selected residential addresses

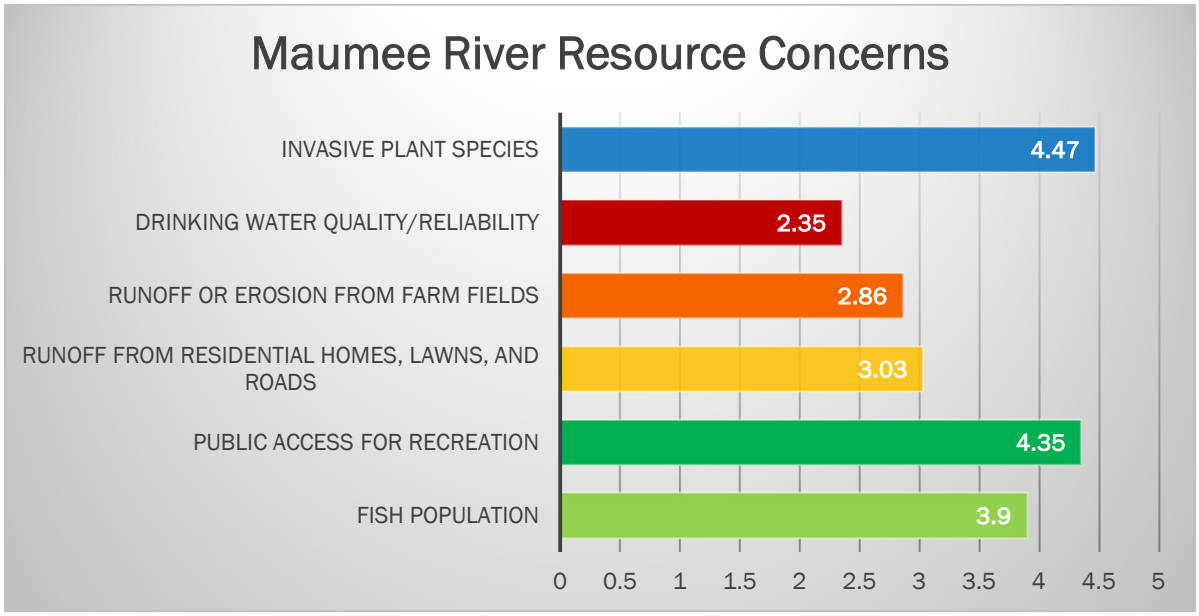
Out of the 84 respondents, almost two thirds identified primarily as a rural or urban homeowner, not adjacent to a river or wetland. However, we recognize that an individual respondent may fit into several categories.




Respondents were asked to rank what they felt were the most important issues facing the Portage River, with 1 being most important and 6 least important. The average score for each concern is represented below, with the lowest number being perceived as the most important issue. The public is most concerned about runoff from farms and from residential properties. Recreational access to the Portage is not a high priority.

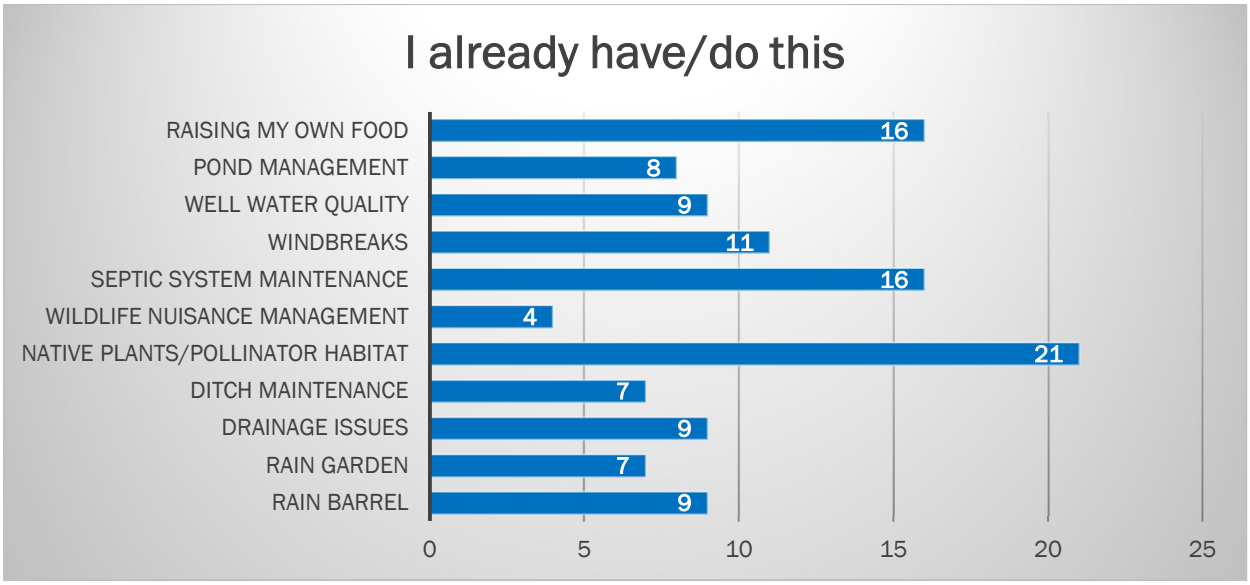


In the Maumee River, Wood County residents have the same runoff concerns as they do in the Portage River watershed. Additionally, drinking water quality and quantity issues ranked highest of the concerns presented. This may reflect increased awareness of drought impacts on the river levels, as well as recent increases in industrial water needs.

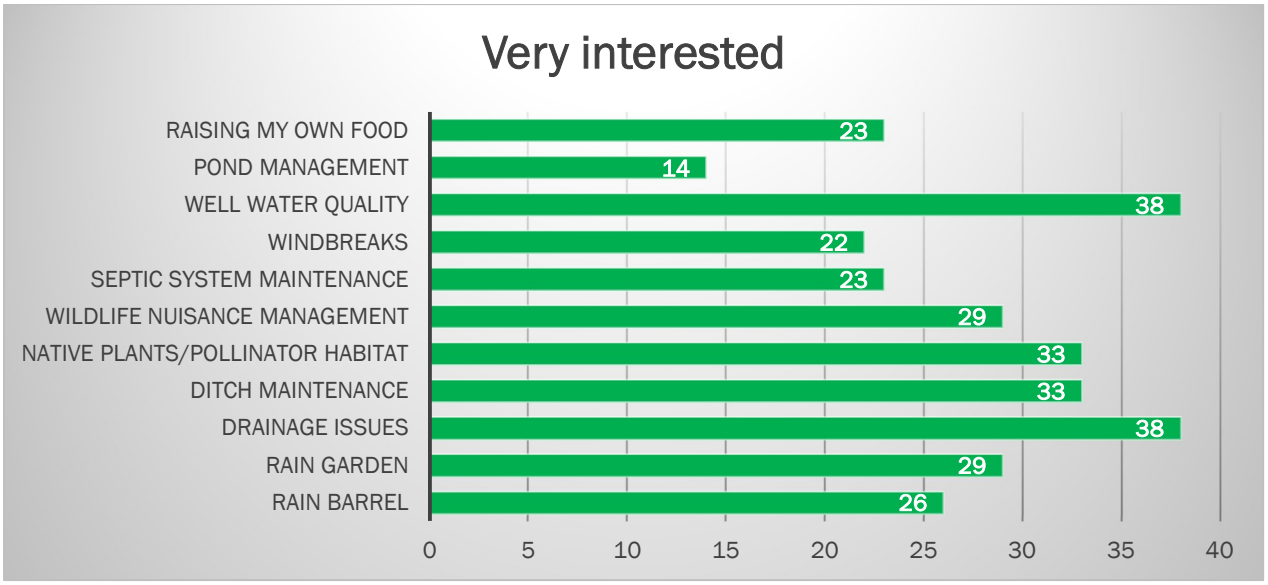


The next few questions asked people what problems they are seeing, and what conservation efforts they notice. Respondents were asked if they saw something frequently, occasionally, almost never, or if they didn't know what it looks like. The resource concerns reported as seen "frequently" were litter and fertilizer/pesticide applications. Malfunctioning septic systems were most likely to be ranked as "I don't know what this looks like." When asked what conservation efforts people are noticing, respondents were overall less willing to use "frequently" as a response. However, if "Frequently" and "Occasionally" are combined, drainage water management, buffer strips or wetlands, and overwintering cover rose to the top. Manure injection or incorporation was most likely to receive "I don't know what this looks like" responses.

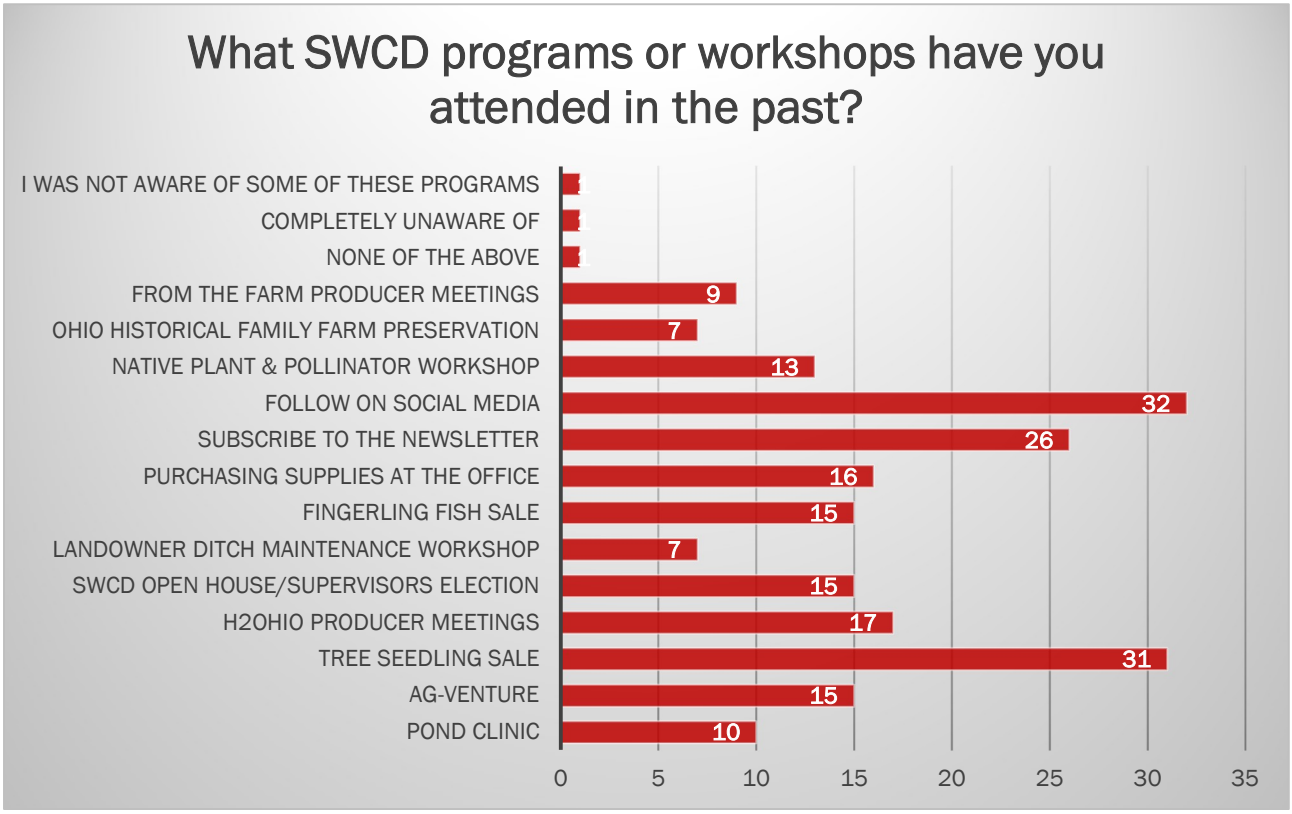
Participants were asked about conservation efforts they had already undertaken or were very interested in undertaking. Practices that had already been adopted included planting native habitat, planting food gardens, and maintaining septic systems.



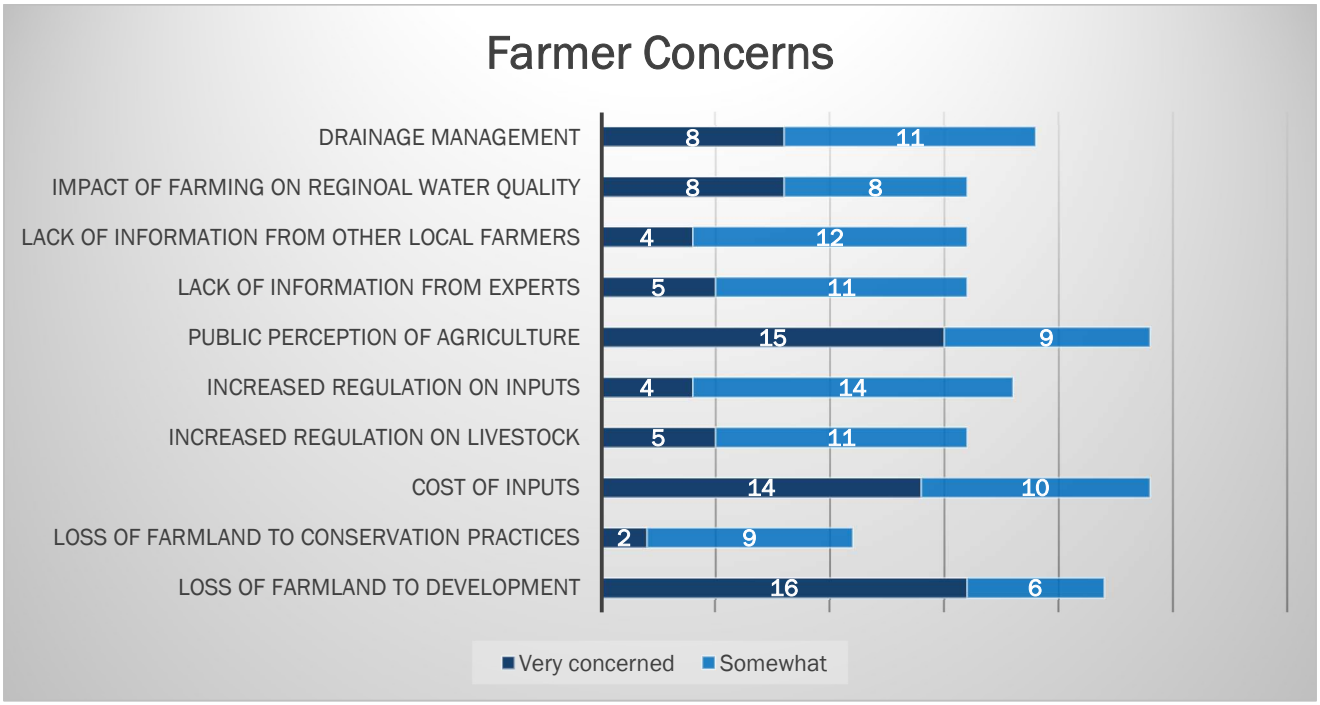
Wood County residents are very interested in participating in additional water quality efforts, especially well water quality, drainage issues and ditch maintenance, as well as gardening for habitat. Pond management, gardening for food, windbreaks, and septic system maintenance were the least interesting to survey participants. Some participants did not complete this section of the survey.



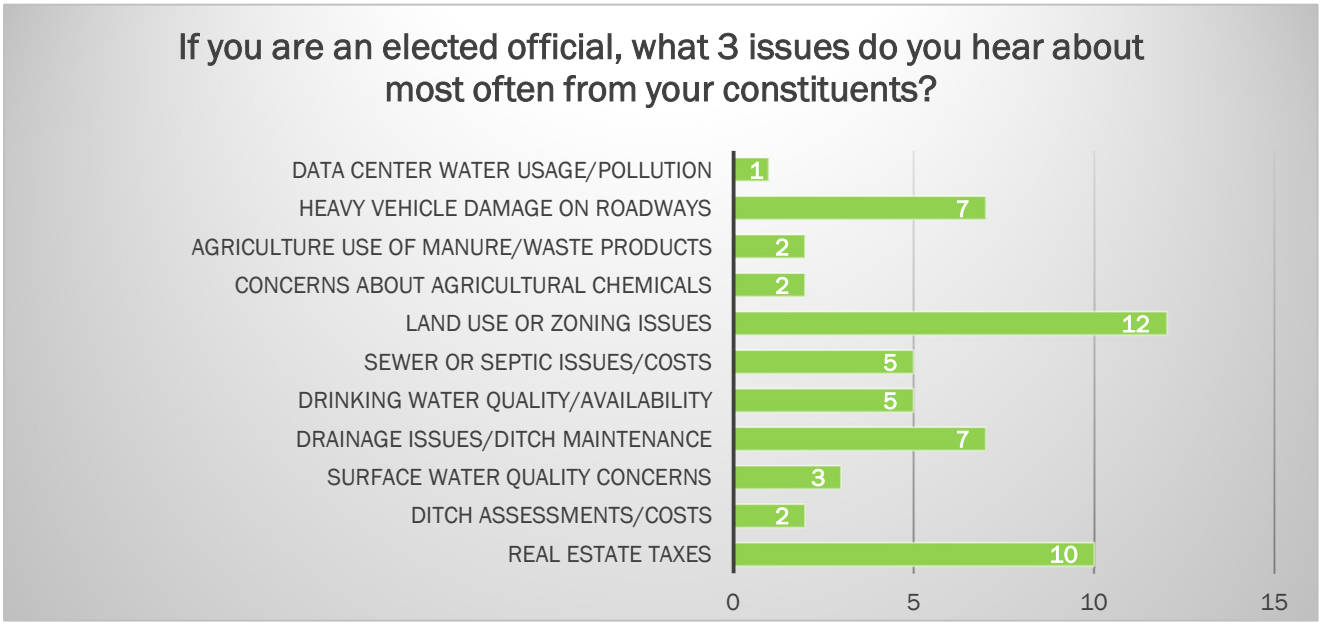
We also asked how participants interacted with the District:



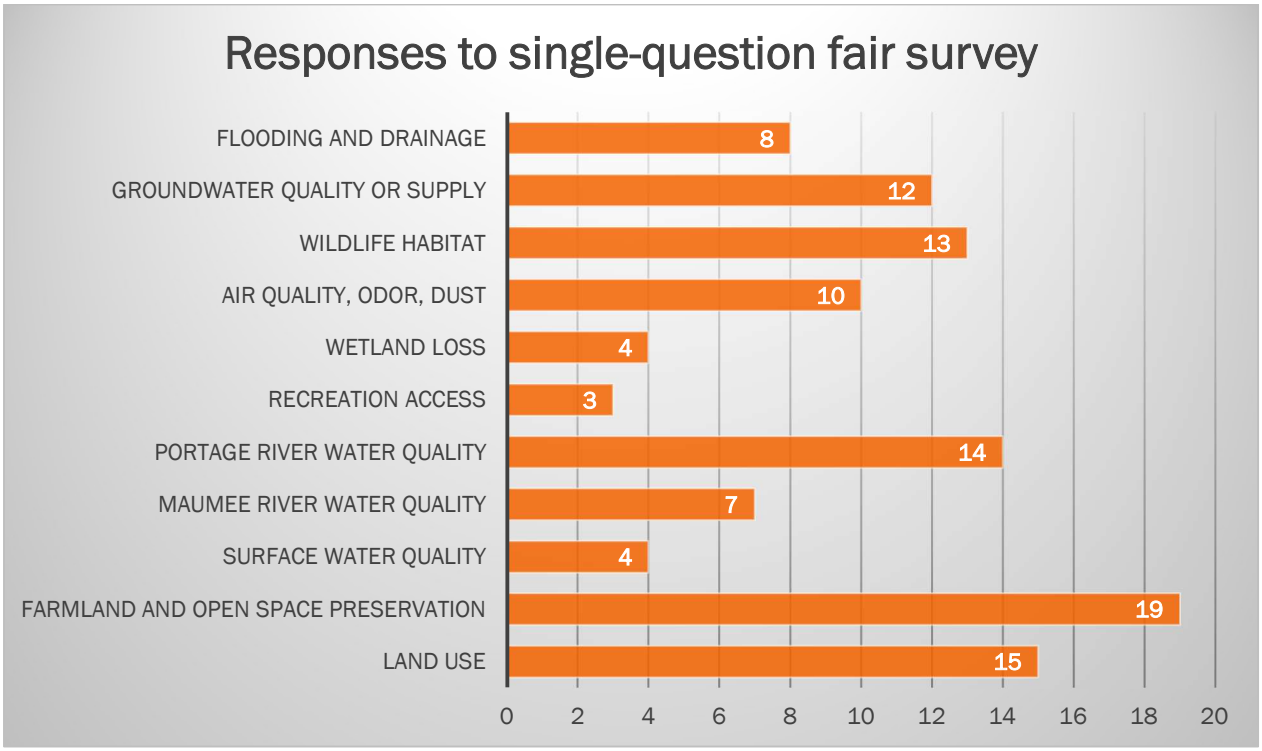
Twenty-six people identified as a farmer and completed the question regarding farmer concerns. When "Very Concerned" and "Somewhat Concerned" are combined, the three main concerns are public perception of agriculture, cost of agricultural inputs, and loss of farmland to development. Interestingly, loss of farmland to conservation practices was the lowest concern.




Seventeen people completed the Local Elected Official question. They identified land use in general and real estate taxes as the issues of most concern to their constituents, followed by road and ditch maintenance.



In addition to the online survey, we posed a single question to fairgoers at the Wood County Fair. In two locations on the grounds, they were asked to rank their top three resource concerns by stamping a square on the relevant pages, using a provided stamp. They were also provided with a QR code to complete the entire survey online.



For more information about Wood Soil and Water Conservation District, or the programs we offer, check out woodswcd.com, call 419-354-5517 ext. 4, or stop by our office at 1616 E Wooster St, Suite 32, Bowling Green OH 43402.

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