

BECWA 2020 Survey

Thanks to: Greg Hyer, for leading development of survey and landowner mailing; Kate Beardmore for online survey management and analysis; Andy Morton for survey environmental partners emails and analysis review.

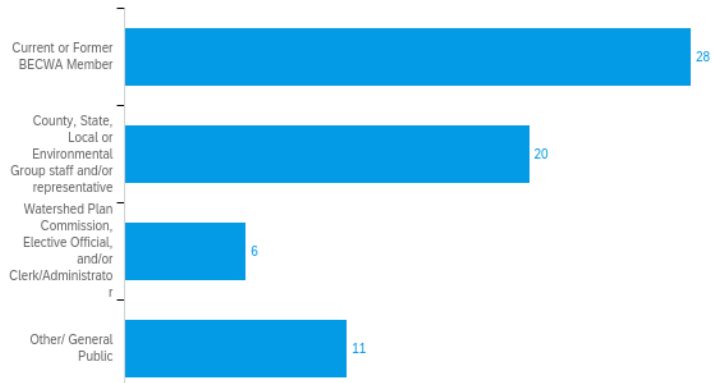
This report was compiled using Qualtrics, an online survey software, and via mail. The survey was sent electronically to 196 email addresses on August 21, 2020. A reminder email was sent to those who did not complete the survey on September 4th and 25th. A total of 38 surveys were returned electronically. In addition, the survey was sent to 175 BECW landowners (within a mile of Creek owning more than 20 acres) through regular mail during August with 27 paper copies returned. Also, some of those respondents who received paper copies responded directly via the digital survey website. The number of surveys completed was 65.

The survey contains a set of questions that apply to all respondents which is included in the main document shown below. Subgroups are included in the "Appendices" and include five groups of responses.

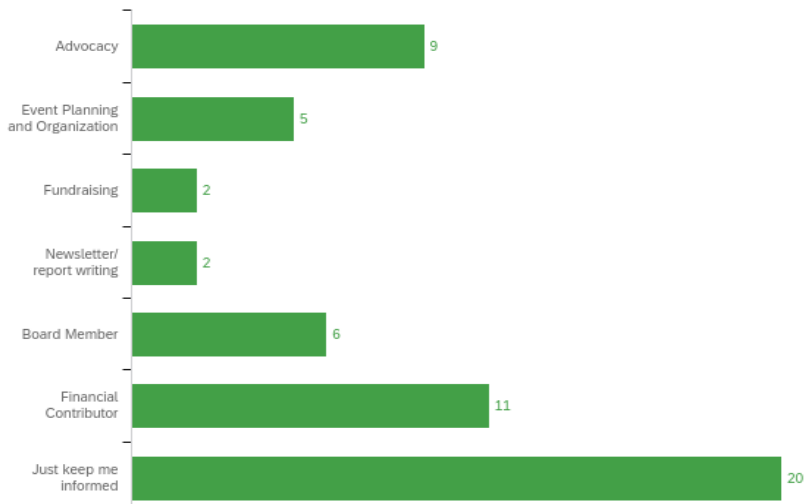
Responses are grouped according to the following:

1. BECWA Members--including A) current and former board members and B) current and former general members
2. County, state, or local governmental staff
3. Environmental group or agency staff or representatives.
3. Town/Village plan commission members, local elected officials and/or clerks/administrators
5. Landowners living within one mile of Black Earth Creek that own at least 20 acres

Do you identify as a:



How would you like to be involved with BECWA?



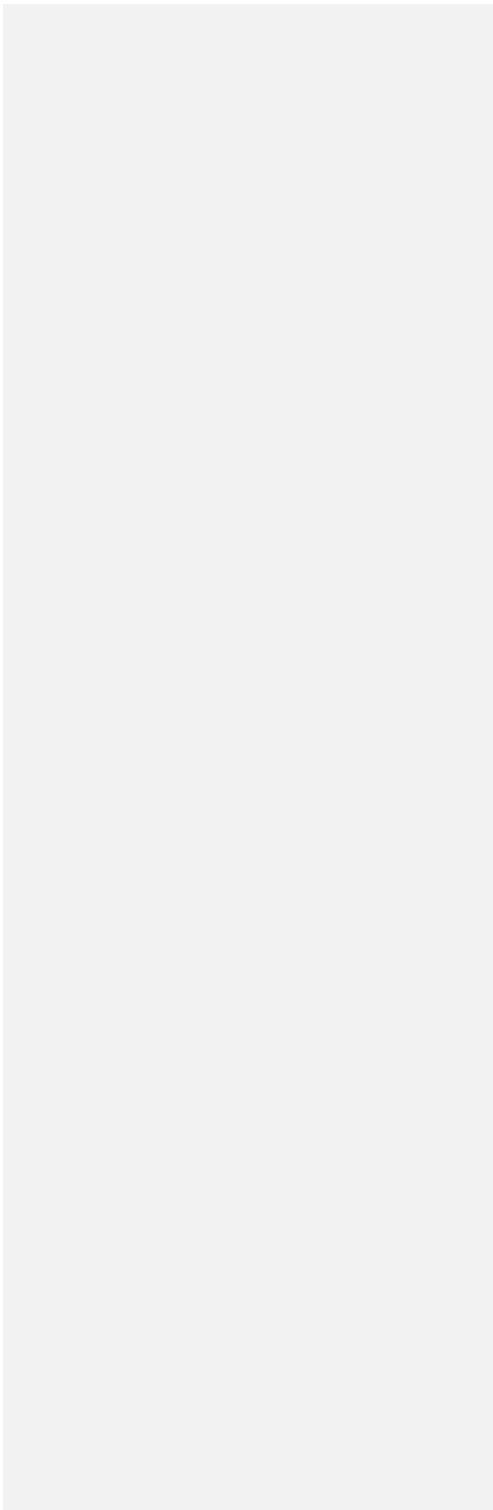
*Elected officials and environmental group respondents were not asked to respond to this question

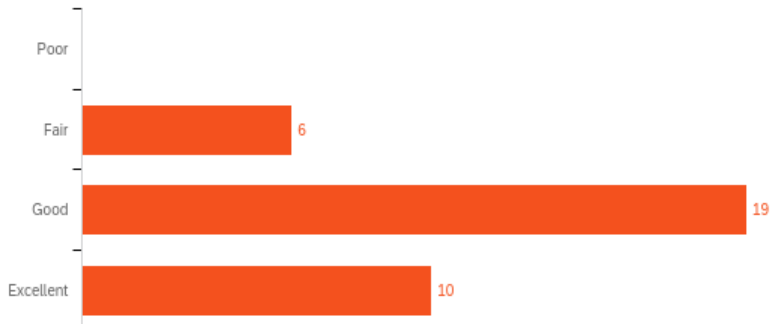
When asked how they would like to be involved with BECWA, 35% of the current or former BECWA members responded with “just keep me informed”, 17% said through advocacy and 17% said as a financial contributor. Landowners primarily would like to be “kept informed” (43%) and as financial contributors (43%).

Have you attended BECWA events?

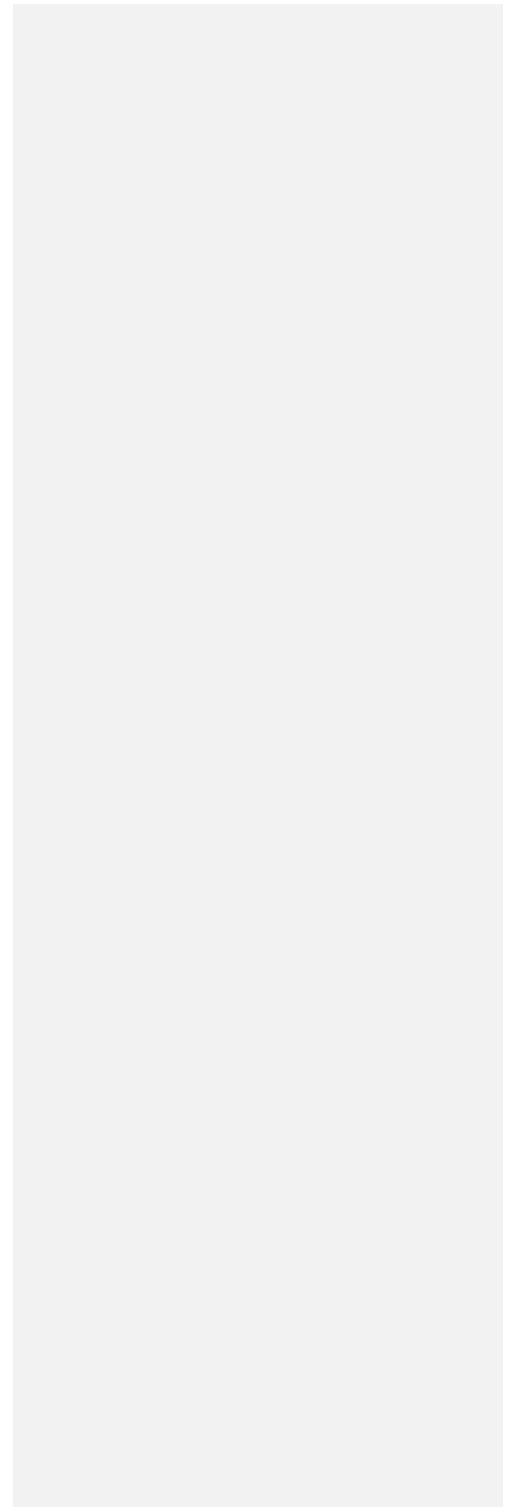


How would you rate them?

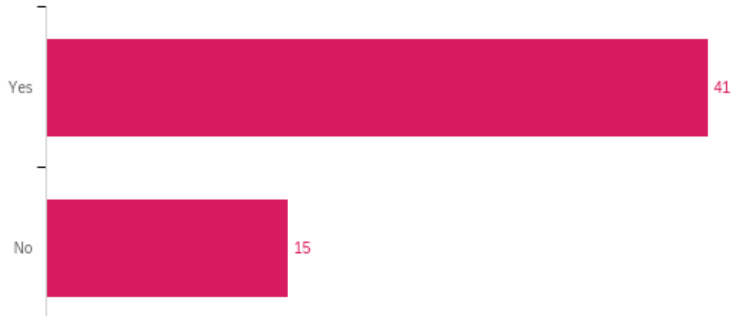




BECWA current and former members were the highest to respond they had attended a BECWA event (23 respondents). Of these responses, 52% stated they were good, 30% excellent, and 17% fair. The other three groups stated events were primarily good (58%).



Have you read the BECWA newsletter?



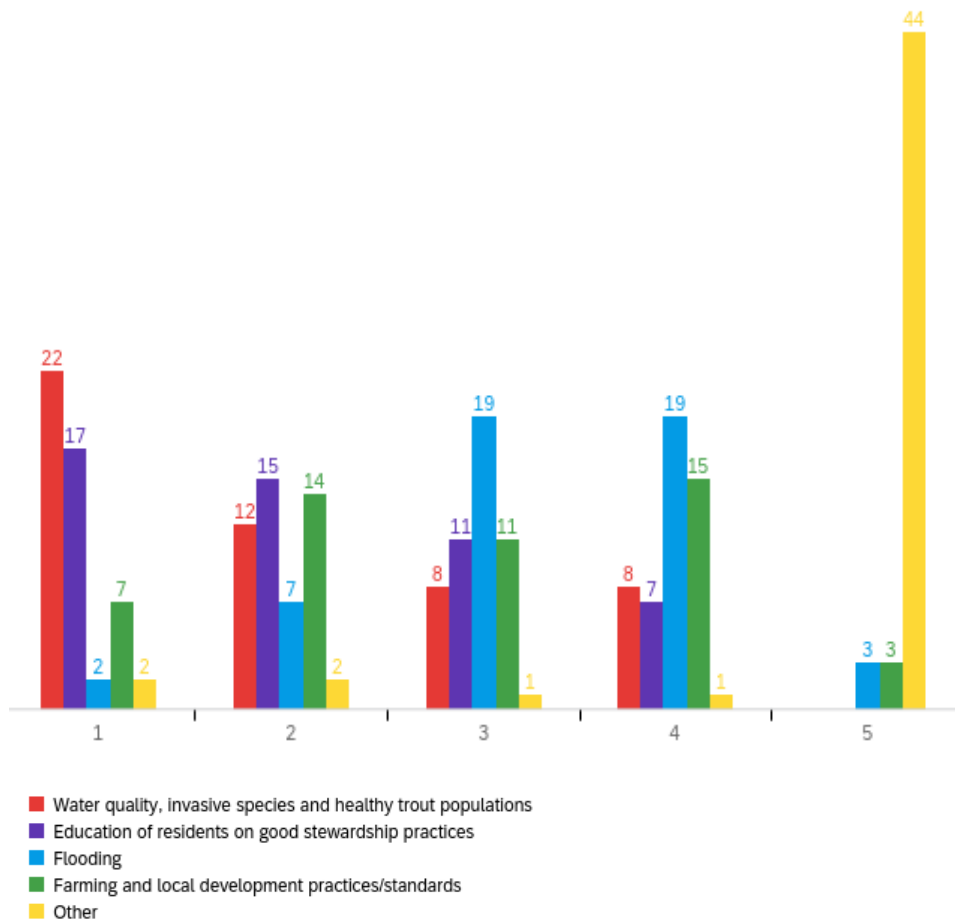
How would you rate them?



Considering the BECWA newsletter, 96% of BECWA members stated they had read it. Next were the Elected officials at 66%, followed by Environ. Group at 60% and landowners at 33%. Of those that had read the newsletter, there was an overwhelmingly positive association.

		<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>
Members	(24)	50%	50%	
Environ Groups	(8)	38%	50%	13%
Elected Officials	(4)	25%	75%	
Landowners	(2)	50%	50%	

What should BECWA focus on? Rate in order of priority, 1 being top priority.

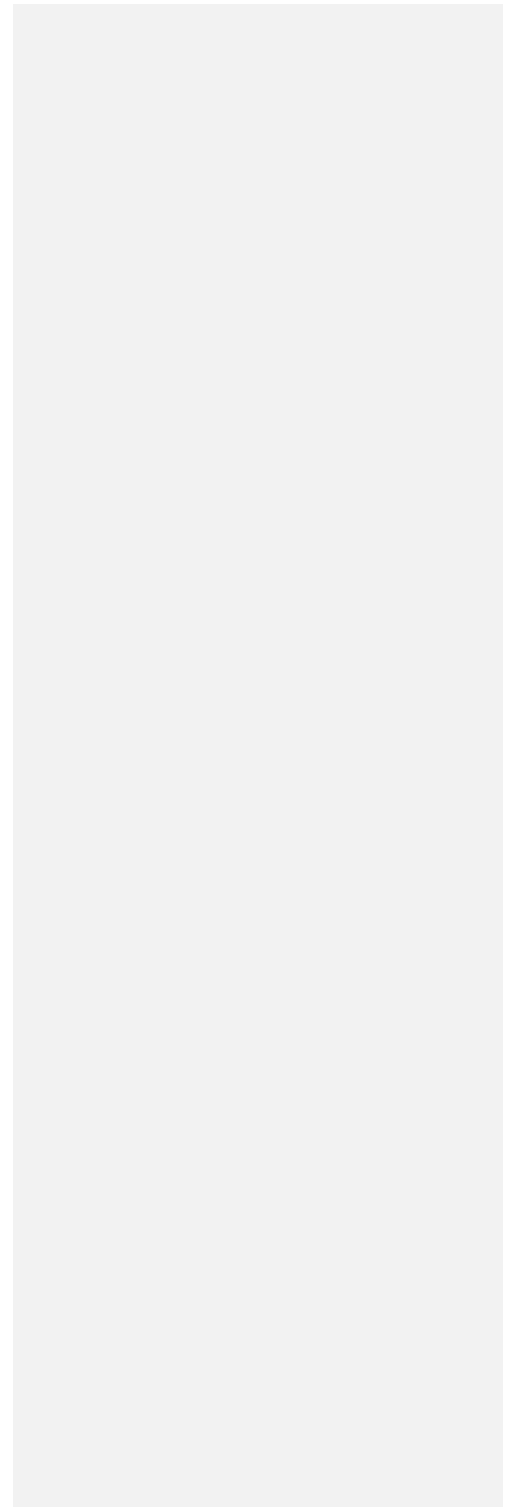


Reading from left to right, 1 as a highest priority, 5 being lowest. The number on the top of the bar represents the number of respondents who ranked that priority 1-5.

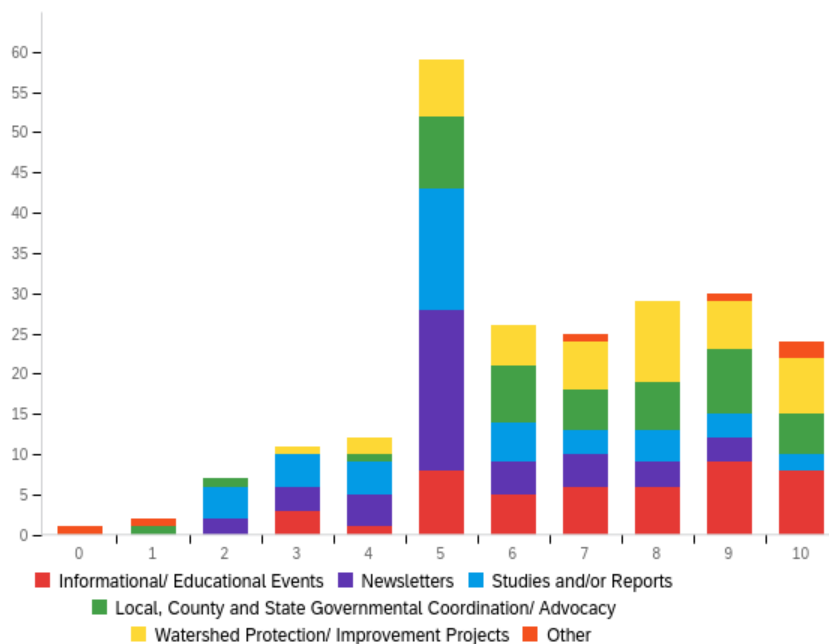
The focus with the highest priority was “water quality, invasive species and healthy trout populations”. BECWA members agreed with this statement with 54% marking it as their highest priority, followed by “education of residents on good stewardship practices”. Their second priority of focus was “farming and local development practices”.

The top priority for the environmental groups and elected officials was the “education of residents on good stewardship practices” (36% and 60% respectively). “Water quality” ranked as the second highest priority among environmental groups with “farming and development” a second priority for elected officials. Landowners agreed with “water quality” as a highest priority with 43%.

While the second priority shifted among groups between farming/development and education, the third priority for all but the elected officials was flooding. Elected officials placed farming/development as their third priority focus.



What should BECWA do more or less of? (1= Less, 10= More)



From right to left, 10 equates to what BECWA should do more of, 1 less of. Respondents were able to rank each item 1-10. Five could be considered neutral, neither more nor less.

BECWA Members would like to see more 1) Informational/Educational Events, 2) Protection/Improvement Projects, and 3) Advocacy in order of preference. One member stated:

“At this present time--building a more sustainable org is likely the highest priority”

Another commented:

“Working with landowners to protect the creek/buffers/farming practices/ etc.”

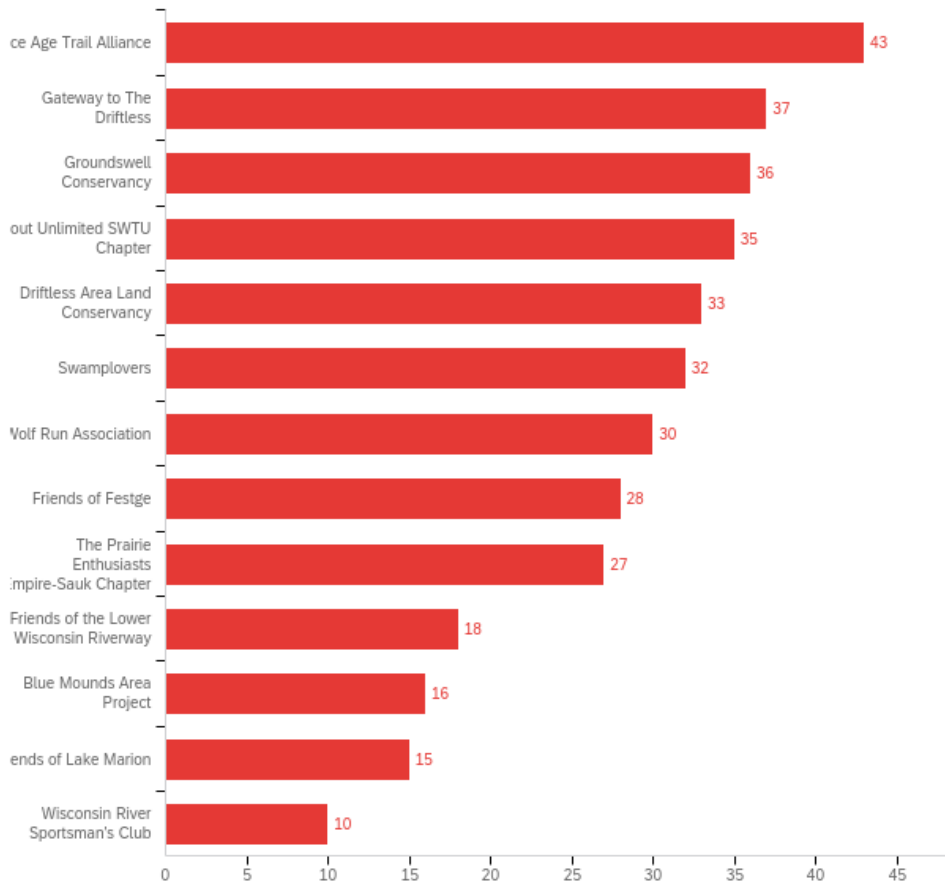
The environmental groups would like to see 1) Advocacy, followed by Informational/Educational Events and Protection/Improvement Projects. Elected officials believe BECWA should do more 1) Protection/Improvement Projects followed by Informational/Educational Events. Two comments made by elected officials were:

“Articulation with other local associations, EX: Wolf Run Association, Gateway to the Driftless, Ice Age Trail”

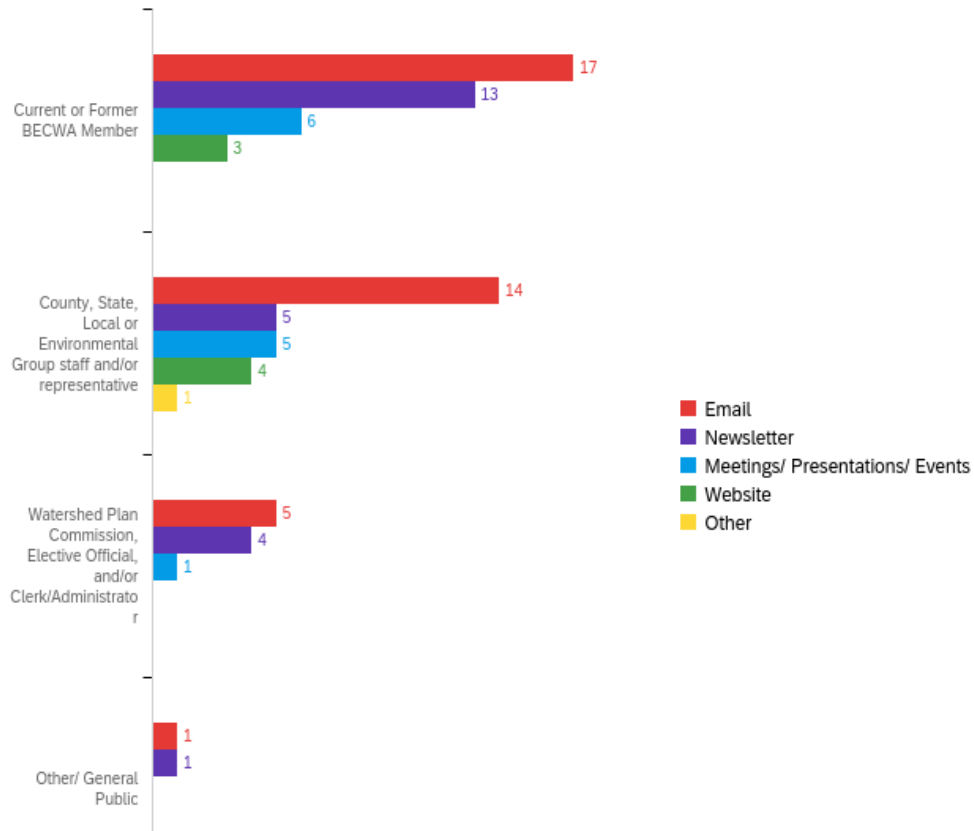
“Host events for local schools so students get into field research projects”

Landowners stated they would like to see BECWA do more “Informational/Educational Events” and “Studies and/or Reports”, which was not a priority for other groups.

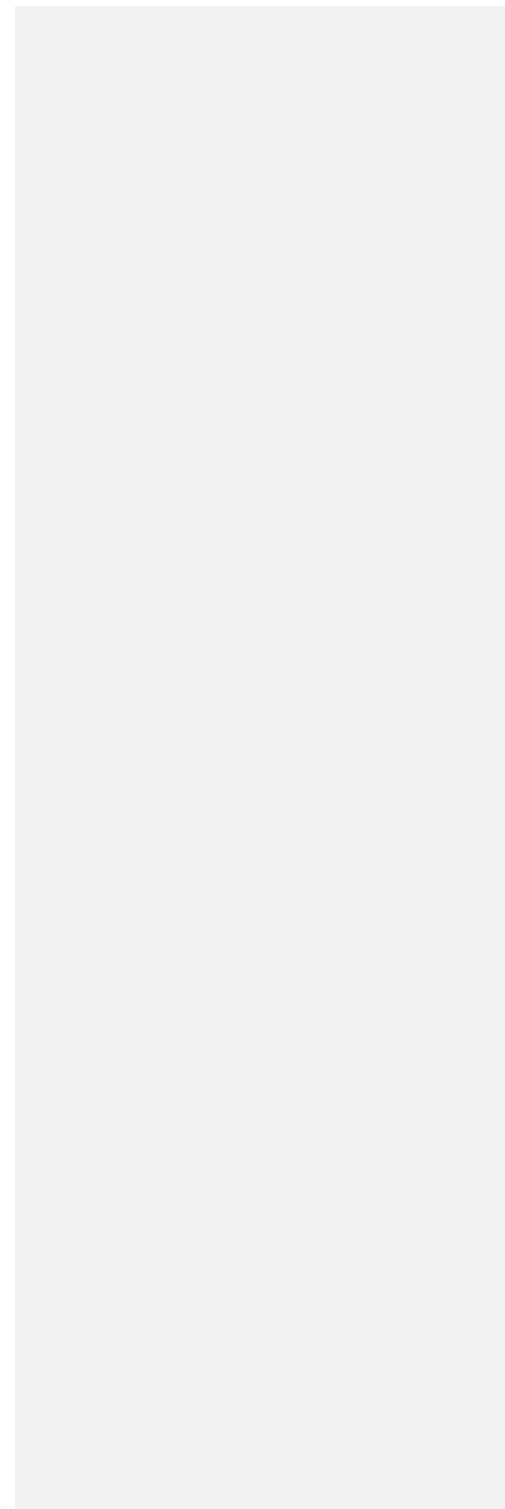
Please indicate if you are familiar with or support any of the following organizations (choose all that apply).



Q33 - What is the best way to keep you informed of BECWA projects/ activities?



Email is the preferred method of communication, 46% among all groups. The newsletter was second with 29%. In the comments social media and Facebook were mentioned as ideal ways to keep respondents informed.



Any other comments, questions, or concerns?

like to learn more before making any commitments

[REDACTED]

**the above response was blacked out because it only contained the email address and the cell phone number of the respondent*

there are quite a few of these groups - uncertain if all needed

keep me informed

awareness of financial assistance programs

BECWA needs to be more diligent because DNR is not as effective as it used to be

how can Schoepp farm (wetland) be made into house lots?

DNR no interest in cleaning up debris from flood restricting flow

no

I look forward to our next BECWA board meeting!

On the questions about whether other organizations have eliminated/reduced the need for BECWA, I said "no", but I'm not really in a position to know. I know you have dedicated members and provide very useful information.

I am grateful to all those who volunteer their time and energy to make our environment better and to foster protective attitudes on the part of the citizens.

I AM BASICALLY THE GO TO PERSON FOR HELPING KEEP THE CREEK CLEAN FROM BLACK EARTH DOWN TO JOHN'S LANDING FOR KAYAKERS

Some questions hard to answer, needed an "I don't know" option.

no

Keep up the good work

I am glad that BECWA is protecting the watershed.

Keep up the ever so important work.

We need to get younger generations involved and to care about the watershed. We leave our legacy to them.

Focus on keeping us aware of the science of the watershed and and what can be done to protect the watershed.

I do the trout stream restorations on private lands. One thing I would note is that due to the excessive rainfall events since August 20 & 21, 2018 and the massive runoff event in the middle of March, 2019, as I have conducted stream surveys for restoration projects, there is a new OHWM being established caused by additional water coming in from a naturally higher water table. I think people need to be aware of this new normal water level that it appears we will be dealing with due to more excessive rainfall events. There are many things this group can look at providing incentives for to the farmers as it relates to their farms. As fields have become wetter a farmer is faced with one of two decisions, either install more tile or drainage ditches to improve the drainage of the field or put that land into a long-term program and seed the field down. They have to still get income off that land. There are trade offs. UW-Madison has conducted extensive research on tile drain systems and how that effects nutrients getting into streams. In time, I think having a information session with farmers and UW researchers would be helpful. The farmers can ask questions directly to the researchers as it pertains to their farms and fields.

Follow-up Question—Following the initial survey, two follow-up questions were emailed to the initial email list. A total of 21 responses were collected. These responses were coded to determine themes.

Question 1: In your opinion, how could/should BECWA improve or strengthen itself as an organization?

The following tables provide both an overview and more detailed breakdown of the comments/suggestions/responses that were provided in answer to the question above.

Overall Summary

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Marketing, education and awareness	8
Partnering/Collaboration	6
Organizational improvement/ management	3
Conservation and advocacy	3

Detailed Breakdown

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Marketing, education and awareness	8
More recognition, marketing, and outreach; explain mission,	6
Hard copies of newsletters needed to hand out at local meetings	1
Resume public events	1
Partnering/Collaboration	6
Work with farmers for Farmland Preservation Tax Credit	1
Connect with groups (local govt business, farmers; environmentalists) attend local govt/org meetings	2
work with villages/orgs to increase public access	1
Work with WDNR to apply for Fed grants	1
Strategic plan should include partnerships	1
Organizational Improvement/Management	3
Involve general members	1
Don't overwork volunteers	1
Do Strategic Planning	1
Conservation and advocacy	3

Commented [1]:
In this section we could add a paragraph of overall thoughts, vs having each comment in full below.

	Reduce phosphorus discharge costs at treatment plants vs paying farmers to install soil health practices.	1
	Lack of fish means fewer visits by out of state anglers to use creek, community, and businesses	1
	Need younger activist leaders to support improving the trout population, down 50-66% from the past,	1

Question 2: In your opinion, what are the strengths of BECWA as an organization they should build on?

The following tables provide both an overview and more detailed breakdown of the comments/suggestions/responses that were provided in answer to the question above.

Overview Summary

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Comments</u>
The organization as a whole/ partnerships	6
Leadership	3
Education	6
Commitment to the watershed	3
Advocate for Creek/Watershed	4

Detailed Breakdown

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Comments</u>
The organization as a whole/ partnerships	6
Knowledge/experience coordinating with partners, groups, government, orgs	3
Represent and address diverse issues	2
grassroots focus on local issues	1
Leadership	3
Recognized and knowledgeable leaders, expertise	2
“Great group of people”	1
Education	6
Key communication role (science based)	3
Remind community of “creek’s” value	1

Commented [2]: Same here. We could have a paragraph vs each quote

	Excellent newsletter, "fact sheets" useful	2
Commitment to Watershed		3
	Long Legacy of work in watershed; ebb and flow of activity and action	2
	Survival value is great strength	1
Advocate for Creek /Watershed		4
	Ebb/flow occurs but BECWA can be energized to respond to an issue; long term advocate	2
	Create awareness of special value of creek/watershed and/or serve as "watchdogs"	2

