

**Vilas County  
Outdoor Recreation Survey**

Chambers of Commerce and Lake Groups advertised this NCWRPC created online survey that was : Opened: August 22, 2012; and  
Closed: October 4, 2012.

**Q1**

What Vilas County lake do you live on or are closest to?  
Even if you are a seasonal resident, please write the lake that you frequently "live" near.

**Q2**

How did you find out about this survey?

- Lake group contact
- Chamber of Commerce notice
- Town or City bulletin board or notification
- Local media (e.g. newspaper, radio, tv)
- Other (please specify)

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**Q3**

What are the top 3 outdoor recreational issues facing Vilas County?  
These issues could be a combination of strengths and desires to maintain what exists.

Issue 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Issue 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Issue 3 \_\_\_\_\_

**Q4**

How shall the recreational issues described above in Question 3 be satisfied?

**Q5**

What existing outdoor recreation facilities in Vilas County need improvement?

***Results for this survey follow...***

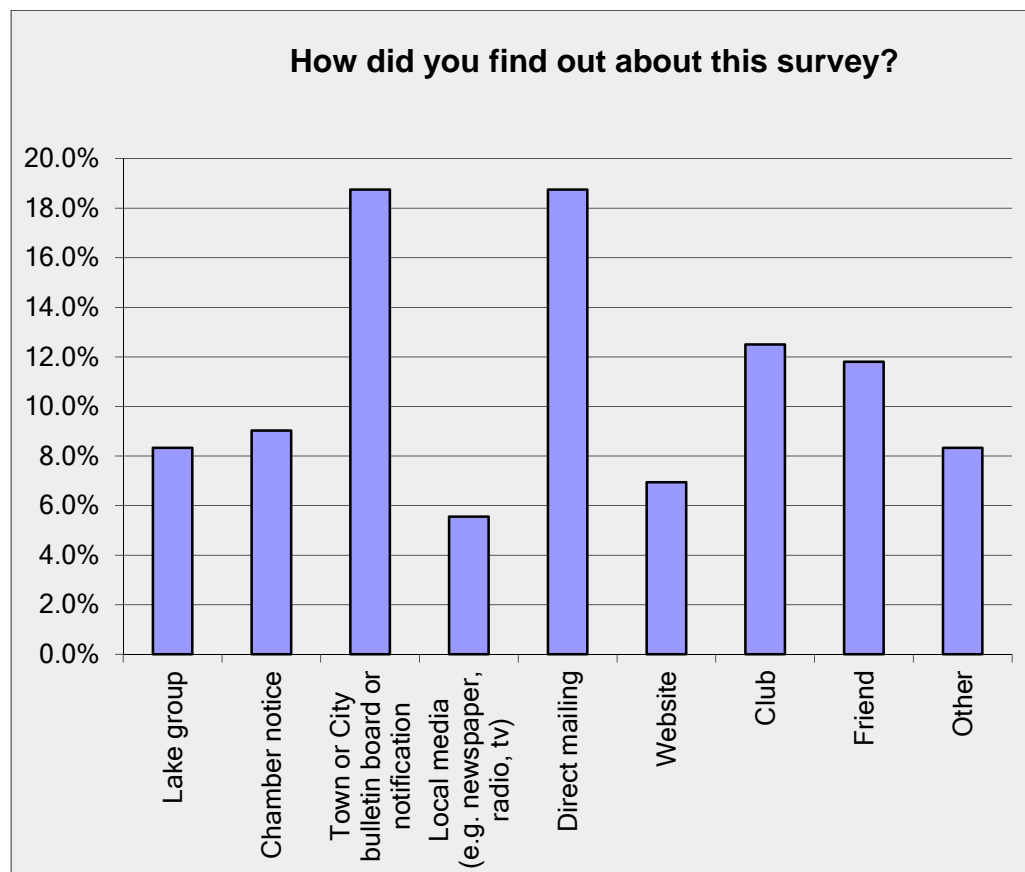
## Vilas County 2012 Outdoor Recreation Survey Results

The Vilas County 2012 Outdoor Recreation Survey was conducted by NCWRPC in the fall of 2012 to identify outdoor recreation issues in Vilas County for updating the countywide outdoor recreation plan for the next five years, 2014-2019. Excellent participation occurred and issues were identified.

This survey is not statistically accurate, because anyone could have chosen to take the survey themselves **or** be part of a group that submitted responses. For example: if 20 people responded the same way and a group representing 100 people voted a different way, then in these results it will look like 20 people want something and 1 person wants something else, whereby the opposite is actually true with 100 people actually wanting something different. 12 recreational groups replied as groups (motorized, non-motorized, and lake groups), and some of these groups encouraged their members to also complete the survey.

115 surveys were mailed or emailed directly to lake group contacts on-record with the Vilas County Land & Water Department. Chambers of commerce in Vilas County also advertised the online survey link. A great response of 144 surveys were completed online and via mail.

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Survey respondents noted how they found out about this survey in the following ways:

**Lake group** – Every organized lake group on the Vilas County Land & Water Department’s mailing list was emailed or mailed a survey. Note: It is possible that “**lake group**” and “**direct mailing**” are all part of “**lake group.**”

**Chamber notice** – Every chamber of commerce in Vilas County was asked to promote this survey however they saw fit.

**Town or City bulletin board or notification** – Local governments may have posted notice of the survey on their bulletin boards.

**Local media** – A story of the survey may have prompted someone to take the survey.

**Direct mailing** – Many paper surveys were mailed directly to NCWRPC for tabulation. Most likely these completed surveys came from **lake group** contact people.

**Website** – A couple websites/bloggers advertised the survey on their site.

**Club** – Some participants noted that they found out about the survey from an organized recreational club.

**Friend** – Co-workers and neighbors encouraged their friends to complete the survey.

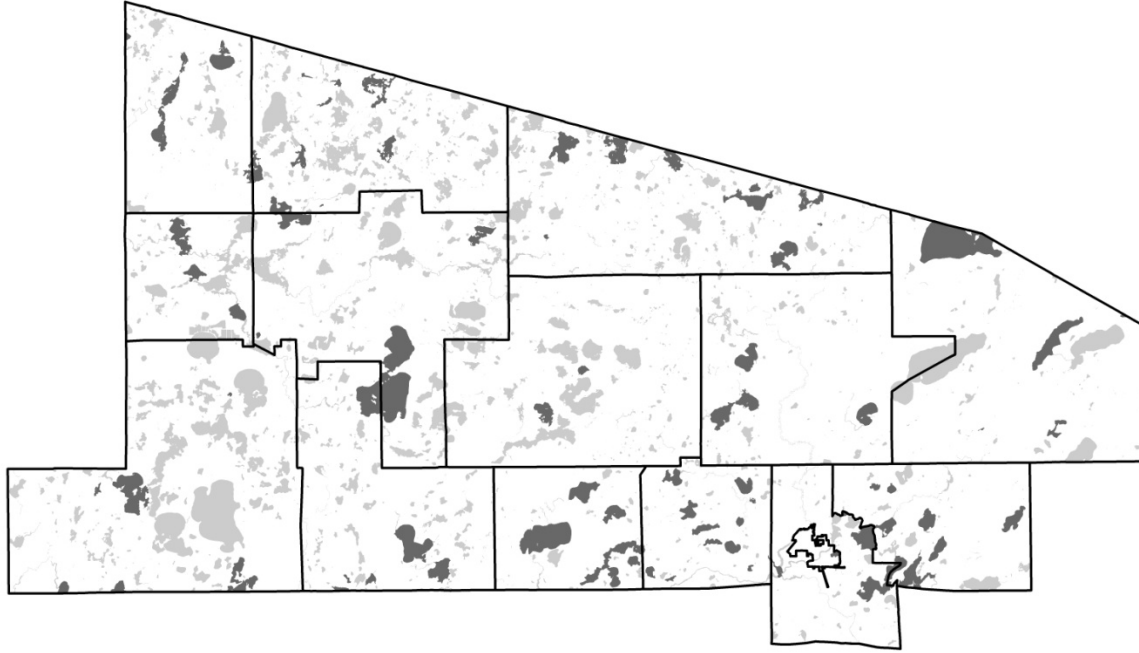
**Other** – A small number of people replied based upon a variety of reasons.

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## Vilas County 2012 Outdoor Recreation Survey Results

### What Vilas County lake do you live on or are closest to?

On the image below, darkened lakes are where survey respondents lived closest to.



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### Top outdoor recreational issues facing Vilas County:

Number of times issue was stated	Issue
<b>All Terrain Vehicles: 87</b>	
42	<b>ATVs are an issue.</b> <i>(NCWRPC Note: This was a general reference respondents made on the survey. No positive or negative reference could be determined from this listing.)</i>
39	Need ATV routes or trails.
5	Silent sports alone (without ATVs) is missing the economic opportunity of having ATVs.
1	Dirt bike access.
<b>Silent Sports (Overall): 42</b>	
15	Maintain Vilas County as a silent sport destination.
13	Keep ATVs out of Vilas County.
13	Connect recreational trails for hiking, biking, walking, birding, and snowmobiling – not ATVs.

## Vilas County 2012 Outdoor Recreation Survey Results

1	Focus on creating "destination" attractions that feature our natural resources and silent recreation
<b>Silent Sports (Bicycling): 28</b>	
6	Biking is an issue.
17	Need bike trails. Connect bike trails.
3	Too many bike routes on paved highways (very dangerous).
1	Educate motorists about the rights of bicyclists.
1	Add 5-foot paved shoulder on roads for bike/run usage.
<b>Silent Sports (Hiking): 15</b>	
5	Hiking is an issue.
1	Jogging and walking trails needed.
1	Need for silent sport trails and parking areas.
2	Need more wilderness trails and interpretive signs.
1	Clear and brush back on existing hiking trails.
4	More cross country ski trails.
1	Increase snowshoe trails.
<b>Invasive Species: 39</b>	
25	Aquatic invasive species concern.
14	Terrestrial Invasive species concern.
<b>Fishing &amp; Boating: 39</b>	
8	Fishing management on lakes in Vilas County.
4	Fish spearing.
5	Fishing.
10	Maintain clean lakes and waters.
3	Shorelines lack buffers on lakes.
4	Enforce boating laws.
1	Allow motor trolling on all lakes.
2	Jet boats.
1	Lake levels dropping.
1	Improving public access points to lakes for boating.
<b>Snowmobiles: 36</b>	
11	Snowmobiling is an issue.
17	Improve or maintain snowmobile trails within county.

## Vilas County 2012 Outdoor Recreation Survey Results

<b>Snowmobiles (continued)</b>	
7	Lack of snow in winter. Snowmobile season shortening.
1	Help the Vilas County Snowmobile alliance to help the 11 clubs with increasing cost of fuel.
<b>Land Development: 16</b>	
2	Overdevelopment.
3	Air/noise pollution.
2	Fragmentation of large privately owned forested areas.
2	Preserve dark skies.
1	Continue logging, but eliminate “clear cut” logging
1	Logging around recreational trails.
1	Development of early successional wildlife habitat.
3	Need a comprehensive collaborative plan to tie goals and resources together of towns county and citizen groups.
1	Determine how to derive the most benefits in terms of recreation, health, and economic impact from county’s natural resources.
<b>Hunting: 11</b>	
7	Deer management in Vilas County.
2	Hunting & shooting.
1	Wolf hunting is a controversial issue.
1	high seasonal resident hunting/fishing fees
<b>Camping: 8</b>	
7	Modern camping facilities needed.
1	Campgrounds

NCWRPC Note: The “Other” group below is where all remaining comments from the survey were placed if they did not fit well with any of the above bolded headings.

<b>Other:</b>	
8	Tourism in general.
7	Preserve natural resources and develop tourism.
4	Silent sport people demonize ATV/UTV motorsport people while expanding their sport.

## Vilas County 2012 Outdoor Recreation Survey Results

<b>Other: (continued)</b>	
3	Better park amenities
2	Poor economy
2	Horse trails.
1	Providing opportunities for ALL powered and non-powered outdoor sports.
1	With all the bike trails built, we need a registration fee for bicycle users.
1	No clubs funding and maintaining silent sport trails in Vilas County.
1	Work with DNR to educate rather than fine users.
1	Promote outdoor recreation to ensure support for conservation and preservation.
1	Preserve "wild" character of Vilas Co.
1	A Vilas County Board with too many members led or beholden to the Extreme Environmentalis Group.
1	Apprehension and/or lack of knowledge of what's available for outdoor recreation.
1	season residents dictate our economy- they are against the economical growth of Vilas county
1	updating internet access for visitors
1	Too many events, every single weekend
1	The fact that silent sports don't necessarily provide economic stability.
1	Bad economic times require added ideas and initiatives to expand our tourism base -- ATVs are the logical answer.
1	To maintain and enhance the highest quality environmental conditions in our waters and woodlands.
1	Far too many businesses are closing here in Eagle River. We rely on tourism, we should act to attract the large group of ATV sportspeople.
1	A lack of - need for - coordinated financial investment in our outdoor recreational infrastructuree - such as bike/ped trails, campgrounds.
1	Devoting county funds to retaining the expert personnel needed to successfully execute any county recreational plan.
1	Recruit sponsors for silent sports activities similar to snowmobile derby.
1	ignorance to what can be done to improve the area
1	Stop wasting Tax Payer money on Bicycle trails that hardly any one uses.
1	Recreation based primarily on the Silent Sports
1	Local Business is losing out on lots of \$\$ because of the current ATV policy
1	utilization of multi-use recreational trails
1	Suronding counties much freindlier around power sports
1	Need more Motorsports recreation

## Vilas County 2012 Outdoor Recreation Survey Results

<b>Other: (continued)</b>	
1	promoting positive features
1	Lack of inforcement of existing regulations
1	Disconnected bike trails
1	Protecting our wildlife
1	Manage loud sports
1	Lake levels dropping - Beaver Dam issues
1	Allowing one user group to dominate resources of the county
1	Have laws in place to regulate ATVs. Once laws are in place, allow ATV activities in townships.
1	Funds to improve, sustain, and create recreational venues and activities.
1	support silent sports
1	warmer climate
1	WOLVES, BEAR AND COYOTE
1	improved grouse habitat
1	Recreation of a 'safe hiking' back-woods environment

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