

Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve

**Coastal Training Program
Market Analysis**



January 2012

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Introduction

The Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve (Lake Superior NERR) was designated in 2010 and is the 28th reserve in the NERR system and the 2nd freshwater estuarine reserve on the Great Lakes. It is situated on the freshwater estuary at the confluence of the St. Louis River and Lake Superior located on the southwestern coast of Lake Superior (Figure 1) and is bordered by Wisconsin and Minnesota. The reserve is 16,697 acres in size and consists of forested upland (7,886 acres), wetland (4,136 acres), and aquatic (4,675 acres) habitats (LSNERR Management Plan 2010).

The Lake Superior NERR is in the pre-operational phase of developing a Coastal Training Program (CTP) to complement the developing research and education programs by addressing the coastal resources management information and training needs of decision makers in the Wisconsin and Minnesota portions of the Lake Superior basin. The goal of the CTP is to improve decision-making related to coastal resource management at local and regional levels by allowing decision makers to understand the impact of their decisions on valued coastal natural resources. The Coastal Training Program works towards this goal through these objectives:

- To provide current scientific information, science-based knowledge, and skill-building opportunities to individuals whose decisions- whether in a professional, elected or volunteer capacity- impact the estuary and its resources;
- To increase networking and collaboration across sectors and disciplines related to coastal management issues;
- And, to influence behavior change through increased understanding of the types of barriers that are present among target audiences.

The purpose of this market analysis is to identify the training roles and preferred venues that will guide the development of the Lake Superior NERR CTP. Existing training programs were inventoried, including organizations that currently offer coastal resource training, the topics covered and audiences served. The process also identified partnership opportunities for the CTP, overlaps in training programs to avoid duplication of effort, coastal management issues that have received inadequate attention by other training providers and audiences that have unmet training needs.

Methods

We developed an online survey utilizing Qualtrics Survey software and consisted of 12 strategic questions that were developed to gather the needed information. Examples of other NERR CTP surveys were used for guidance. Links to the survey were distributed via email to a distribution list of 110 individuals representing 39 organizations serving the six coastal county region of Lake Superior which included four counties (Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland, Iron) in Wisconsin and two (St. Louis and Carlton) in Minnesota (Figure 1). The distribution list for this survey was developed by Lake Superior NERR staff based on staff knowledge of training providers obtained through the Lake Superior NERR designation process and an informal phone survey of providers (Table 1). Organizations that have provided training and/or resources related to coastal resource management were included in this initial phone survey. While the survey may not have included all current providers it provided a substantive initial list to begin the assessment of training opportunities in the region. The on-line survey was distributed on Nov. 2nd and closed on Nov. 28, 2011. Reminder emails were sent and phone calls made between Nov. 15th and 22nd, 2011.

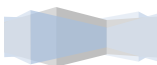


Figure 1. Market Analysis Geographic Area

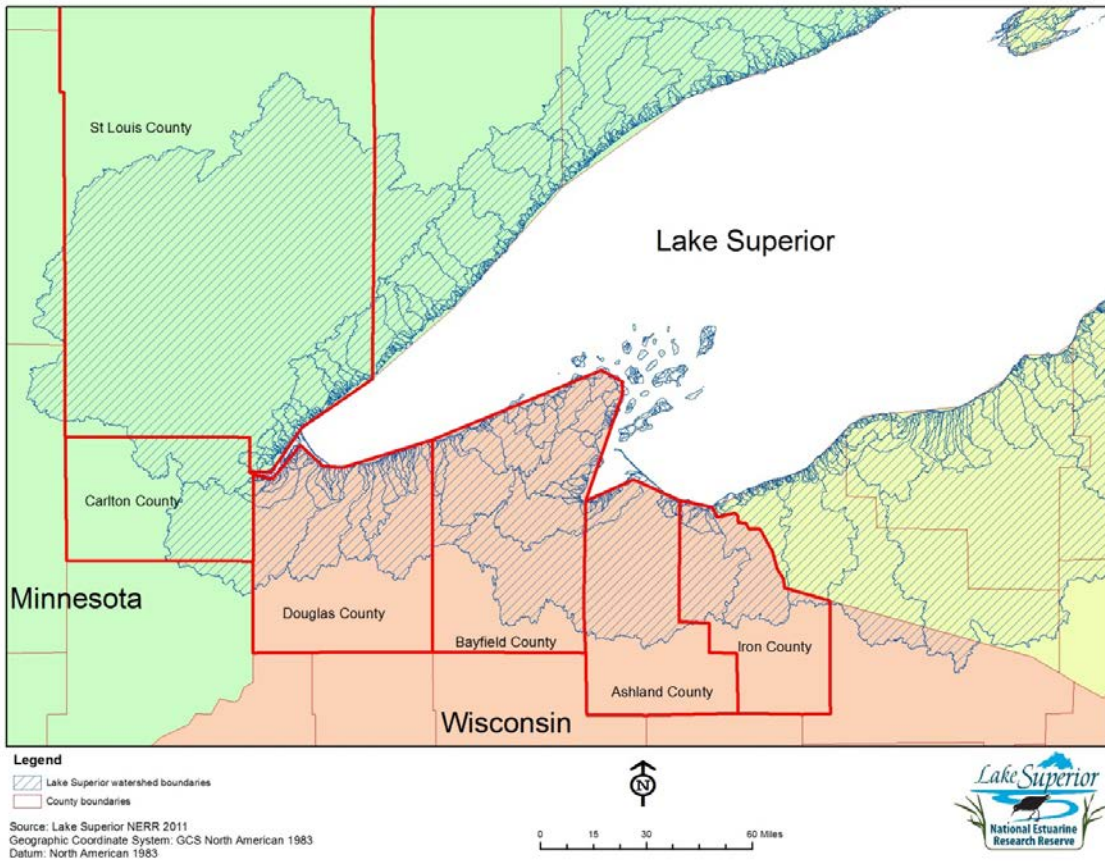


Table 1. List of Providers

Organization Name	Type
Ashland County Land Conservation Department	Government
Bad River Watershed Association	Non-profit
Bayfield County Land Conservation Department	Government
Bayfield Regional Conservancy	Non-profit
Carlton County Soil and Water Conservation District	Government
City of Superior Environmental Services	Government
City of Superior Public Works	Government
Douglas County Land Conservation Department	Government
Fish and Wildlife Service	Government
Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Tribal
Great Lakes Aquarium	Private
Hartley Nature Center	Non-profit
Iron County Land Conservation Department	Government
Lake Superior College	Education
Lake Superior Research Institute – UW-Superior	Research/education
Minnesota Coastal Management Program	Government
Minnesota Department of Transportation	Government

Appendix D. Market Analysis

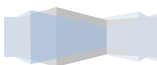
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency	Government
National Park Service	Government
Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center	Education
Northland College – Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute	Education
Northwest Regional Planning Commission	Government
Regional Stormwater Protection Team (+7 municipalities)	Non-profit
South St. Louis County Soil and Water Conservation District	Government
St. Louis River Alliance	Non-profit
University of Minnesota – Duluth	University
University of Minnesota Extension	University
University of Minnesota Sea Grant	Government
University of Wisconsin – Superior	University
University of Wisconsin Extension	University
University of Wisconsin Sea Grant	Government
US Environmental Protection Agency	Government
West Wisconsin Land Trust	Non-profit
Western Lake Superior Sanitary District	Government
Wisconsin Association of Floodplain, Stormwater and Coastal Management	Non-profit
Wisconsin City/County Managers Association	Non-profit
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	Government
Wisconsin League of Municipalities	Non-profit
Wisconsin Towns Association	Non-profit
Wisconsin Wetlands Association	Non-profit

Survey Results/Findings

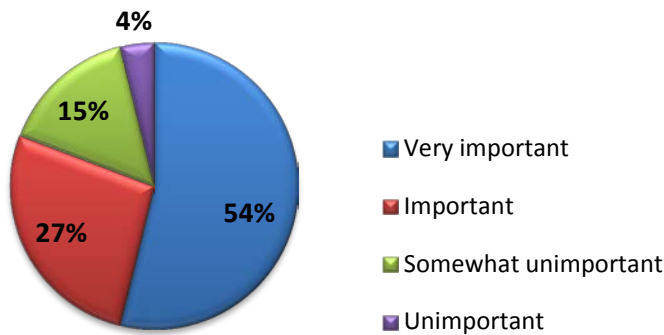
Many of the providers listed are statewide organizations that provide training at the request of local agencies and organizations. The University of Wisconsin Extension programs include both university-based Centers located statewide and county-based Extension staff located within each of the coastal counties. University of Wisconsin Extension programs cover a variety of topics, not all concerned with coastal resources. Other organizations, such as Sea Grant, deliver training and resources primarily to coastal communities on coastal and natural resource topics. The Lake Superior NERR CTP geographical area includes portions of four coastal counties of Wisconsin and portions of two counties in Minnesota that are within the Lake Superior and St. Louis River watersheds.

Twenty-eight responses were received from the 110 requests sent to individuals to participate in the survey resulting in a response rate of 25%. A copy of the survey can be viewed in Appendix A and a list of questions and responses received are compiled in Appendix B. The responses for each question are listed below.

The first set of questions (Questions 1 through 6) address program logistics related to training workshops. The next group (Questions 7 & 8) addresses audiences marketed for training. Questions 9 & 10 relate to training topics and the final two questions (11 & 12) gauge interest in collaborations and leveraging of resources.

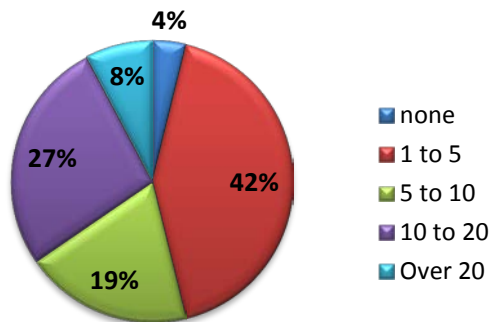


Q1: Relative to your organization’s mission, how important is providing training about coastal resource management?



Twenty-one respondents (81%) reported that training related to coastal resource management was ‘very important’ or ‘important’ to their organization’s mission. The positive response rate indicates that we were successful in reaching our intended audience.

Q2: In the past two years approximately how many training events have you offered to audiences in the Lake Superior region (WI and MN)

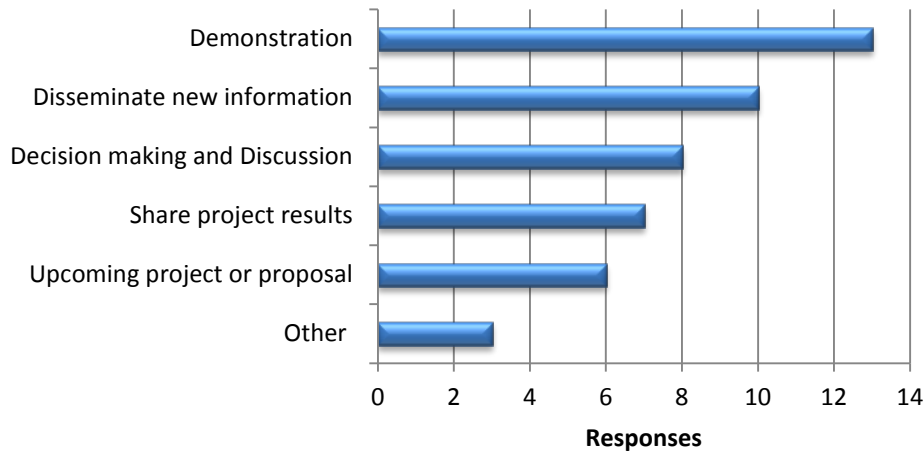


Most (42%; 11 respondents) training providers offered 1 to 5 training events over the past 2 years followed by 27% (7 respondents) offering 10 to 20 events. While this seems to be a low rate of workshop offerings it is not unexpected for this relatively low population density in an economically depressed region of the Great Lakes.



Q3. What are the two most common objectives of the events that your organization offers?

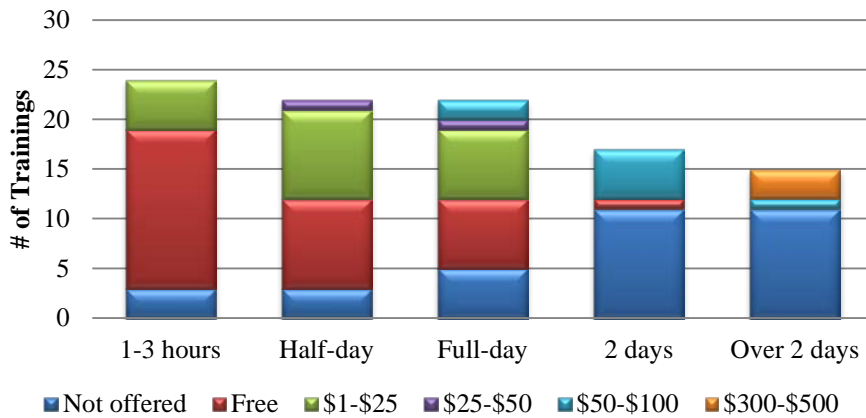
Two Most Common Training Objectives



The training objectives most commonly identified were demonstration of a technique, tool or technology (13 responses) followed by offering dissemination of new scientific or technical information. Less commonly listed objectives include evaluation of alternatives/decision-making, sharing project results and collaborative proposal development.

Q4. Please tell us about the length and cost of the events that you offer. For each duration listed below, select the price range that your organization typically charges attendees.

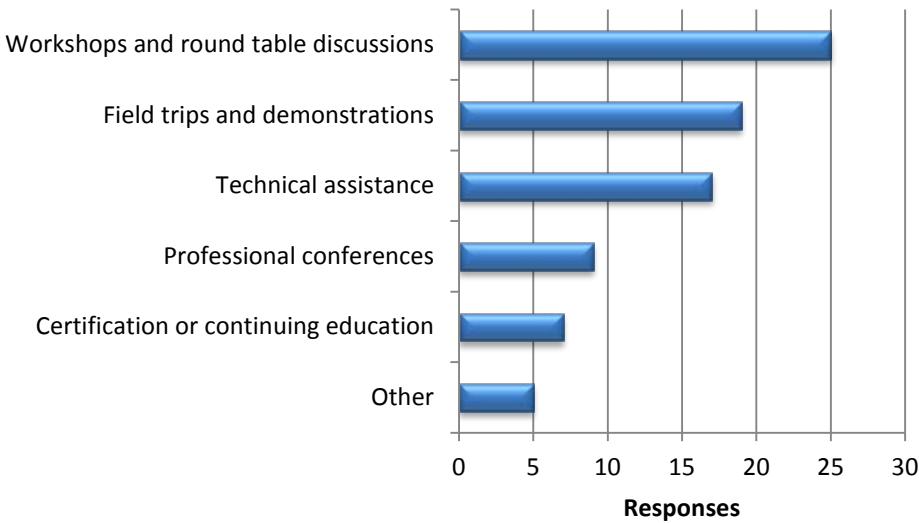
Length and Cost of Trainings Offered



The majority of workshops offered was available for \$25 or less and lasted from ‘1-3 hrs.’ to a ‘full-day’. Training workshops lasting 2 days or more were offered by a few respondents with a cost ranging from \$50 to \$500.

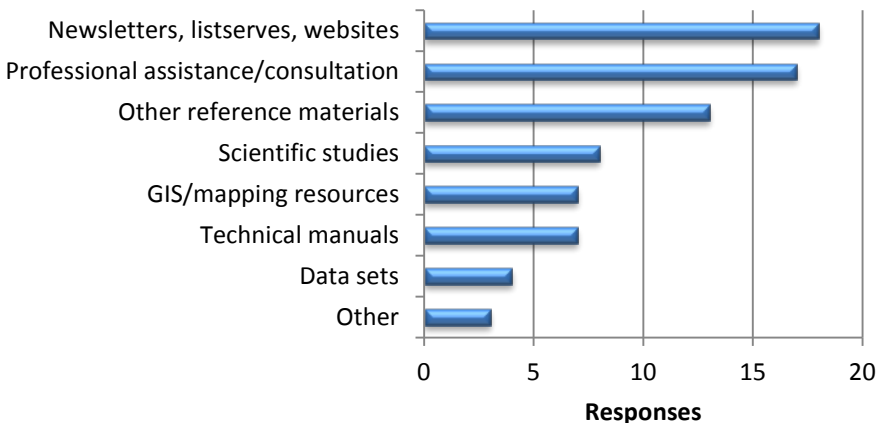


Q5. In the past two years which types of events has your organization offered? (Check all that apply).



Most respondents identified ‘workshops’ and ‘round table discussions’ as the most common type of event offered by their organization. ‘Field trips and demonstrations’ and ‘technical assistance’ (17) were also regularly offered. There was a sharp decline in the number of trainings offered in the categories of professional conferences and symposiums and those offering professional certification and continuing education credits.

Q6. Do you offer other resources to people working on coastal issues? (Check all that apply)

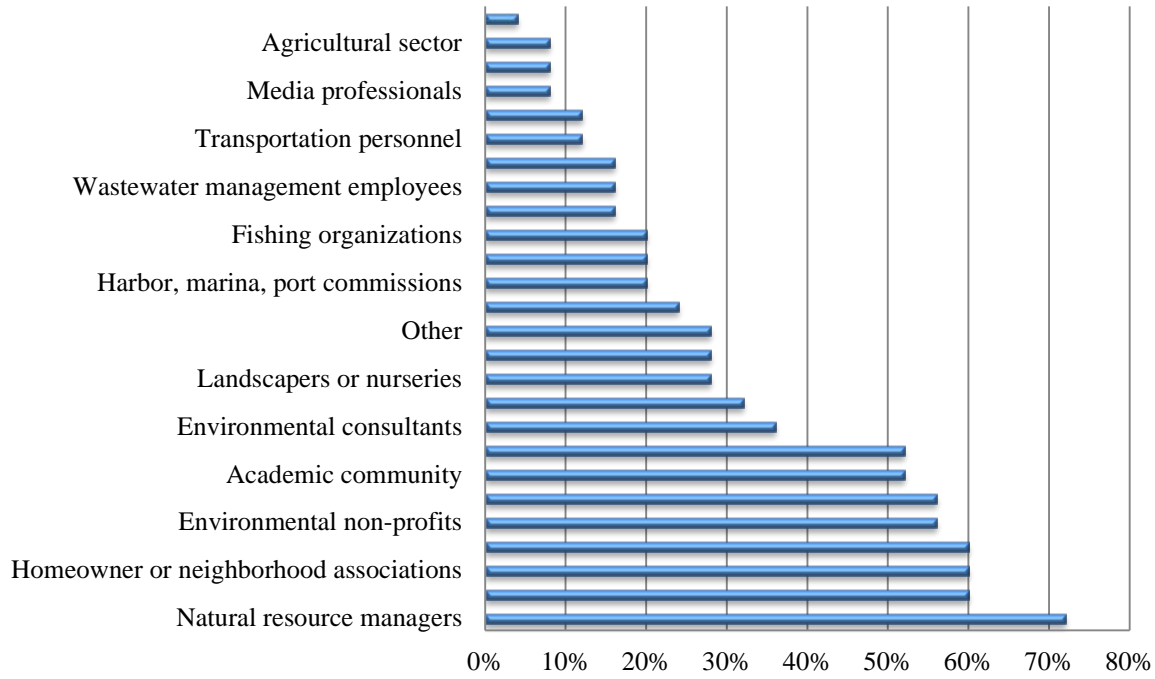


The most common types of resources offered by respondents/agencies for people working on coastal issues included: ‘newsletters, listserves and websites’ (18) ‘professional assistance and consultation services’ (17) and ‘reference materials’ (13). Resources less commonly available to coastal resource decision-makers include ‘scientific studies’, ‘technical manuals’, ‘GIS and mapping resources’ and ‘data sets’. A role for the CTP could be to address this lack of available resources in the scientific and technical areas.



Q7. During the past two years which of the audiences listed below have you marketed your training events to? (This question refers to the TYPES of audiences, not topics covered).

Targeted Audiences

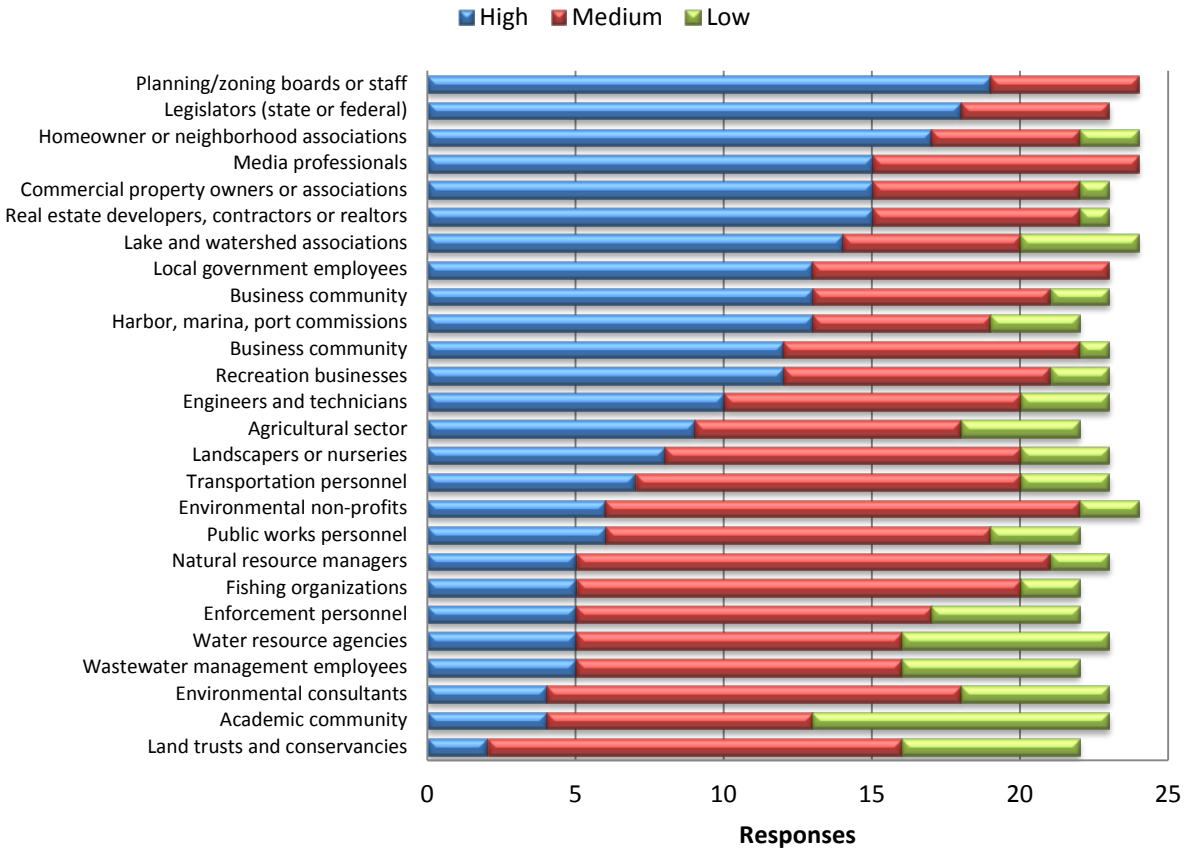


The audiences most often targeted for training by respondents included: ‘natural resource managers’ (72%); ‘homeowner and neighborhood associations’, ‘lake and watershed associations’, ‘local government employees’ (60% each); ‘environmental non-profits’ and ‘planning/zoning boards or staff’ (56% each); and ‘academic community’ and ‘water resource agencies’ (52% each). Audiences that were the least often targeted for training included ‘legislators (state or federal)’; ‘agricultural sector’; ‘media professionals’; ‘land trusts’; and ‘conservancies’, ‘recreation businesses’, and ‘transportation personnel’ (≤ 12%).



Q8. Please tell us if you think there is a high, medium or low need for additional training targeted to each of the audiences listed below. (This question also refers to audience TYPES, not topics).

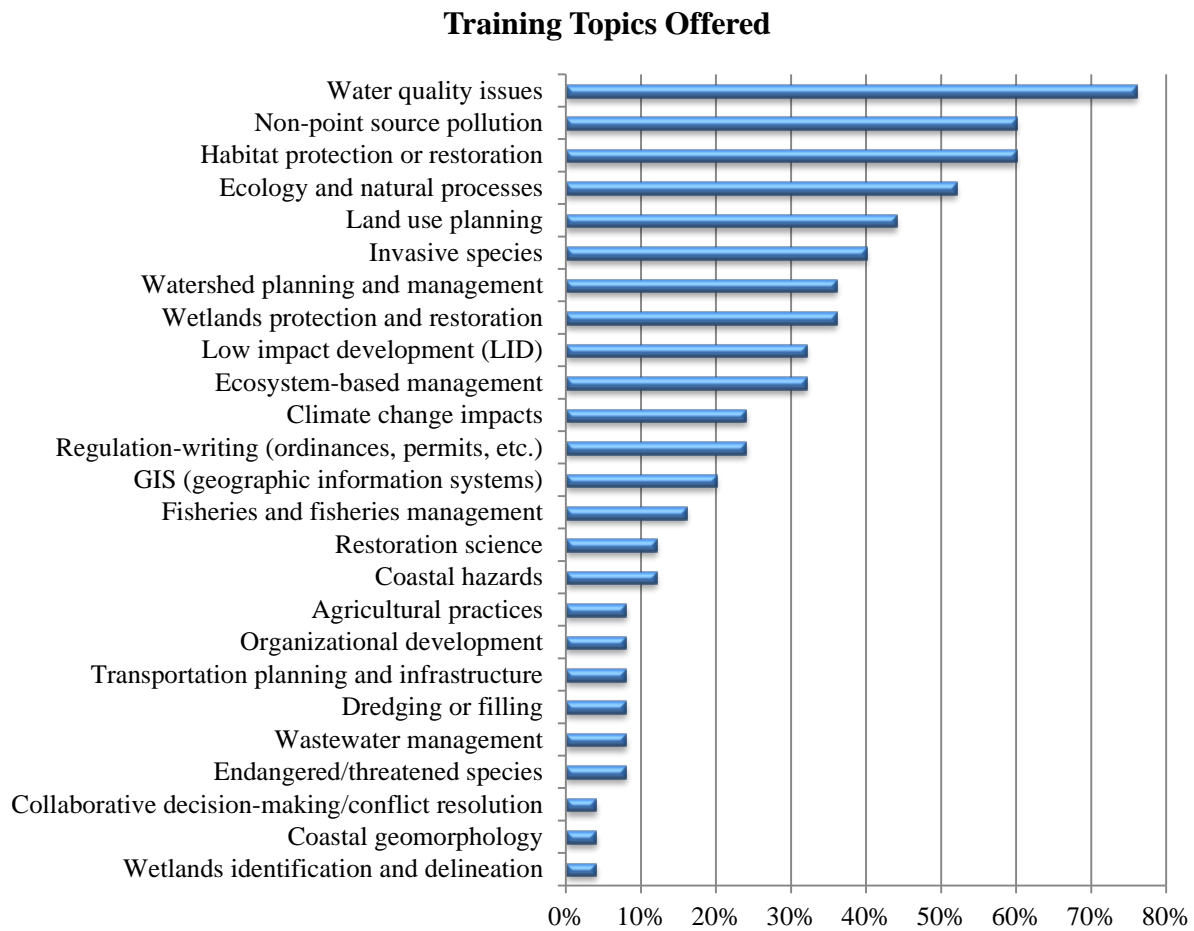
Additional Training Needs by Audience



Audiences perceived as having a high need for training ($\geq 50\%$) included: ‘planning and zoning boards or staff’ (79%); ‘legislators (state or federal)’ (78%); ‘homeowner or neighborhood associations’ (71%); ‘real estate developers, contractors, realtors’; ‘commercial property owners’, ‘media professionals’ (63-65%); ‘lake and watershed associations’ (58%); ‘harbor, marina and port commissions’, ‘business community and local government employees’ (57-59%); and ‘recreation businesses and business community’ (52%).



Q9. In the past two years, which of the topics listed below has your organization offered training on? (Check all that apply)

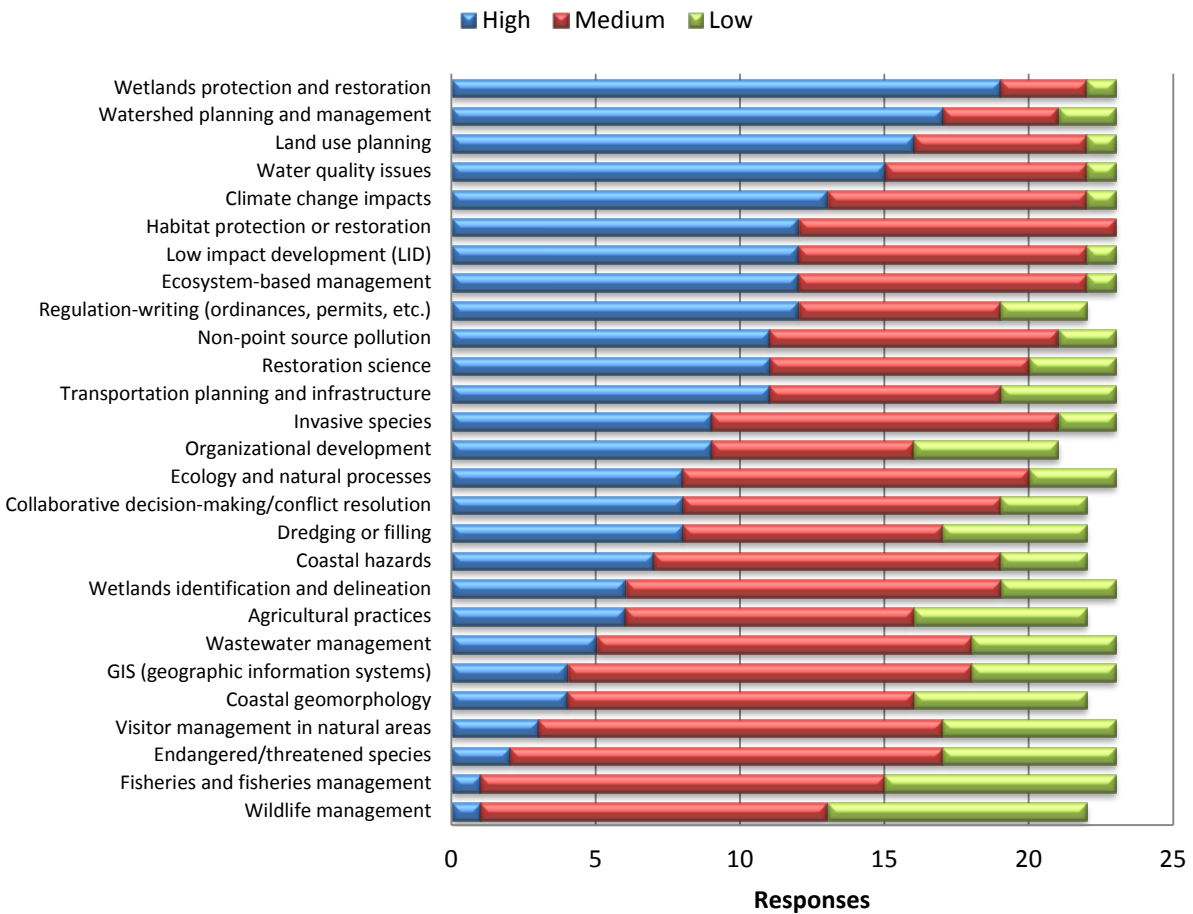


Top training priorities for organizations included ‘water quality issues’ (76%); ‘non-point source pollution’ and ‘habitat protection/restoration’ (60%); ‘ecology and natural processes’ (52%); ‘land use planning’ (44%); and ‘invasive species’ (40%). Topics least offered included ‘coastal geomorphology’; ‘collaborative decision-making and conflict resolution’; and ‘wetland identification and delineation’ (4%). Two topics that had no training offered (not on graph) included ‘visitor management in natural areas’ and ‘wildlife management’. Topics offered that were not listed on the table included ‘sustainable agriculture’; ‘community gardening’; ‘shoreland zoning’; ‘groundwater quality’; and ‘wetland restoration and management’.



Q10. Please tell us if you think there is a high, medium or low need for additional training on each of the topics listed below.

Additional Training Needs by Topic



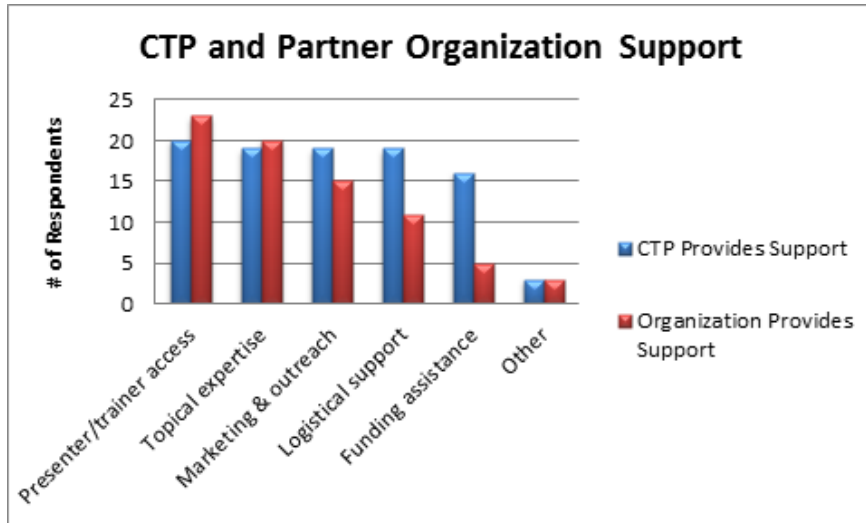
Topics that were rated as highest priority for additional training included ‘wetland protection and restoration’ (19 responses); ‘watershed planning and management’ (17 responses); ‘land use planning’ (16 responses); ‘water quality issues’ (15 responses); and ‘climate change impacts’. Additional topics of interest include ‘habitat protection and restoration’; ‘low impact development’; ‘ecosystem-based management’; and ‘regulation-writing’.

Q11 and Q12. As a partner, how could the Coastal Training Program support your organization’s mission or goals? and: As a partner, how could your organization support the Lake superior NERR’s Coastal Training Program? (Check all that apply).

Partnering organizations indicated an interest in CTP support in all areas listed which included ‘presenters/trainer access’; ‘topical expertise’; ‘marketing and outreach assistance’; ‘logistical support’ for events and ‘funding assistance’. They were also interested in providing support to the CTP in these areas with the exception of funding assistance. This is not surprising as many organizations in this region operate on limited budgets or are grant supported. Based on these responses there seems to be wide support for collaboration between the CTP and other coastal training organizations in the region. Other



areas suggested for support include project development and partnering on grants, collaboration on shared programming and involvement in strategic planning efforts.



Discussion

The response to the market analysis was lower than expected but still provides a useful assessment of training opportunities that have been available for coastal decision maker audiences in the western Lake Superior region. The top five training topics offered by coastal training organizations currently include water quality, non-point source pollution, habitat protection/restoration, ecology/natural processes and land use planning. Results indicate that there is overlap between topics currently offered and those with the highest perceived additional need as well as audiences previously targeted and those perceived as needing additional training (Tables 2 and 3). Within the top ranked topical categories, overlap occurred in wetland protection, watershed planning, habitat protection, water quality and land use planning. Climate change impacts was ranked in the top five as a need for training while it ranked 11th as a training opportunity that has been offered. Another high priority topic identified for training was water quality even though training opportunities have been available. Other training topics to be addressed include ecosystem-based management, low-impact development, land use planning, regulation writing and restoration science. Habitat protection and restoration training opportunities are available but there is still considered to be a high need for additional training.

The most often targeted audiences for training include natural resource managers, homeowner associations, watershed associations, local government employees and environmental non-profits. Overlaps within the audiences identified as previously targeted vs. perceived additional need and include planning and zoning boards, local government employees, and homeowner and watershed associations. There are several audience groups in the perceived need category that are not being adequately addressed and include legislators, real estate developers, contractors, realtors, commercial property owners, media professionals, harbor, marina and port commissions and business communities. Planning and zoning boards were perceived as having a high need for training even though opportunities have been made available. This perceived need for training may be due to high turnover rates and changing state and local regulations that they need to be regularly updated on.

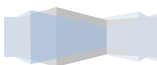


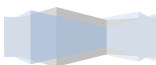
Table 2. Ranked List of Current Topics Offered and Topics Identified as High Need for Additional Training

Current Topics Offered	# Respondents	Topics to Address	# Respondents
Water quality	19	Wetland protection/restoration	19
NPS	15	Watershed planning	17
Habitat protection/restoration	15	Land use planning	16
Ecology/natural processes	13	Water quality	15
Land use planning	11	Climate change impacts	13
Invasive species	10	Ecosystem-based management	12
Wetland protection/restoration	9	Habitat protection/restoration	12
Watershed planning and management	9	Low impact development	12
Ecosystem-based management	8	Regulation writing	12
Low impact development	8	Restoration science	11

Table 3. Ranked List of Audiences Previously Targeted and Audiences Perceived as Needing Additional Training

Previously Targeted	# Respondents	Need additional training	# Respondents
Natural resource managers	18	Planning/zoning boards	19
Homeowner associations	15	Legislators	18
Watershed associations	15	Homeowner associations	17
Local government employees	15	Real estate developers, contractors	15
Environmental non-profits	14	Commercial property owners	15
Planning/zoning boards	14	Media professionals	15
Academic community	13	Lake/Watershed associations	14
Water resource agencies	13	Harbor, marina and port comm.	13
Environmental consultants	9	Business community	13
Engineers and technicians	8	Local government employees	13

There were also overlaps within the audiences identified as previously targeted vs. perceived additional need for training (Table 2). These include planning and zoning boards, local government employees, and homeowner and watershed associations. There are several audience groups in the perceived need category that are not being adequately addressed and include legislators, real estate developers, contractors, realtors, commercial property owners, media professionals, harbor, marina and port commissions and business communities. Planning and zoning boards were perceived as having a high need for training even though opportunities have been made available. This perceived need for training



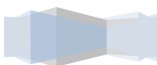
may be due to high turnover rates and changing state and local regulations that they need to be regularly updated on.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This market analysis highlights potential training niches and collaborative opportunities that could be filled by the LSNERR CTP. They include:

- Several high priority topical areas should be addressed where training needs have been identified but current training on the topic is low. These topics include wetland protection and restoration, watershed planning and management and climate change.
- CTP should target audiences 1) that currently have a low level of training opportunities or 2) have a continuing need for training. These audiences include planning and zoning boards, real estate developers, contractors, realtors, commercial property owners, media professionals, harbor, marina and port commissions and business communities, and legislators.
- CTP should conduct in-depth needs assessments for audiences identified as in need of additional training, and should include other organizations as partners when possible.
- Resources available to CDM's related to scientific studies, technical and GIS mapping resources and data sets are currently lacking and is an appropriate gap for the CTP to fill due to the program focus on linking research and management.
- Though there currently are a limited number of training workshops offered to the coastal decision-makers, organizations are interested in developing partnerships that would support expansion of training opportunities.
- Training workshops should continue to be offered at low cost to avoid reduced participation by CDM's due to budgetary restrictions.
- CTP can fill an important role by conveying CDM's needs to researchers and assist in the development of collaborative grant proposals that address priority coastal management issues.
- Provide additional venues for professional conferences to enhance the connection between research and management
- Develop training workshops that offer professional and continuing education credits.
- An emerging issue of concern to be addressed is proposed mining in the Lake Superior watershed. Mining projects are being explored within the upper St Louis River watershed (Minnesota) and the Bad River Watershed (Wisconsin)

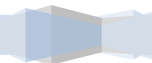
Many potential partnerships exist for addressing these identified training needs. In the category of wetland protection and restoration, the Wisconsin Wetlands Association, Wisconsin Coastal Management Program, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and West Wisconsin Land Trust are interested in supporting training opportunities for a variety of audiences. Wisconsin and Minnesota Extension, WI and MN Sea Grant, MN and WI Coastal Management Programs would be supportive of efforts to address



climate change impacts and adaptation training in Lake Superior basin communities. In the watershed planning and land use category key partners include the county land conservation departments and state and county extension staff. Training workshops will be developed for water quality, stormwater and non-point pollution, some of which will focus on the St. Louis River Area of Concern. Several agencies in both WI and MN are developing a strategic plan for working towards delisting of nine identified beneficial use impairments. Partners include WI Extension, MN and WI Sea Grant Programs, WI and MN Coastal programs, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the MN and WI Department of Natural Resources.

CTP will develop training opportunities that provide coastal decision makers with access and interpretation of scientific studies, data sets and GIS mapping resources. One of the roles of the Lake Superior NERR is to compile available GIS layers and data sets related to research, restoration and management activities within St. Louis River Estuary and Lake Superior coastal region. This information and training associated with the use of these resources will be made available to communities as requested. Partnerships will be developed to coordinate and provide support for professional conferences and symposiums as well as training that offers professional certification and continuing education credits.

The development of the LSNERR website will include a CTP component that will provide listings of training and technical assistance workshops, on-line workshop registration and a resource library. A brochure will be developed that describes the CTP and will be distributed to CDM's through the website and through attendance at local and regional meetings and events. The University of Wisconsin-Extension operates a public radio station which will play a role in disseminating information about our programs. UW-Superior public relations staff will regularly update the community and other local media on CTP events and training opportunities.



Marketing Plan for LSNERR Coastal Training Program

The Lake Superior NERR CTP marketing strategy will:

1. Promote the Reserve's CTP resources to target audiences through effective and efficient means.
2. Develop a professional rapport with target audience.
3. Implement a web-based presence that will allow for coastal managers to access CTP information and resources at their convenience.

Audiences Marketing Strategies

Marketing strategies work differently for different target audiences, as well as, based on individual preferences. Therefore, the Lake Superior NERR will utilize multiple strategies to market the program, trainings, and resources available. These strategies will include:

- Email
- Web
 - Lake Superior NERR website (CTP webpage)
 - NOAA CTP website
 - Wisconsin Freshwater Estuary Initiative website
- One-on-one interactions
- Listserve
- Partner Meetings (Network)
- Telephone
- United States Postal Service
- Newspaper
- Radio

Lake Superior NERR CTP will strive to increase the visibility and broadening the understanding of the CTP within the coastal management community. This will be accomplished through the implementation of the CTP through offerings of technical training workshops, webpage development and dissemination of resources and tools valuable to the coastal decision makers. The CTP program will also work with University of Wisconsin – Superior and University of Wisconsin –Extension and their media relation offices to create press releases regarding the benefits and value of the CTP to the community.

As the CTP program matures large scale efforts will be announced on the Lake Superior NERR website, listserv, through our partners and by targeted mailings. More targeted efforts with municipalities will be advertised through the website, by phone calls to potential participants, and by individual meeting with targeted municipalities. These types of personalized interactions will be more effective to the municipal community than some of the more non-direct marketing approaches such as mail, emails and faxes.

Long-term goals would be to grow the CTP webpage on the Lake Superior NERR website to be able handle online program registration in which the contact information of registered participants would be permanently stored making email advertising of upcoming programs extremely efficient in addition to streamlining program administration associated with training registration. The webpage would also house links to resources and tools important to coastal decision makers.

In addition, the partnership that the National Estuarine Research Reserve Association has established with the American Institute of Certified Planners to provide Certification Maintenance credits will also enhanced the awareness and credibility of CTP events.

The Lake Superior NERR CTP will utilize their logo consistently on materials, websites and resources to assist in the recognition of the CTP program. The logo is anticipated to combine the Lake Superior NERR logo and Coastal Training Program title. The logo will be created by professional graphic designers within the University of Wisconsin –Extension's Environmental Resources Center.