

Survey Research and Great Lakes Water Policy

Sarah Mills, PhD
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Presentation Outline

- Survey research and environmental policy
- Elite and public opinion on the Great Lakes
 - Most pressing problems
 - Economic values
 - Environmental federalism
 - Support for policies

Survey research and environmental policy ...

Survey research: Who uses it?

- Government agencies
 - Assess usage
 - Determine priorities
- Campaigns / Lobbyists
 - Find likely supporters
 - Test messages
- News outlets

Survey research: What can it tell you?

- Knowledge (or not) about the issue
- Willingness to pay
- Support in aggregate and by group, region
- Relative priorities

Survey research: What **can't** it tell you?

- Nuanced knowledge
- What people will actually pay
- How people will actually vote

Data is only as good as the survey

Great Lakes survey data ...

Based on two parallel surveys

- Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS)
- The Energy & Environmental Policy Initiative (EEPI)

The Michigan Public Policy Survey



- **Census survey** – all 1,856 counties, cities, villages, and townships
- **Respondents** – chief elected and appointed officials
- **Administered** – online and via hardcopy
- **Timing** – Spring and Fall each year

Elite & Public Opinion

Elite Opinion:

Michigan local gov't

- MPPS survey
- 1,353 jurisdictions
 - 73% response rate
 - 1.4% margin of error

Public Opinion:

Residents in GL Basin

- Telephone survey
- 1,247 residents
 - 3% margin of error (overall)
 - 267 respondents from Michigan (6% moe.)

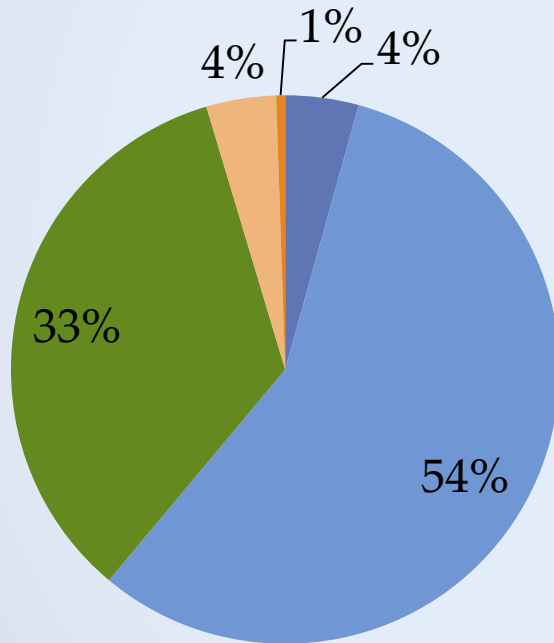
Reports on each of these datasets
available on closup.umich.edu

Water-related Data

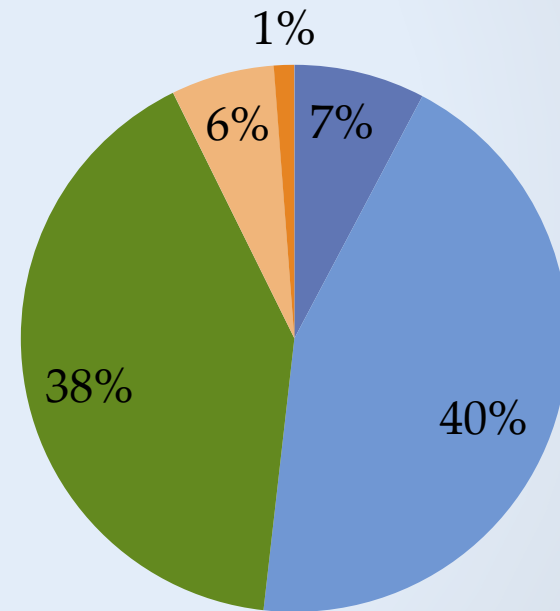
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Current condition of the Great Lakes

MI Elite



MI Public



■ Excellent ■ Good ■ Fair ■ Poor ■ Very Poor

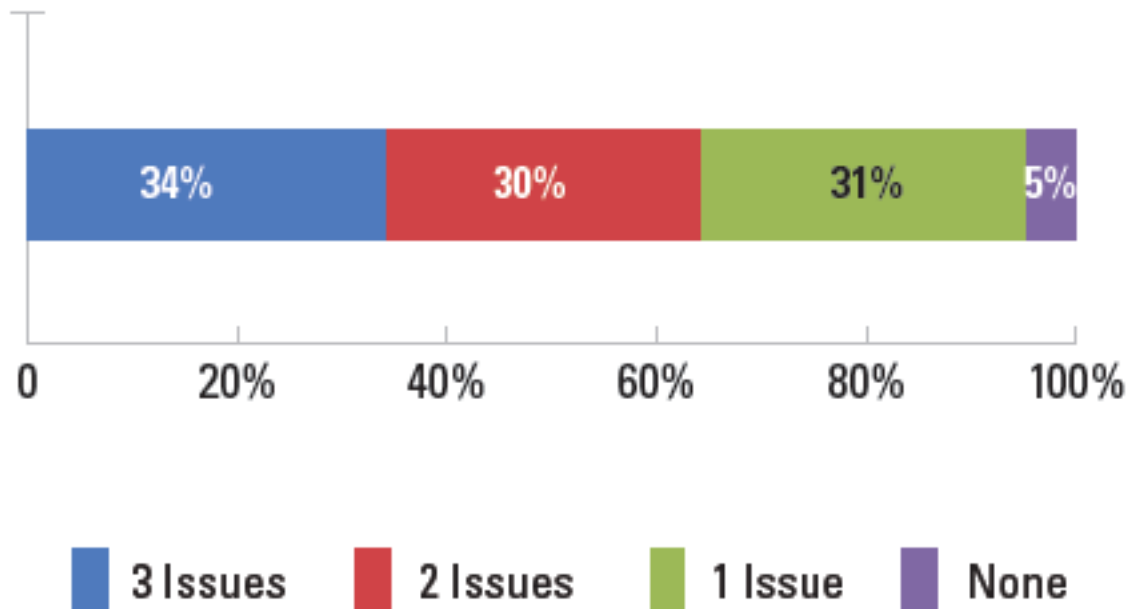
Most important concerns?

Issue(Grouped by category)	Rank 1	Any mention
Pollution/Contamination	55%	73%
Asian Carp	8%	21%
Water Levels	5%	16%
Invasive Species	4%	11%
Sewage/Waste	3%	7%
Water Quality/Maintaining Quality	3%	6%
Industrial/Business Waste	2%	6%
Garbage Dumping	2%	6%
Zebra Mussels	2%	5%
...		
Global warming	0.5%	2%

Public opinion only

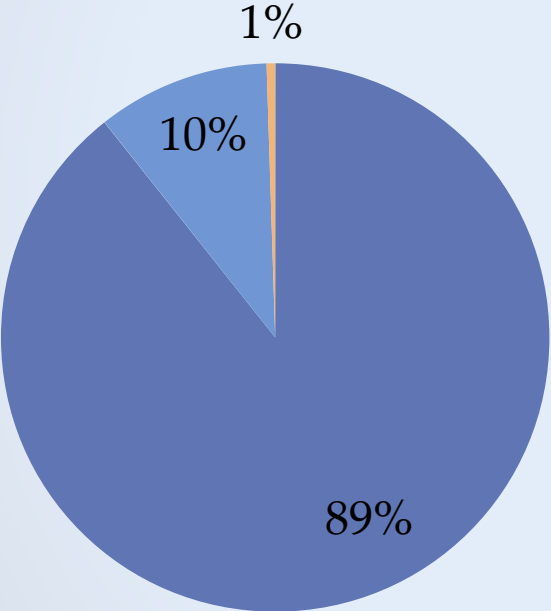
Knowledge about problems

Number of environmental issues respondents identified in open-ended question about Great Lakes

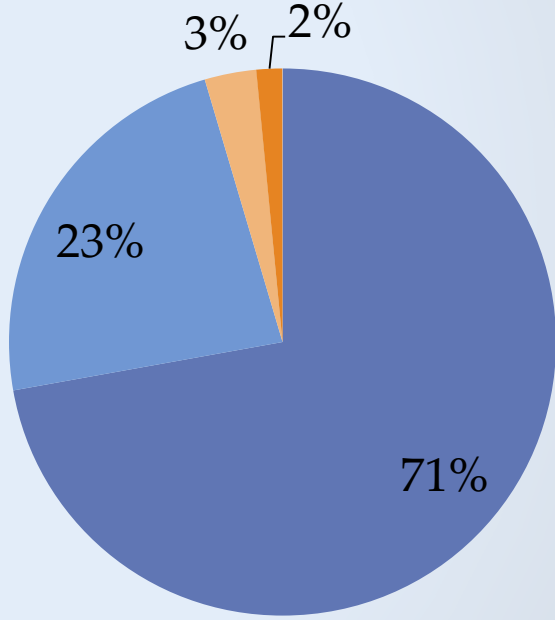


GL economic resource for Michigan

MI Elite



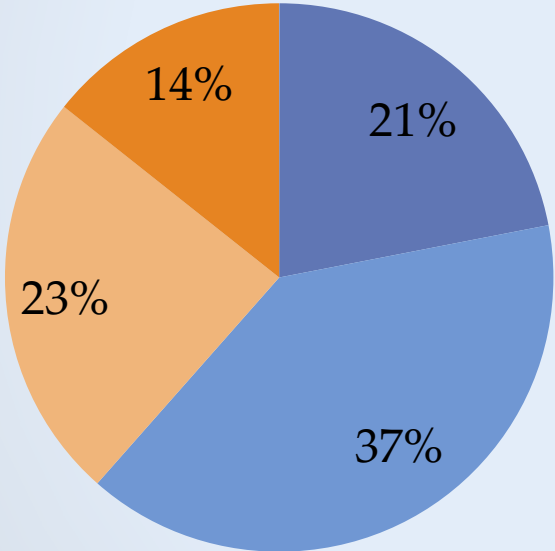
MI Public



■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree

GL economic resource for *your jurisdiction*

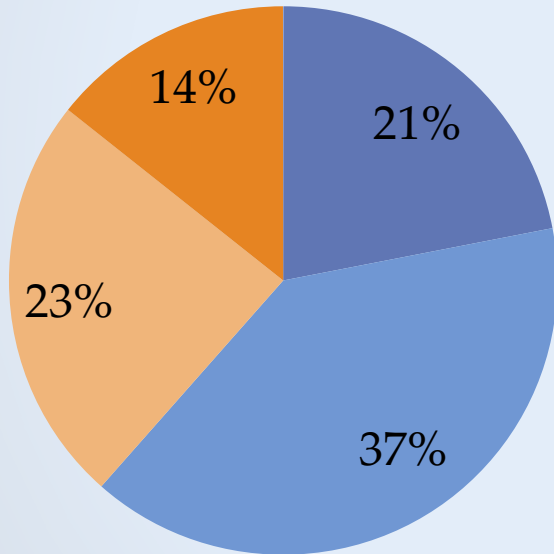
Overall



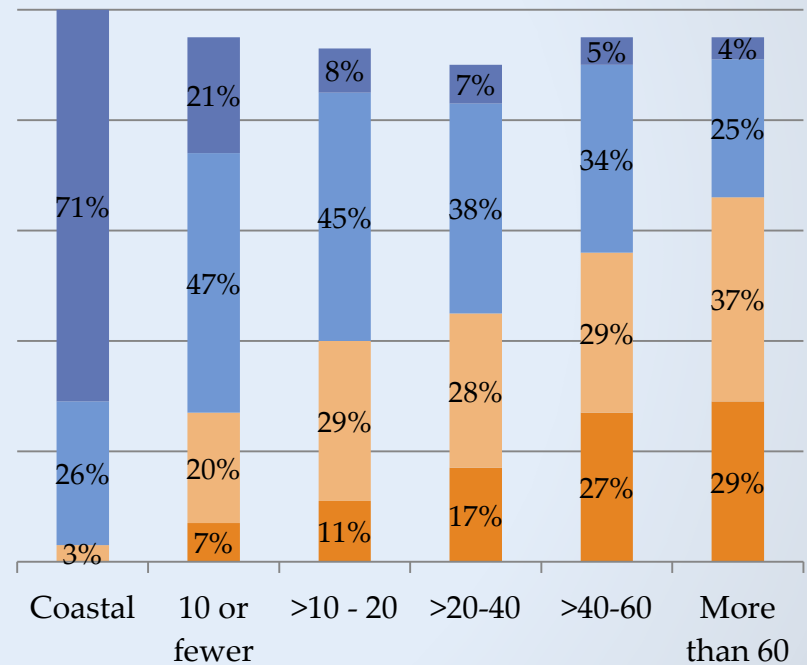
■ Strongly disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Strongly agree

GL economic resource for your jurisdiction

Overall



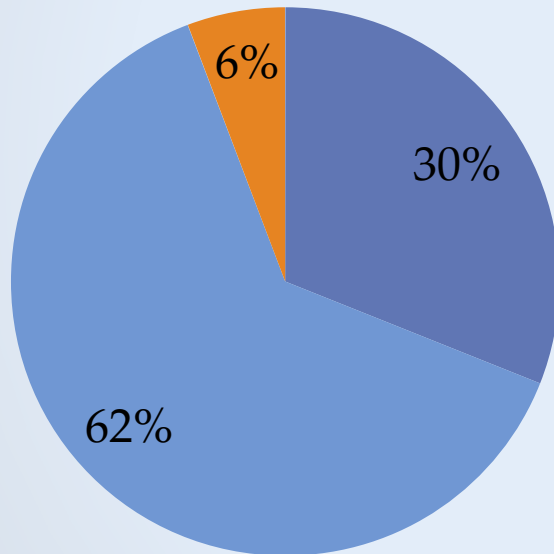
By miles to nearest GL



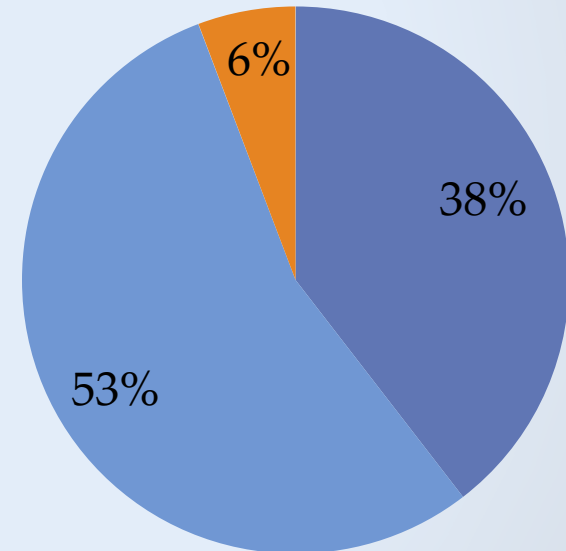
■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Somewhat agree
 ■ Strongly agree

Federalism: Local government

MI Elite



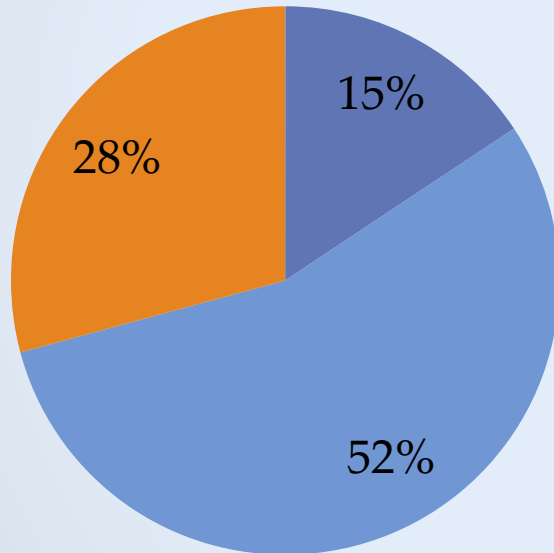
MI Public



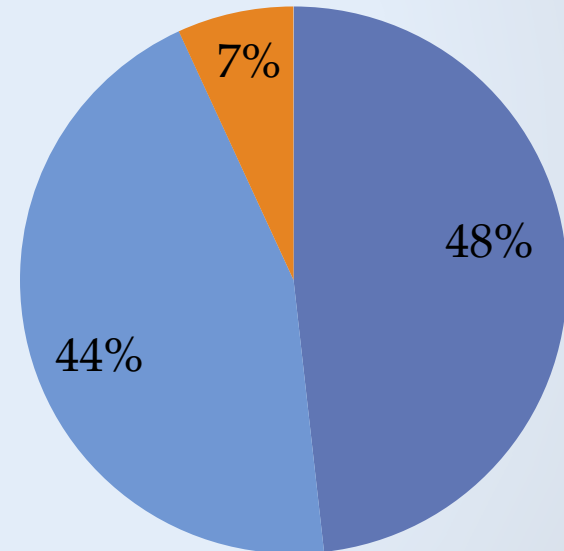
■ Great deal of responsibility ■ Some responsibility ■ No responsibility

Federalism: **Your** local government

MI Elite

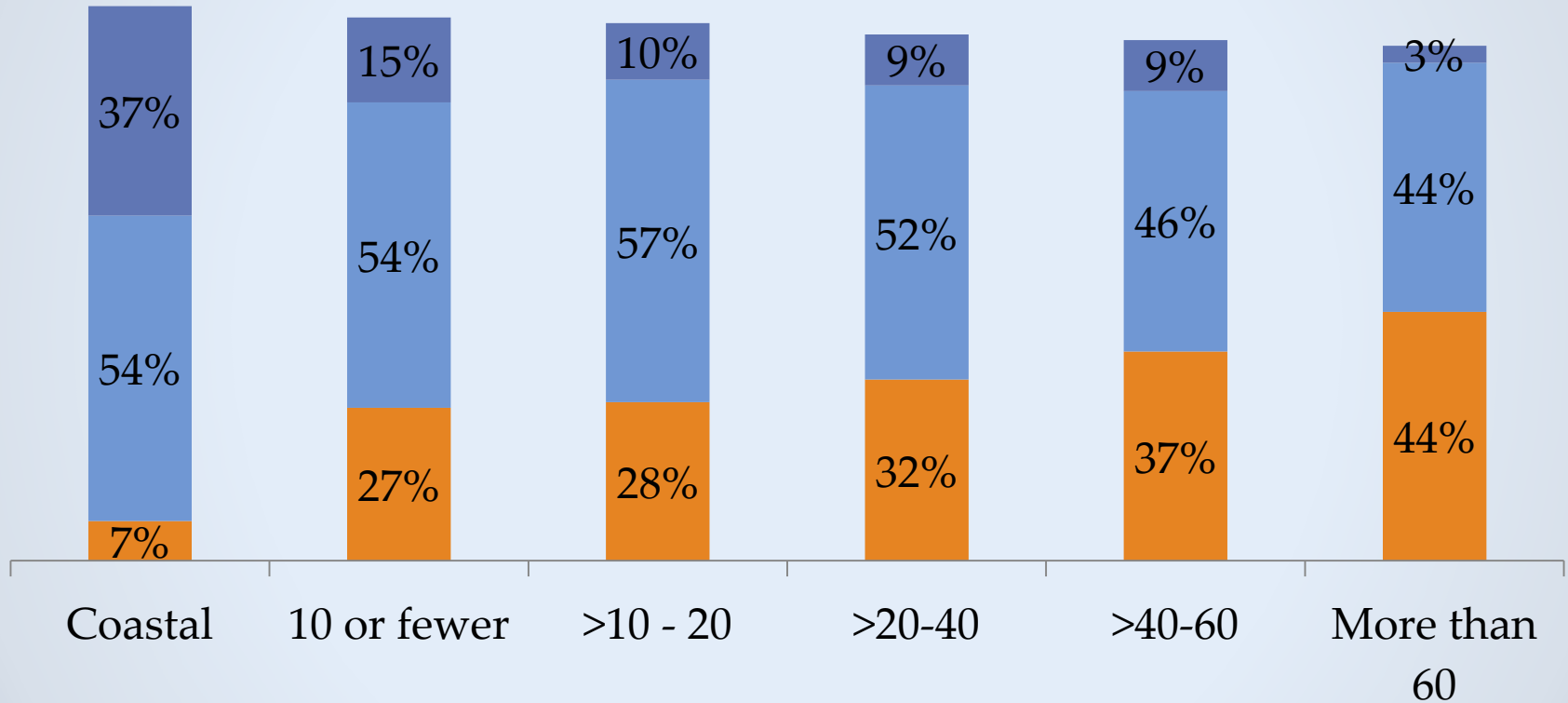


MI Public



■ Great deal of responsibility ■ Some responsibility ■ No responsibility

Federalism: Your local government



Distance to nearest Great Lake, in miles

Elite opinion only

■ None
 ■ Some
 ■ A Great Deal

Support for GL policies

- Asked about 12 policies (with consequences)
 - Rebuild sewers, but increase property taxes
 - Prevent construction on wetlands, but limit economic development

“Strengthen regulations to reduce the release of pharmaceuticals and other contaminants entering the Great Lakes, even if the cost of drugs increase”



“Rebuild sewers to improve Great Lakes water quality, even if it requires an increase in your property taxes”



“Increase efforts to improve Great Lakes water quality, even if it requires higher taxes”



“Reduce runoff from farm and the agricultural sectors even if it increases the cost of food”



“Phase out coal-fired power plants to reduce mercury emissions in the Great Lakes Region, even if the cost of electricity increases”



“Prevent new construction on wetlands, even if limits economic development”



“Reduce the rate at which farmland or other natural areas are being paved over, even if it limits local economic development”



“Close the shipping channel near Chicago that may allow Asian carp to enter Lake Michigan, even if this harms the local economy”



“Increase the cost of water for households and businesses to encourage consumers to use less water”



“Enforce laws to reduce water diversion from the Great Lakes, even if it means citizens outside the Great Lakes face water shortages”



Support for GL policies

MI Elite

- Limit water diversion (85%)
- Prevent sewer overflow (75%)
- Prevent agri. runoff (72%)

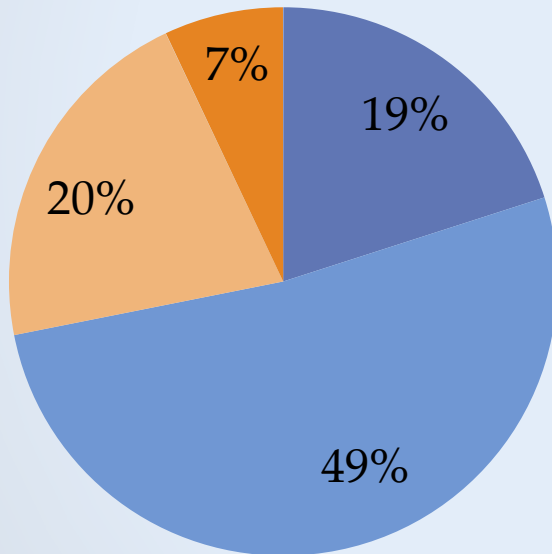
MI Public

- Prevent sewer overflow (82%)
- Reduce pharmaceutical release (81%)
- Prevent agri. runoff (77%)

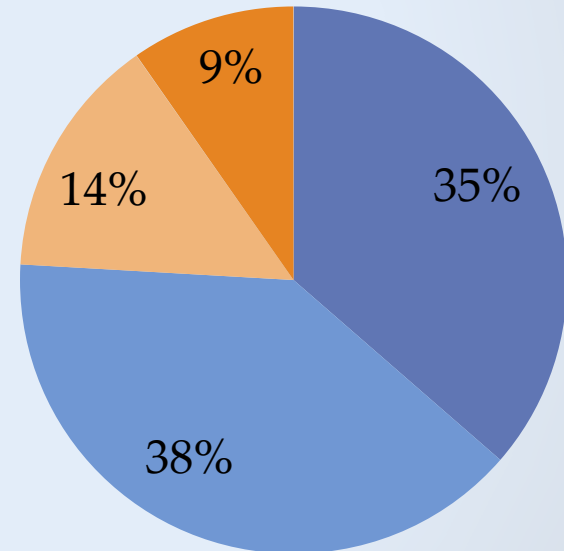


Improve water quality, increase taxes

MI Elite



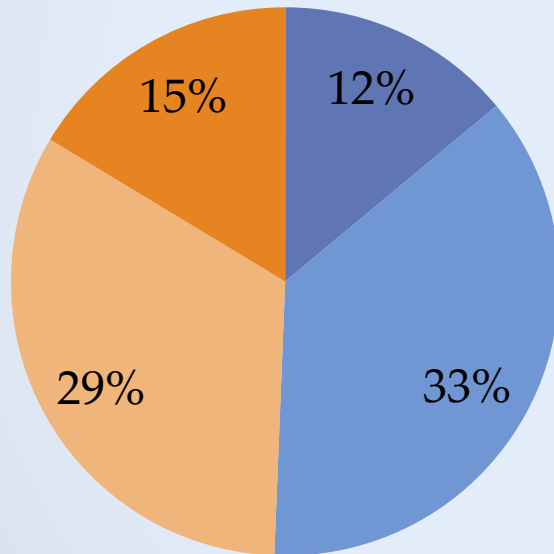
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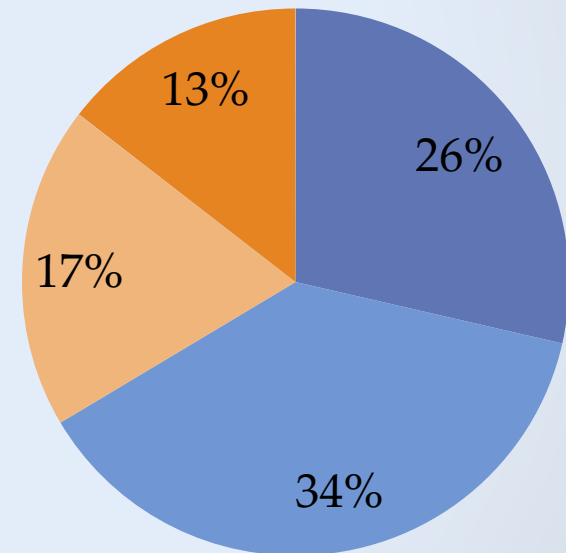
■ Strongly support ■ Somewhat support ■ Somewhat oppose ■ Strongly oppose

Phase out coal-fired power plants

MI Elite



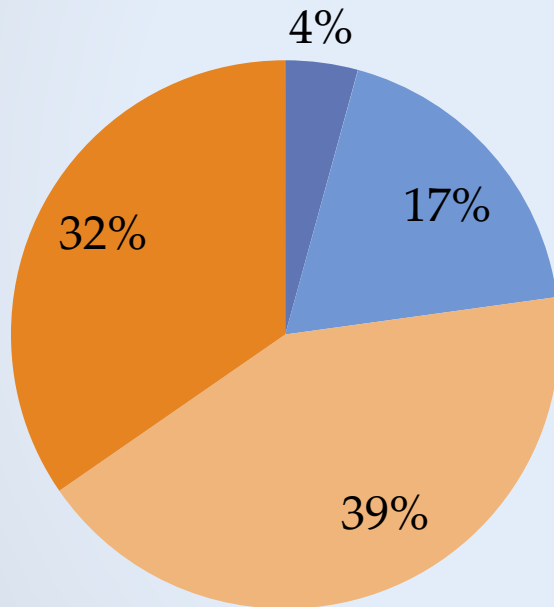
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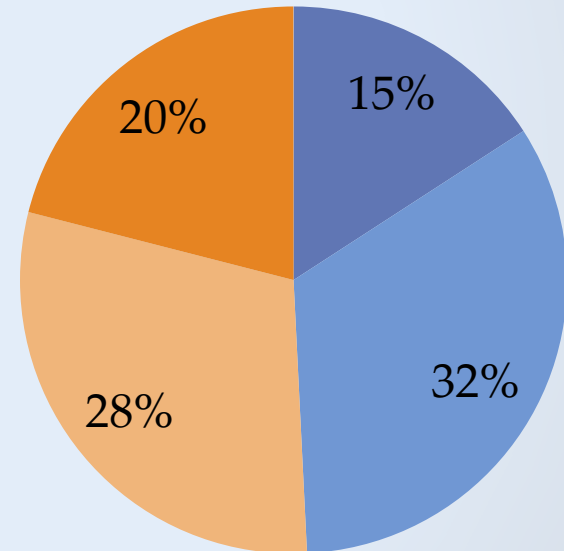
■ Strongly support ■ Somewhat support ■ Somewhat oppose ■ Strongly oppose

Encourage conservation by increasing cost of water

MI Elite



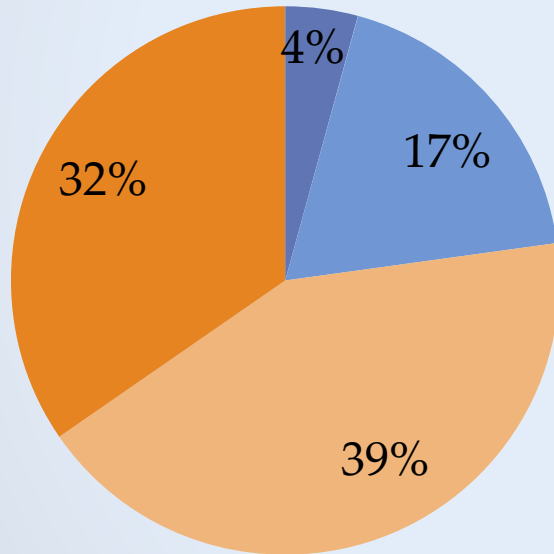
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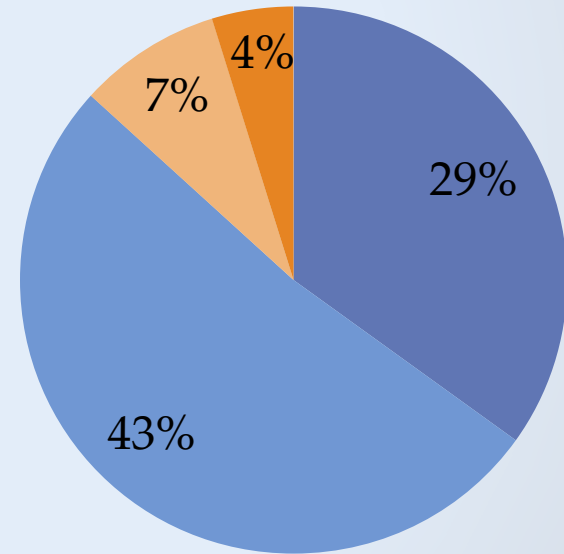
■ Strongly support ■ Somewhat support ■ Somewhat oppose ■ Strongly oppose

Increasing water rates

**MI Elites:
encourage conservation**



**MI Elites:
Improve infrastructure**



■ Strongly support ■ Somewhat support ■ Somewhat oppose ■ Strongly oppose

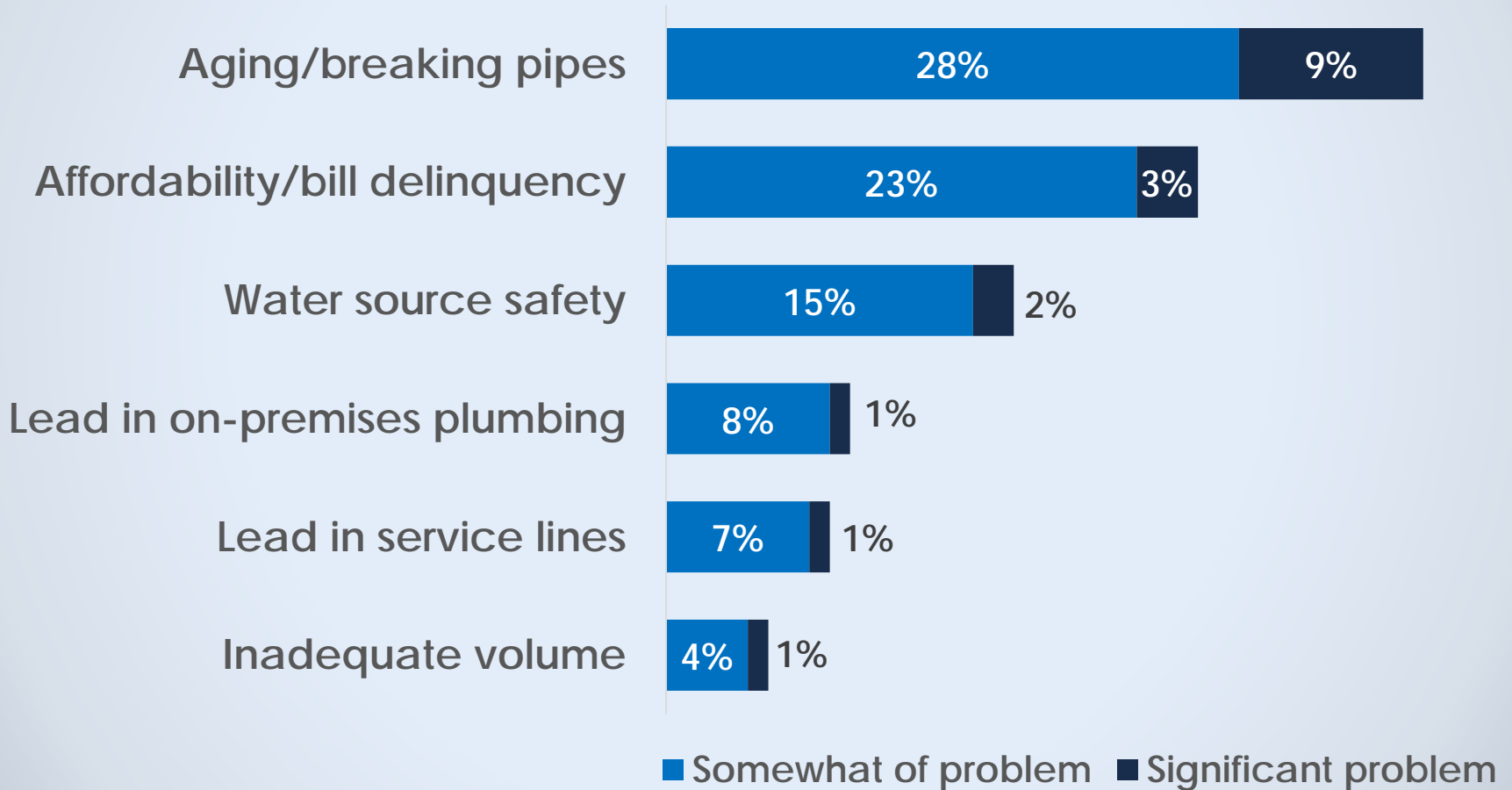
Drinking Water Infrastructure

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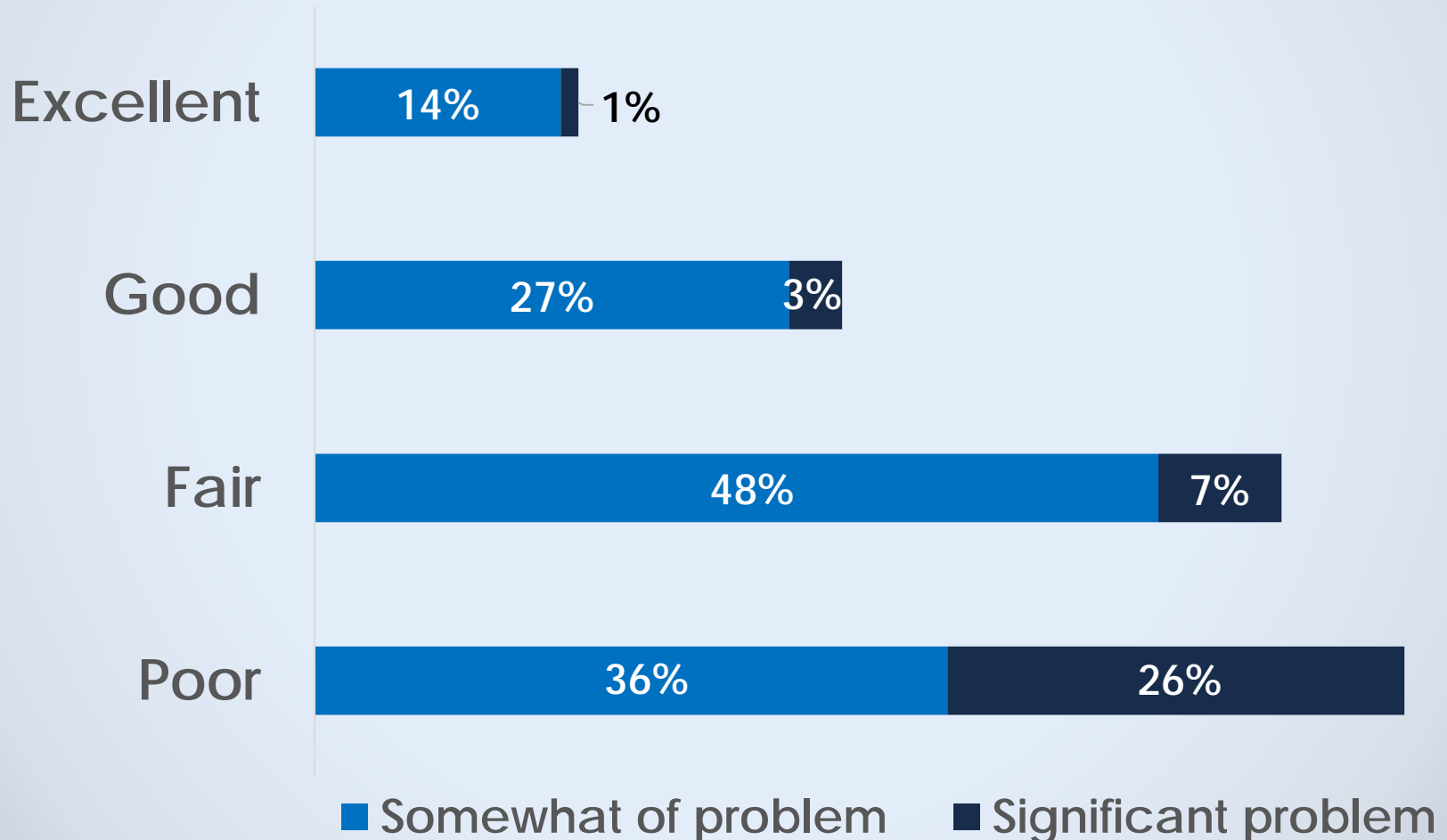
Just among local government officials

Extent of problems

(in jurisdictions with shared systems)



Affordability / Delinquency (by infrastructure condition)



Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy (CLOSUP)

Web: www.closup.umich.edu

Email: sbmills@umich.edu