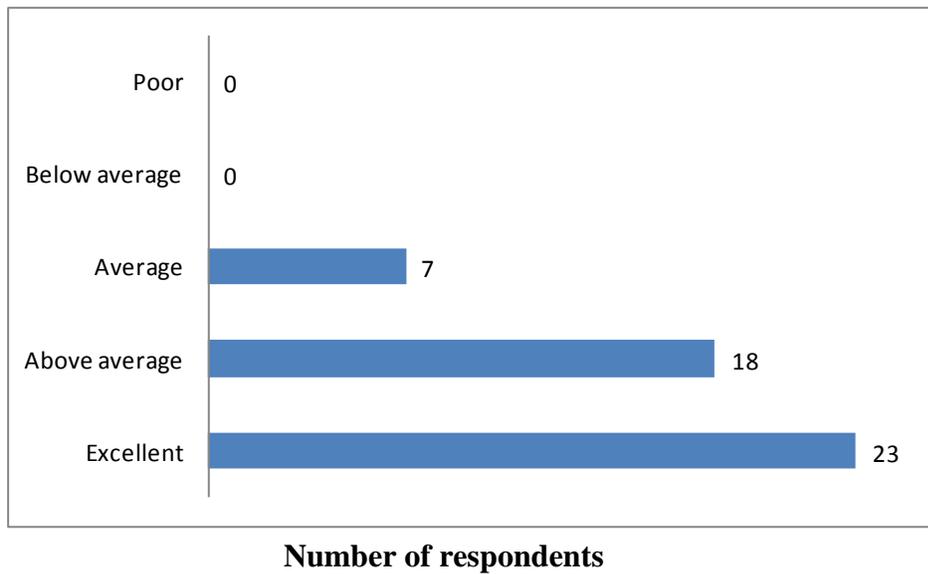


“Nibi & Manoomin: Bridging Worldviews” Post-Symposium Survey Results – Summary  
November 9, 2011

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*This is a summary of the results from the post-symposium internet survey. Survey was sent to about 130 symposium attendees who provided email addresses and 48 people completed the survey. Not included in these results is the contact information from the 25 people who wished to be involved in working groups. Lists provided in the summary are in no particular order.*

1. How would you rate the overall quality of the "Nibi and Manoomin: Bridging Worldviews"



## 2. What impacted you the most at the symposium and why?

*Responses to this question emphasized:*

- *The wild rice camp*
- *The talking circles*
- *The quality of the presenters and the diversity of perspectives and information presented*
- *The presentation of the white paper to the University*
- *Being able to understand the cultural significance of the wild rice and the importance of it to University of Minnesota researchers*
- *The student presentations*
- *Each day's opening ceremony*
- *The water ceremony*
- *Meeting people with similar interests and concerns*
- *Improvement in tone (more positive) compared to the last symposium*

*A sample of the individual responses to this question include:*

There were several remarkable events at the symposium. I enjoyed the ricing camp and opportunity to network with people of like mind regarding our ecosystem. I also appreciated the speakers, especially Ricky Defoe, for their insights and inspiration. Also, Chairwomen Vizenor who provided inspiration and conveyed commitment to the protection of these relationships we have with Nibi and Manoomin. It was great to see the work being done by high schools and college age students to provide care for the environment. The Nibi ceremony was also inspirational. Migwiitch to the organizers for their commitment to this gathering.

Incorporation of ceremonies each day. The ceremonies set the tone for the entire day and signaled that we were there to do "business" differently.

The water ceremony - it brought the purpose and importance of our meetings, presentations, and discussions back to the forefront of the symposium overall. Also, the talking circles.

Grandma Josephine's story and challenge to all of us about what we as individuals are going to do to protect our nibi and manoomin.

I was strongly impacted by hearing diverse views coming from within both the University-affiliated people and the non-University Anishinaabe people, as well as from other outside groups. This impacted me because the diversity of views included people who were clearly taking the "bridging worldviews" theme to heart, as well as people who I felt were more focused on creating dichotomies and divisions among people, and this surprised me.

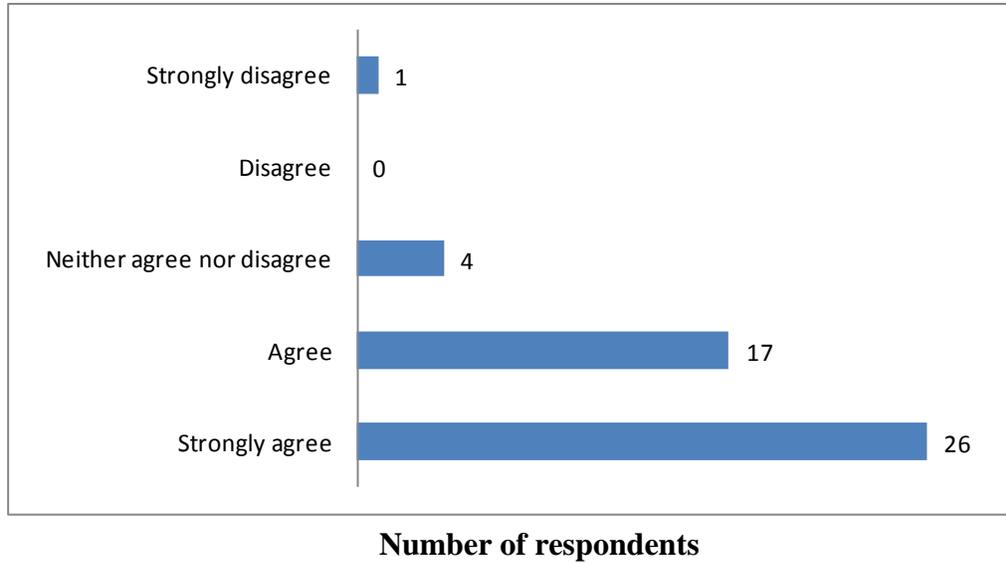
Water ceremony, sometimes we forget these ceremonies and this was the way to refresh ourselves and return to our Anishinaabe way of life. Plus, this is our view of the world and we are letting other people know our way of life is to protect this earth and everything in it.

I was most impacted by the moments of being in community with everyone -- the morning prayers, the rituals and ceremonies, even meal-times. The talking circles were also very meaningful. I feel that those were the moments where "bridging" really took place.

The opportunity to reconnect with the 2009 participants and celebrate the incredible accomplishment of presenting the White Paper to Vice President Dave Jones. A second one is the poster session and presentation of the collaborative work of the youth and the U of M in recognizing the need to study the history of manoomin

The session on Anishinaabe world-views, because the speakers--both individually and collectively--brought together insights from various perspectives in order to illuminate important challenges and opportunities. The afternoon at rice camp also had significant impact because of the ways in which the setting and experience cultivated collegiality, because of the massive amount I learned while on site, and because of the pleasure of being in that place.

3. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:  
The "Nibi and Manoomin: Bridging Worldviews" symposium broadened how I understand nibi (water) and manoomin (wild rice) to include new perspectives.



#### 4. As a result of the symposium, how do you understand nibi and manoomin differently than before?

*Responses to this question emphasized:*

- *Understand the sacredness of both nibi and manoomin to the Ojibwe people*
- *Understand the concern over the threats to nibi and manoomin like sulfate mining and genetic engineering*
- *Understand the deep connection towards life giving natural gifts*
- *Understand the science happening at the U of MN and the differences between different types of scientific research concerning manoomin*
- *Understand the complexity of the issues surrounding nibi and manoomin*
- *The importance of Native people being involved in protecting nibi and manoomin*
- *No difference*

*A sample of the individual responses to this question include:*

Tribal traditions regarding water and rice can be honored by the U of MN with understanding and good science

some of the science info was useful. there are many pressures on water and manoomin as a result of the industrialization of the anishinaabe landscape. many of the tribal and quasi tribal programs are not doing an adequate job of informing the anishinaabe public about all the threats.

I have a better appreciation of how other cultures may view, use, and value these entities. The symposium succeeded in reminding me to consider other perspectives when doing work, and there are perspectives that may or may not be familiar to us that need to be considered before proceeding with scientific research.

This is a process that I think is very slow and yet needs to be slow. I have appreciated how little I know of these the more I know. Nibi and manoomin contain the history, present and future of resources and spiritual gifts. The challenge is to appreciate how they are intertwined with many communities and how they bridge communities.

I think of the presentation on waste water systems and how water must be managed in a good way and the water ceremony, which is also about how water must be treated with respect. It was interesting to see some commonalities among what at first, seemed like very contrasting parts of the symposium. There are clear connections between the "practical" and "sacred."

I understand how important it is for women to take an active role in protecting nibi as we are the keepers of the water. How manoomin prefers to be called manoomin and not "wild rice".

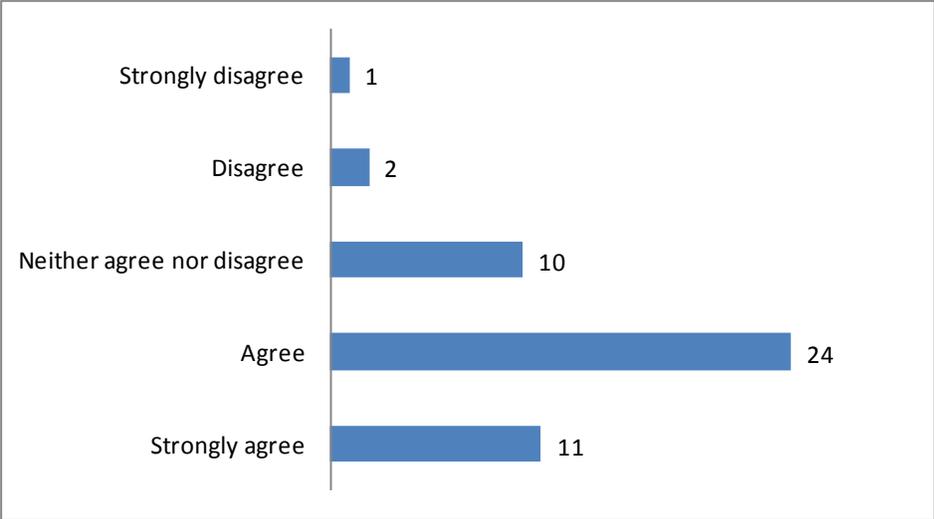
I have a greater appreciation for the complexity of the situation, and the nuances of differences even within seemingly similar world-views.

I thought I had a decent understanding of the position of manoomin in the Anishinaabe culture, but my thoughts on nibi was purely "scientific". The symposium helped spiritually connect nibi to manoomin.

After participating in the water ceremony, my feeling and awareness about our relationship to water has changed, how my family will respect water differently and remember to offer prayer, tobacco and food to the water and give thanks for it every day.

I had never been in conversation with the U's scientists doing research on manoomin, nor had I read any of their work, so the symposium offered the opportunity to engage with them and ask questions. I now have a far clearer sense of the relationships and distinctions between wild rice, domesticated rice produced through intentional breeding, and genetically modified rice.

5. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:  
The Nibi and Manoomin symposium helped bridge worldviews.



**Number of respondents**

6. What parts of the symposium were most successful in achieving bridging? What are other ways, at future symposia or more generally, that bridging could be achieved?

*Parts of the symposium that were most successful at achieving bridging included:*

- *Having elders speak about the importance of nibi and manoomin*
- *Interactive sessions, such as meals, talking circles and ricing camp*
- *Talking circles*
- *Incorporation of ceremony*
- *Water ceremony*
- *Having presentations from researchers and from the members of the Ojibwe community*
- *Sharing among tribes of best practices for caring for nibi and manoomin*
- *Presentations by Indigenous young people collaborating with U of MN on projects*
- *Treaty presentations – helping to bridge “Indian rights” and native way of life*

*Other ways that bridging could be achieved included:*

- *Finding areas of additional collaboration*
- *Having talking circles attended by all symposium participants*
- *More involvement in youth in talking circles and more generally*
- *Inviting people involved with manoomin and experts from fields that impact manoomin*
- *Emphasis on cultural learning, knowing and appreciation*
- *Involve in other non-Ojibwe indigenous communities who find nibi and manoomin sacred*
- *Having symposia, email or mail communication, and other events; perhaps at U of MN*
- *A presentation of Native American science & elder knowledge alongside European American science & knowledge*
- *Invite people from agencies working on wild rice and in favor of keeping it natural*

*A sample of the individual responses to this question include:*

The small group circles where we all got to go around and share our thoughts was vital. I think that going to the ricing camp was important to understand culture and how important nibi and manoomin is to the Anishinaabe people. This culture is more unknown and it was good to get more background on their lifestyles and beliefs.

The water ceremony was moving for some that were open to it. The talks provided by individuals made people take notice. There are others who look at nibi and manoomin as resources rather than relationships and that may take a higher power to open their receptors to this reality.

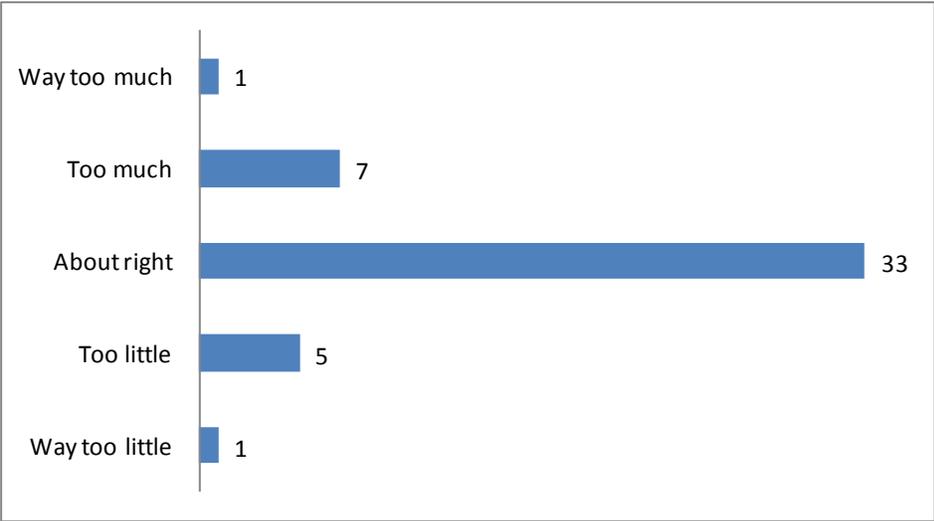
The sharing of the water ceremony was instrumental and showed the cultural importance that rests with the women who work to protect our water. Also the final round table of final statements.

In some ways, the current effort is to get non-Indians to understand Anishinaabe perspectives and I think these were presented in a good way that was both accessible and not hostile. I think that the youth presentations did a good job in this regard - people are more open when listening to youth than with adults. The youth projects were also excellent examples of how research and can be done in ways that does not conflict with Anishinaabe cultural beliefs.

I thought the talking circles were very well done. This was a great format, that participants respected and utilized. Lots of frank and honest sharing took place in the circle I was involved in.

These two cultural views cannot be bridged. Nibi and Manoomin are living beings with rights and until western science understands that no bridge can be built.

7. The amount of material covered at the symposium was:



**Number of respondents**

8. What would you have liked to have seen more of at the symposium? What would you have liked to have seen less of at the symposium?

*Respondents would have liked to see more:*

- *Specifics on tribal water management*
- *Diversity within the various parties, assuring accurate representation*
- *Involvement from companies involved with paddy rice and genetic work on wild rice*
- *Ojibwe people involved in the conference, especially from White Earth*
- *Student work*
- *Scientific research*
- *Indigenous knowledge*
- *Personnel from the U of M*
- *Engagement with controversy*
- *Water quality impacts to wild rice*
- *Interaction between the elders and scientific experts*
- *Youth participation and time for youth to present their research*
- *Discussion about research needs*
- *Grassroots organizing*
- *Involvement of local government units*
- *Time for dialogue between sessions*
- *Teachings of Anishinaabe worldview*
- *Indigenous Women having a stronger place of respect and voice*

*Respondents would have liked to see less:*

- *So many speakers or powerpoint presentations in a row – hard to keep concentrating*
- *Sticking so strictly to the schedule; there was little time for things to settle and it felt rushed*
- *Institutional presentations*

*A sample of the individual responses to this question include:*

I would have like to have seen more personnel from the U of M at the symposium. There are many other faculty as well as graduate students that could have been involved. This would increase the potential for bridging between the Native people and the U of M.

I found that having the youth present their work at the symposium was a positive addition that gives us hope for the future knowing that we have a new generation that will be the keepers of the nibi and manoomin. I would like to see more youth participation in the future. I can't identify anything that I would like to see less of at the symposium.

It would have been interesting to have a workshop to see if state and tribal reps could agree on some research needs as high priority topics to actively pursue accomplishing.

Audience-wise would be more local government units. Those local government people are the ones we need to reach out more to, because they are the ones we deal with more than any other gov't entities. Most don't understand state regulations regarding nibi and manoomin. I guess a little more law regarding environmental issues.

9. The past two symposia incorporated artwork such as this year's Fire & Water projection and sculpture. Do you feel this artwork was important in generating the proper tone for the gathering? What impact did it have on you?

*A vast majority of respondents felt that the artwork was important in generating the proper tone for the gathering. Comments included:*

Yes, art is representative of the people and how they express their connection to the land.

I think the artwork was a very appropriate way to show how important the manoomin as well as the fire & water are integrally important in the discussion of the symposium. In addition, providing a visual object to look at is a welcome relief to a symposium that is all auditory.

Yes, relates to earlier comment about bringing in more creative and cultural pieces to what are often conferences based on speaking and presentations. I would enjoy bringing in other artists too. So much of what we are working to know and achieve is likely achieved by means other than words.

Yes, the artwork had a positive impact on my experience. I felt that it gave a nice positive grounding to the event. I think it had a calming effect too. It also worked toward bridging because it was something new for everyone - it reminded me that we are all learning and that there are different ways to interpret both the art and the information being presented.

Personally I enjoyed that component; I think it helps prime one's thinking a bit to broaden their perspectives towards a familiar resource.

Yes! reminded me that we continued to be in a sacred space.

The sculpture was an interesting piece in the symposium. I thought it was very appropriate setting for what the symposium was about

*Other suggestions for art in the future included:*

- *Include a public discussion around it*
- *Have a juried art show about nibi and water to involve a variety of indigenous artists*
- *Place the art in a part of the room that is more frequented*
- *Include more artwork in the future*