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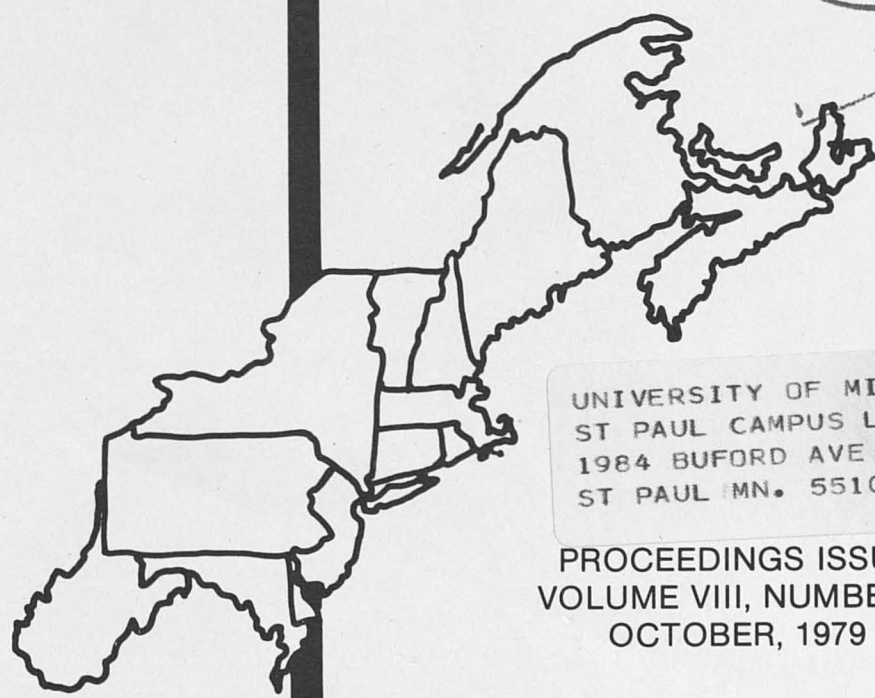
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Public Perceptions of Issues and Problems in
The Lake Champlain Basin Area: A Summary

Harold R. Capener,
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In the summer and fall of 1977 a survey team carried out a study of environmental issues and problems as perceived by high-school-age youth, selected adult key informants, and relevant organizational leaders. The study was completed in the spring of 1978 as part of a larger series of Level B studies sponsored by the New England River Basins Commission.

The major policy-oriented findings were as follows:

- 1) Of the variety of issues studied in depth, no single issue tends to dominate as a major critical area of concern.
- 2) On the issues studied in depth, the perceptions of the populations turned out to be very similar for New York and Vermont.
- 3) Virtually equal weight and ranking were given to the top two issues identified in the region--water pollution (23% of all mentions) and socio-economic (22% of all mentions).
- 4) The range and coverage of the issues and problems reveal an intuitive sense of the relationship between and among the issues--for example, the relation of energy to water pollution and recreation to land use.
- 5) The nature of the problems and issues is such that many lend themselves to a strategy of pin-pointing specific locations with cited specific recommendations.
- 6) A significant portion of the respondents in each of the three types of public groups sampled indicated a desire to be kept in touch and kept informed of the progress, recommendations, and final outcomes of the Level B study.