



LAKE WINNIPEG FOUNDATION

For Citizens

LWF is uniquely positioned to link science with action. Together, we are speaking up for the health of fresh water – and the future of Lake Winnipeg.

We encourage individuals to take action at home, at the cottage or within communities. We also work behind the scenes to bring the collective voice of our membership to the tables of decision-makers. Using the [Lake Winnipeg Health Plan](#) as a road map, we advocate governments for evidence-based solutions to manage phosphorus loading across the watershed.

Browse our policy submissions below to learn more about our recent advocacy efforts.



[Federal letter to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change in response to divestment from the Freshwater Action Plan in Budget 2022 - April 2022](#)

Together with the Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective, we express our disappointment in the unexpected divestment from regional freshwater-protection initiatives – including the Lake Winnipeg Basin Program, which provided critical resources for the protection of Lake Winnipeg from 2008 to 2022. Funding commitments in Budget 2022 fall short of promises made in the Liberal Party’s 2021 election platform and the Prime Minister’s mandate letter to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change. We share our concerns that the potential formation of a new federal water agency – still lacking clear purpose after two years of discussion – is diverting time and resources away from urgent phosphorus-reduction and Indigenous-engagement priorities within the Lake Winnipeg watershed.

[Federal joint report card, Five Things the Federal Government Must Do for Lake Winnipeg - March 2022](#)

Jointly released by LWF and the Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective on World Water Day, this report card reviews progress made over the last year on recommendations originally presented in December 2020. Under the paper’s five overarching recommendations, we assigned grades to 13 immediate actions – necessary first steps to improve the health of Lake Winnipeg – by reviewing publicly available documents and statements related to federal commitments for Lake Winnipeg.

[**Federal joint pre-budget submission - February 2022**](#)

Budget 2022 is an opportunity for Canada's government to deliver concrete results for Lake Winnipeg through evidence-based decision-making, while also recognizing Indigenous jurisdiction and affirming Indigenous rights. Together with the Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective, we are asking the government to demonstrate leadership by investing in four key funding priorities originally outlined in our December 2020 joint position paper, Five Things the Federal Government Must Do for Lake Winnipeg.

[**Provincial letter to new minister of Manitoba Environment, Climate and Parks on the need for accelerated phosphorus compliance in Winnipeg sewage treatment upgrades - January 2022**](#)

We congratulate the Honourable Jeff Wharton on his appointment as minister of the newly created department of Manitoba Environment, Climate and Parks. As a longtime resident of Winnipeg Beach, Minister Wharton knows firsthand the detrimental effects of algal blooms on Lake Winnipeg, and on the communities surrounding the lake. Our letter reiterates the urgency with which the provincial government must act to accelerate compliance with phosphorus limits at Winnipeg's North End Water Pollution Control Centre, by ensuring that phosphorus compliance is included within the scope of upgrade projects currently being considered for federal infrastructure funding.

[**Provincial letter advocating for accelerated phosphorus compliance in Winnipeg sewage treatment upgrades - December 2021**](#)

Along with the International Institute for Sustainable Development and the Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective, our letter to Premier Stefanson calls for accelerated phosphorus compliance at Winnipeg's North End Water Pollution Control Centre - and presents concrete action the Manitoba government can take to achieve this.

[**Federal policy brief, Realizing the Full Potential of Community-Based Monitoring - June 2021**](#)

Submitted to Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), our policy brief identifies how ECCC's regional water programs, including the Lake Winnipeg Basin Program, are perfectly positioned to link community concerns and federal policy priorities. We highlight how phosphorus data generated by the Lake Winnipeg Community-Based Monitoring Network (LWCBMN) can support regional decision-making and funding allocation, and urge any renewed federal program to explicitly recognize the value of LWCBMN data in order to effectively complete the data-to-impact cycle.

[**Federal submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development: Study on Freshwater - May 2021**](#)

The House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development invited LWF to submit a brief to inform its study on the role of the federal government in protecting and managing Canada's freshwater resources. Our submission highlights the importance of Environment and Climate Change Canada's existing regional water programs, and how community-based monitoring data can improve decision-making and resource allocation. We also recommend federal support for the establishment of an Indigenous-led water agency to affirm Indigenous jurisdiction and self-determination, and create space for Indigenous knowledge and law to guide water governance.

[**Federal submission on the establishment of a Canada Water Agency - March 2021**](#)

Environment and Climate Change Canada held a public consultation on the establishment of a new Canada Water Agency. Reiterating the recommendations made in our joint position paper, Five Things the Federal Government Must Do for Lake Winnipeg, our submission emphasizes the need to strengthen existing federal programs, laws and regulations for freshwater protection. We also propose that the new agency be Indigenous-led, creating opportunities to strengthen water governance by recognizing Indigenous jurisdiction and supporting Indigenous knowledge systems.

[**Provincial submission on proposed Nutrient Targets Regulation - February 2021**](#)

Manitoba Agriculture and Resource Development solicited public feedback on proposed nutrient targets for Lake Winnipeg under the Water Protection Act. Our submission highlights the need for evidence-based, ecologically meaningful targets which can be linked to concrete timelines, and integrated with new regulatory and incentive-based action, and recommends the proposed regulation be redrafted to achieve measurable results.

[**Civic submission on interim phosphorus removal for Winnipeg's north end sewage treatment plant - February 2021**](#)

Winnipeg's public service has completed testing and is ready to move forward with interim phosphorus removal at the North End Water Pollution Control Centre. Presenting to the Standing Policy Committee on Water and Waste, Riverbank Management and the Environment, we urge councillors to approve funding for the interim phosphorus solution, accelerate the implementation timeline and ensure the interim phosphorus removal is optimized in the design and construction of the new biosolids facility.

[**Federal joint position paper, Five Things the Federal Government Must Do for Lake Winnipeg - December 2020**](#)

Jointly created by LWF and the Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective, this position paper offers five recommendations for the federal government to achieve real impact for Lake Winnipeg by strengthening established programs, acting on robust evidence, enforcing existing laws and regulations, and following through on long-standing commitments.

[**Civic submission on Winnipeg biosolids treatment capacity - December 2020**](#)

Accelerating phosphorus reduction at the North End Water Pollution Control Centre is a recognized priority of Winnipeg's City Council and of its citizens - and phosphorus reduction requires biosolids capacity. Presenting to the Standing Policy Committee on Water and Waste, Riverbank Management and the Environment in response to a public service report on biosolids treatment capacity for the City of Winnipeg, we remind city council of its environmental responsibilities, and the need to reserve biosolids capacity for the effective implementation on interim phosphorus removal at the north end sewage treatment plant in order to protect Lake Winnipeg.

[**Provincial and Civic joint statement re: Interim Phosphorus Reduction and NEWPCC Upgrade Plan Update - October 2020**](#)

Along with the International Institute for Sustainable Development and the Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective, we responded to an updated plan concerning phosphorus reduction at Winnipeg's largest sewage treatment plant. Together, we stress the need for continued urgency from both governments to meet previous commitments to accelerate action, and identify two opportunities to reduce phosphorus levels in the plant's effluent well before long-term upgrades are slated to be complete.

[Provincial submission on Manitoba Water Management Strategy - August 2020](#)

Manitoba's Expert Advisory Council (EAC), established under the Climate and Green Plan Act, has been mandated by the Minister of Conservation and Climate to provide advice to inform a new provincial water management strategy. The EAC, in turn, sought advice from water stakeholders. Responding to an engagement document which proposed key issues, goals and performance indicators, our submission provides 14 recommendations including: increasing Indigenous representation at decision-making tables; prioritizing phosphorus reduction to address the eutrophication of Lake Winnipeg; and using community-based monitoring data to support provincial water decision-making.

[Provincial letter urging investment in Winnipeg sewage treatment upgrades - May 2020](#)

In response to increased investments in infrastructure through the Manitoba Restart Program, our letter to Premier Pallister advocates for the immediate prioritization of upgrades to Winnipeg's North End Water Pollution Control Centre.

[International submission on proposed nutrient targets for the Red River - February 2020](#)

The International Joint Commission (IJC) works to investigate, prevent and resolve transboundary water disputes, and recommend solutions to the federal governments of Canada and the United States. The IJC solicited feedback on proposed nutrient loading targets and concentration objectives for the Red River, which has implications for water quality in Lake Winnipeg. Our submission supports the proposed phosphorus objectives for the Red River, based on a robust body of research demonstrating that phosphorus drives the growth of harmful algae blooms in freshwater ecosystems. We do not support proposed nitrogen objectives, since reducing nitrogen loading will have no impact in reducing algae blooms in Lake Winnipeg.

[Provincial letter regarding Water Rights Regulation consultation - May 2019](#)

Following public consultation on the proposed Water Rights Regulation in early 2019, the Lake Winnipeg Foundation is calling for a transparent and collaborative process to ensure public input is meaningfully integrated into the revised regulation. Our letter to the Minister of Sustainable Development requests the publication of all public submissions received, alongside departmental analysis of the feedback. Similar letters were also submitted to Sustainable Development by our partners at Ducks Unlimited Canada, the International Institute for Sustainable Development and Keystone Agricultural Producers.

[Provincial submission on Water Rights Regulation - January 2019](#)

Manitoba Sustainable Development solicited feedback on proposed regulation governing drainage. Our submission reinforces that amendments to regulation must comply with the legislated requirement for no net loss of wetland benefits. Our recommended changes include: prohibiting drainage of Class 3, 4 and 5 wetlands; changes to mitigation and compensation schemes to ensure their effectiveness; the creation of a comprehensive provincial wetland inventory prior to the launch of the registration process; and ongoing auditing, monitoring and evaluation processes.

[Provincial Submission on Budget 2019 - December 2018](#)

In advance of Budget 2019, the Manitoba government solicited input on how provincial spending and revenue should be prioritized. Our submission highlights the government's responsibility for the sustainable management of provincial water resources, recommending investments in wetland protection, Winnipeg wastewater treatment, data sharing and aquatic invasive species prevention programs.

[Provincial submission on Bill 7 \(The Sustainable Watersheds Act\) - May 2018](#)

Bill 7 proposes to amend existing legislation to improve provincial watershed management. Our presentation to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs supports amendments to enable new drainage regulations that will increase administrative efficiency, improve enforcement and protect more threatened wetlands. LWF also supports amendments that enable evidence-based nutrient targets to be set throughout Manitoba. We identify several opportunities to strengthen Bill 7, by enabling efficient and cost-effective upgrades to improve sewage treatment in the City of Winnipeg, and ensuring new monitoring regulations are subject to public consultation.

[Provincial submission on the Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan - November 2017](#)

The provincial government solicited feedback on a proposed framework to support environmental protection, natural resource management and sustainable development that recognized water as one of its key pillars. Our submission recommends strengthening the proposed plan with the addition of measurable targets and timelines, and investments in strategic action such as wetland protection, and transparent monitoring and reporting systems.

[Provincial submission on Bill 24 \(The Red Tape Reduction and Government Efficiency Act\) - October 2017](#)

Bill 24 proposed amendments to Manitoba's Environment Act that would repeal legislated limitations to the hog industry's growth and the ban on winter spreading of manure. Presenting to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs, LWF expressed concern about the lack of evidence behind the proposed amendments, and recommended that no changes be made to the legislation governing Manitoba's hog industry until water-quality data is available to determine if current manure management practices are effective at keeping nutrients out of our lakes and rivers. Such data are necessary to determine how the industry may be expanding without increasing phosphorus loading to Manitoba's waterways.

[Provincial submission on Watershed Planning Initiatives - September 2017](#)

The Manitoba government solicited public feedback on three inter-related watershed planning initiatives. Our submission recommends regulated, enforced protection for Manitoba's remaining threatened wetlands, targeted investments in regions with reduced water retention capacity and/or high phosphorus loading, and program-specific monitoring to measure ecological outcomes.

[Provincial Submission on Livestock Manure and Mortalities Management Regulation - April 2017](#)

The Manitoba government solicited public input with respect to proposed amendments to existing regulation which dictates where, when and how livestock manure can be used as an agricultural fertilizer. Our submission notes a lack of information on the effectiveness of current and proposed regulatory measures to protect water quality. We recommend that no changes to regulation or associated legislation be made without first providing evidence that increased manure application will not result in a corresponding increase in phosphorus loading to Lake Winnipeg.

[Provincial Submission on Manitoba's Climate and Green Plan - March 2017](#)

The Manitoba government solicited public input on energy, land use and conservation measures as part of the development of a new Climate and Green Plan. Our submission focuses on protecting Manitoba's threatened wetlands through strong regulation and strict enforcement. Specifically, we are calling for new legislation that ensures no net loss of water retention capacity on the landscape by putting in place a drainage moratorium on seasonal (i.e., "Class 3") wetlands and strengthening protection of semi-permanent and permanent wetlands (i.e., "Classes 4 and 5").

[Federal Submission on the Next Agricultural Policy Framework - November 2016](#)

Agricultural policy frameworks outline policy and program priorities to be delivered by federal, provincial and territorial governments in order to encourage investment, adaptation and sustainable growth in Canada's agricultural sector. In July 2016, federal, provincial and territorial ministers of agriculture released the [Calgary Statement](#), which outlines key priority areas that will guide the development of the next agricultural policy framework. LWF's submission in response to this statement highlights the inextricable links between agriculture and water and the importance of protecting the ecosystems on which our prosperity depends.

[Provincial Submission on Manitoba Budget 2017 - November 2016](#)

In advance of Budget 2017, the Manitoba government solicited input on how provincial spending should be prioritized, emphasizing themes of efficiency, opportunities for growth and Northern economic development. Our submission highlights the need for an efficient, evidence-based approach to improving water quality and flood protection.

[Provincial Brief for Minister of Sustainable Development - July 2016](#)

Presented during our introductory meeting with Manitoba's newly elected Sustainable Development Minister Cathy Cox, this document identifies three opportunities within our eight-point Lake Winnipeg Health Plan for immediate, collaborative action to improve the health of our shared waters.

[Federal Submission on Federal Sustainable Development Strategy - June 2016](#)

The [Federal Sustainable Development Strategy](#) is an initiative of the department of Environment and Climate Change Canada, created to demonstrate federal leadership on climate change, provide priorities in response to the [United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals](#) and establish measurable targets. A draft of the strategy was released for public consultation in early 2016. Our submission outlines challenges and solutions related to fulfilling our international responsibility to address eutrophication in Lake Winnipeg, and offered recommendations for implementation strategies.

Get involved as a citizen of Lake Winnipeg's watershed

- Reach out to your MP, MLA, city or First Nation councillor, local reeve or other decision-makers. Share your concerns about the health of our lakes and rivers - and your recommendations for solutions.
- [Become a member](#) of LWF and add your voice to our growing network of change.
- Support our efforts! Participate in one of our [fundraising events](#) or [organize one of your own](#).

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