Manitoba’s government has launched public consultations on three new watershed planning initiatives. This is an opportunity for lake-lovers to speak up for our lakes and rivers and help shape provincial water policy.

Co-developed by the provincial departments of Sustainable Development and Agriculture, the three documents outline:

- Changes to drainage regulations
- An incentive program for farmers
- Changes to Manitoba’s conservation districts program

At LWF, we recognize that these proposed initiatives have the potential to provide a strong framework to improve water management – and the health of Lake Winnipeg – for the benefit of all Manitobans. We are offering several recommendations to further strengthen these important initiatives. You can read our full response [here](#).

To improve water management for the benefit of all Manitobans, a watershed-based policy framework must:

- Protect Manitoba’s remaining threatened wetlands through strong regulation, supported by effective and timely enforcement of illegal activities;
- Use precious public funds to achieve a net gain in ecological goods and services;
- Provide targeted investment in regions with reduced water-retention capacity and/or high phosphorus loading; and
- Demonstrate measurable environmental outcomes through tailored, program-specific monitoring that enhances existing provincial water-quality monitoring.

**How you can get involved**

Take part in the public consultation process. Let the government know that a strong framework to improve water management is crucial to address the challenges facing Lake Winnipeg.
Here's an example of a helpful comment:

“As a citizen of Manitoba – and as a voter – I care deeply about the health of Manitoba’s lakes. I expect strong provincial leadership in protecting our freshwater resources.

Increased water retention capacity on our land is crucial to address the challenges of eutrophication in Lake Winnipeg and other water bodies. The new policy framework should protect Manitoba’s threatened wetlands through strict regulation and improved enforcement.

I would also like to see targeted investment in areas with reduced water retention capacity and/or high phosphorus loading, to ensure we are spending public resources wisely and getting the maximum bang for our buck.

Lastly, I expect increased investment in monitoring programs to measure the outcomes of any new initiatives. This monitoring should go beyond measuring the number of projects or the area covered, and be designed specifically to measure program-specific reductions in phosphorus loading and flooding. All results should be shared publicly to ensure transparency and accountability.”

Remember to customize your comment as much as possible, and aim to be clear and concise with your message.

The deadline for feedback is Oct. 6.

Comments can be provided by emailing watershedconsult@gov.mb.ca. You can also mail written submissions to:

Box 11, 200 Saulteaux Crescent
Winnipeg, MB, R3J 3W3

Use your voice for positive change and join other lake-lovers in speaking up for fresh water!

Want to learn more about LWF’s position on the Manitoba government’s proposed watershed planning initiatives? Click here to read our provincial submission.

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