



**LAKE
WINNIPEG
FOUNDATION**

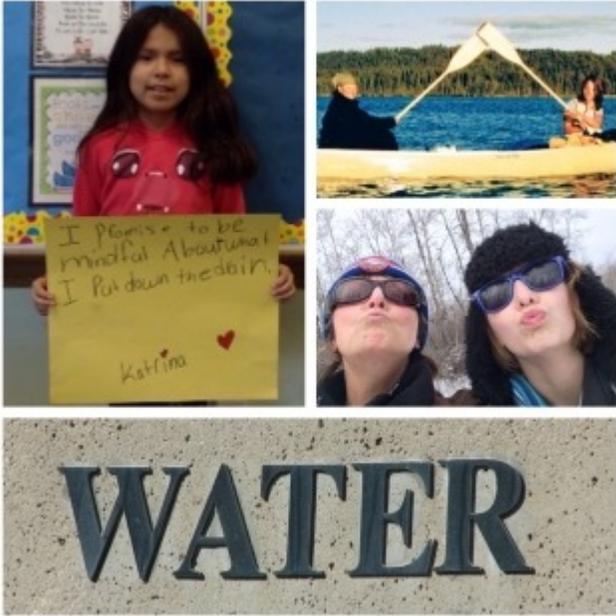
Canada Water Week 2015: Follow Your Water, Winnipeg

News

LWF

March 26, 2015

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March 16 to 20 was [Canada Water Week](#), an annual celebration of water from coast to coast to coast, held in advance of World Water Day on March 22. Inspired by this year's national theme, [Know Your H2O](#), LWF created an interactive, week-long challenge to highlight the connection between urban water and the health of Lake Winnipeg.

Follow Your Water, Winnipeg, kicked off last Monday morning where Winnipeg's Red and Assiniboine Rivers meet. We placed a sign with our distinctive LWF logo at Oodena Celebration Circle, then asked participants to find it and take an "LWFelfie" with it.

[Dana.LWFelfie.jpeg](#)



Canada's First Nations have used The Forks as a gathering place for the last 6,000 years - making it the perfect spot to launch a challenge about connection. This site was thematically appropriate in another way, too - the two major waterways that define Manitoba's largest city are primary vehicles by which algae-causing phosphorus makes its way to Lake Winnipeg. Ultimately, "urban water" becomes lake water. Its health is our shared responsibility.

[Water.1.JPG](#)



Tuesday's challenge was an online photo-identification game. We posted a close-up picture of Winnipeg's North End Water Pollution Control Centre, a facility that treats approximately two-thirds of the water from Winnipeg's taps and toilets, to remind people that improving urban wastewater treatment systems is a key part of the solution to the challenges facing Lake Winnipeg.

On Wednesday, our "LWFelfie" challenge returned. This time, we placed our sign at the entrance of the Manitoba Museum's Science Gallery, home to [Lake Winnipeg: Shared Solutions](#) – an amazing interactive exhibit that features a state-of-the-art computer simulator. LWF was one of the partners that helped create this exhibit, and researchers from LWF's Science Advisory Council played a key role in its development.

[Hans.Thater.1.jpg](#)



Our Day 3 challenge made the point that knowledge is power. Understanding how phosphorus is entering our watershed will allow us to make smart, science-based decisions that will have real, meaningful impact on nutrient loading to our lake.

[Jaymie.pic_.JPG](#)



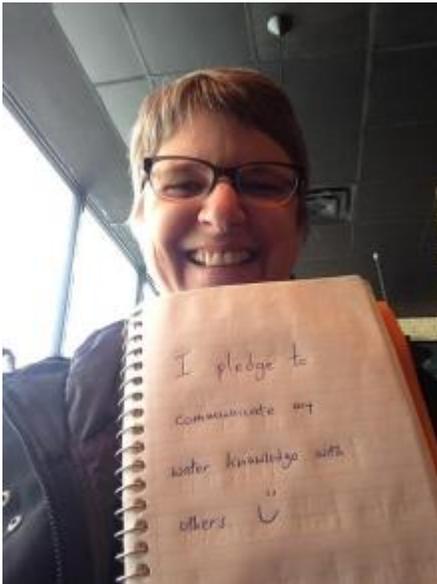
Thursday's challenge was all about fun! We asked participants to share photos or drawings of themselves enjoying some of the many recreational experiences provided to us by Lake Winnipeg and its surrounding watershed. We received so many amazing submissions: from snowshoeing and ice fishing to canoeing and sunset-watching. A special thank-you to the Grade 4 students who created beautiful works of art depicting themselves and their families playing at Grand Beach!

[Marisa art.jpg](#)



Our final Follow Your Water, Winnipeg challenge asked participants to make a personal pledge to help Lake Winnipeg. We wanted to hear about the specific actions people were taking in their own lives to protect our shared waters – and we weren't disappointed!

[Anita plegde.jpg](#)



We received a diversity of pledges: Purchasing phosphate-free soaps for the home. Cleaning up after pets. Using a rain barrel to collect water in the garden. Picking up trash at the beach. Being mindful of what goes down the drain. Talking about water stewardship with others.

That morning, LWF made a [pledge](#) of our own. Returning to The Forks where our Canada Water Week challenge begun, we renewed our commitment to restoring and protecting the health of Lake Winnipeg by signing the [Lake Friendly Accord](#) – becoming the first local ENGO to do so.

[LF Accord signing3.JPG](#)



The goal of the accord is to improve water quality by reducing nutrient loading to rivers and lakes. Surrounded by our partners and supporters, we publicly promised to continue building solutions by advancing our [Lake Winnipeg Health Plan](#), which identifies eight key actions to reduce phosphorus loading across Lake Winnipeg's watershed.

Action 8 of our health plan, [Taking Responsibility](#), recognizes that addressing the complex challenges facing Lake Winnipeg depends on each of us accepting responsibility for our water. We're all in this together. No matter who we are, how old we are or where in the watershed we live, we can make a difference.

[Aaron.pic2_.jpeg](#)



We had a great time celebrating Canada Water Week. Thanks so much to everyone who participated in Follow Your Water, Winnipeg. Thanks, too, to all the lake-lovers who shared our message online by using the hashtag #FollowYrH2O, retweeting us on Twitter and sharing our Facebook posts. Congratulations to our five daily winners, DJ, Cheryl, Zoe, Craig and Katrina (we hope you enjoy your prizes!), and a special shout-out to DJ, who won our World Water Day grand prize, a \$200 gift card to MEC.

It was truly inspiring to be able to interact with people who care as deeply as we do about protecting our shared waters. Together, we can achieve our shared vision: a clean, healthy Lake Winnipeg and watershed – now and for future generations.

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