



LAKE
WINNIPEG
FOUNDATION

Freshwater advocacy efforts - and how you can help

News

LWF

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As individuals and as a group, citizens have great power to influence change. Decision-makers take note when people speak up for water; individually and collectively, our voices matter. Using our voices is an effective tool to influence policy, encourage action and hold governments accountable.

Now is an important time for freshwater advocacy. LWF has been engaging with all levels of crown government to push for evidence-based solutions to reduce phosphorus loading across the watershed.

Here's a snapshot of what we've been up to - and how you can help us speak up for Lake Winnipeg.

At the federal level:

Together with the [Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective](#), we have released a [position paper which identifies five things the federal government must do for Lake Winnipeg](#).

We're urging federal departments to fulfill their jurisdictional responsibilities by acting on evidence and following through on long-standing commitments. Our paper is outcomes-focused: under each of our five recommendations, we've identified specific, concrete actions to improve the health of Lake Winnipeg that are achievable in less than five years.

We are now sharing our position paper with federal leaders and freshwater partners, and will continue to use it throughout 2021 and beyond as the foundation for our efforts to strengthen federal action for Lake Winnipeg.

How you can help: Participate in [public consultations currently underway on the establishment of a Canada Water Agency](#). Use our position paper to inform your submission, and remind federal decision-makers that Lake Winnipeg needs immediate attention. The consultation period ends on March 1, 2021.

At the provincial level:

The government of Manitoba has launched a [public consultation on proposed nutrient targets for Lake Winnipeg](#) under the Water Protection Act.

The proposed regulation would establish targets for the four major rivers which flow into Lake Winnipeg, as well as targets for the lake itself. This regulation is expected to be a component of a future provincial water management strategy, helping to guide activities, identify priorities and track progress.

LWF's Science Advisory Council is currently reviewing the draft regulation. Once this review is complete, we will craft a provincial submission, which we'll post on our website's ["Resources for Citizens"](#) page. **Update:** [our submission has now been posted.](#)

How you can help: Use our submission to inform your own response to the province's proposed nutrient targets regulation. The consultation period ends on Feb. 26, 2021.

At the civic level:

We continue to [advocate for accelerated phosphorus reduction at Winnipeg's North End Water Pollution Control Centre \(NEWPCC\)](#), the single largest point

source of phosphorus to Lake Winnipeg.

In February 2021, Winnipeg city councillors are expected to provide approval to proceed with interim phosphorus removal at the north end sewage treatment plant. In compliance with a 2019 city council motion, an interim phosphorus-reduction solution is to be operational within 14 months, i.e., by April 2022.

We are closely monitoring ongoing developments and will be sharing more information as we have it.

We are also championing the need for new biosolids facilities at the NEWPCC to be proactively designed and constructed to optimize interim phosphorus removal by addressing existing capacity constraints at the plant. This will enable the NEWPCC to meet its provincial phosphorus licence limit well before long-term plant upgrades are slated to be complete, and at a much-reduced cost.

As advisors to the NEWPCC upgrade process, we remain committed to ensuring transparency and accountability. The governments of Winnipeg and Manitoba have promised to accelerate phosphorus reduction at the NEWPCC. We intend to hold them to that promise.

How you can help: This is a dynamic file. Keep updated by checking our website and social media for the latest news. Then, contact your elected officials and remind them that you expect them to fulfil their commitment to focus on phosphorus at the NEWPCC.

It is our privilege to bring the collective voice of our members to the tables of decision-makers - but we can't do it alone. Citizen participation is essential to successful advocacy. Simply put, politicians pay attention to the issues that matter to voters in their constituencies. By getting involved, you are reminding them that Lake Winnipeg matters - and that you expect action.

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