

**RFCPP Project 13-00021
Whitefish Lake Walleye
Spawning Habitat
Enhancement**



Project Summary

Submitted by: Swan Valley Sport Fishing
Enhancement

Project Manager: Holly Urban
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Acknowledgements

As many of SVSFE's projects go, our initiatives would not be possible without the strong community support found here in the Swan River Valley. Special thanks to our:

- volunteers; Jeff & Nick Connolly, Brad Chambers, Stan Anderson, Rodney & Alex Machan, Holly & Trevor Urban, Darren Ross.
- Dedicated and licensed blasters; Aaron Goethe & Marty Thomas
- Supporters; William's Auto Electric and Parks & Fisheries Branch for equipment.

Also big thank you to Manitoba Water Stewardship Fisheries Branch for providing continued support and guidance on all of our projects and activities.

And lastly, the biggest recognition should be awarded to the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partner Program (RFCPP). The RFCPP was developed to support projects led by recreational fishing and angling groups aimed at improving the conservation of recreational fisheries habitat and has done exactly that by providing funds for SVSFE to meet their mandate of enhancing fish habitat.

Project Objectives

Whitefish Lake is one of the most popular fishing destinations in the area and ensuring and protecting this fishery for future generations is one of SVSFE's priorities. Through past studies, two main tributaries; North and Lagoon creek were identified as suitable spawning habitat for walleye and other species. Beavers create several barriers within the creeks on an annual basis and if unmanaged, this vital spawning habitat would be lost and inaccessible to fish. Through this project and future management, SVSFE is committed to protecting and maintaining this habitat.

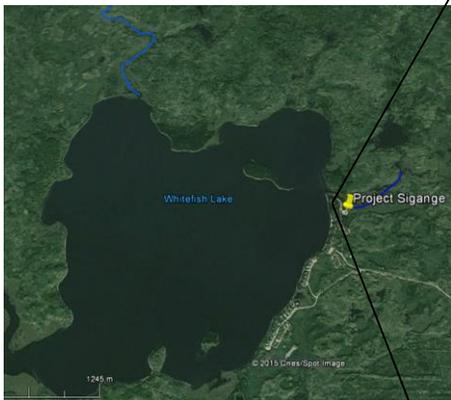
Objectives:

- Remove barriers (beaver dams) in the main tributaries of Whitefish Lake to make valuable spawning habitat available to fish.
- Increase and/ maintain walleye recruitment success
- Enhance and conserve the current walleye fishery and to maintain it for future generations
- Inform and educate the public on the role these tributaries play, the importance of habitat restoration for walleye populations and how they can respect and protect them for the future.

Project Summary

The project consisted of three main activities (Work Plan Activities); (1) installation of signage, (2) Project Site Layout, and (3) Enhance Access to Spawning Habitat.

Signage - the framework for the sign was installed in the fall of 2014, prior to freeze up. The sign was later installed in March 2015 at the most visible location in the lagoon creek marina.



Project Site

Layout -

was completed in the fall of 2014, with technicians locating, marking and prioritizing barriers for removal (see North and Lagoon Creek Barrier Inventory booklets for more details).

Project Summary

Enhance Access to Spawning Habitat - Prior to blasting, SVSFE volunteers created and cleared trails for access to barriers along both creeks in February & March. This year SVSFE was fortunate as snow depth and ice conditions were favourable.

On March 14th, volunteers and licenced blasters worked together and removed 30 barriers between the two tributaries. Project activities have enhanced at minimum, approximately 4 km of fish habitat for spawning. As stated before, SVSFE is committed to maintaining and enhancing the habitat these tributaries offer to the fishery at Whitefish Lake and will continue future management efforts.

