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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Whitefish Lake Institute Presents Whitefish Area Water Resource Report at Community Forum**

WHITEFISH, MT, March 14, 2016 – The Whitefish Lake Institute (WLI) today announced that it will host a Community Forum on Tuesday, March 22 at 6:00 PM at the O’Shaughnessy Center to explain the results of their *Whitefish Area Water Resources Report: A Status of the Whitefish Lake Watershed and Surrounding Area*.

#### **THE EVENT**

The public is invited to this special event to hear from the WLI researchers who wrote the 300+ page report detailing water quality in the Whitefish Lake Watershed. During the 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM social hour, students from science teacher, Eric Sawtelle’s Whitefish High School GIS class will present a poster session on current student projects related to water quality and environmental issues. Wine and dessert from Simple Chef Catering will be served during the social hour.

Mayor John Muhlfeld will provide introductory comments, followed by WLI executive director, Mike Koopal and WLI Science and Education Director, Lori Curtis, who will provide details of the research and the report. A Question and Answer session will follow the presentation. This Department of Natural Resources and Conservation funded report was developed for the City of Whitefish to support management recommendations regarding drinking water and recreation resources; to provide actionable measures for resource managers to protect or restore habitat; and to further contribute to the Environmental Protection Agency’s ongoing TMDL process.

#### **THE REPORT**

WLI processed and analyzed the data and information collected since 2007 through its core monitoring program and assimilated historical data from project partners, resulting in a complete water quality status report and a scientifically comprehensive foundation for long-term water quality management of the Whitefish Lake Watershed & Surrounding Area. Imperative for the ecological health of the Watershed this report provides baseline knowledge, identifies known and potential concerns, and offers recommendations to the conservation management organizations responsible for the health of the watershed.

Long-term conservation requires a baseline of scientific, cultural, and historical knowledge of an area; an understanding of its physical, biological, and chemical dynamics; and a program to monitor changes from the baseline. With these elements in place, adaptive management plans and education programs can be developed and implemented. The report was peer reviewed by scientists, educators, resource managers and policy makers prior to being finalized and was made available to all resource management entities and the general public to increase our collective understanding of the resource and to make more informed resource management decisions.

## About Whitefish Lake Institute

Founded in 2005, the Whitefish Lake Institute is a 501 (3)(c) non-profit organization committed to science, education, and community stewardship to protect and improve Whitefish Lake and Whitefish area water resources today, while providing a collective vision for tomorrow.

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