

550 East 1st Street #103
Whitefish, MT 59937

Voice: 406.862.4327
Fax: 406.862.0686

www.whitefishlake.org
info@whitefishlake.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Whitefish Lake Institute Releases Water Resources Report – Lake at “Tipping Point”

WHITEFISH, MT, November 16, 2015 – The Whitefish Lake Institute (WLI) today announced the release of its *Whitefish Area Water Resources Report: A Status of the Whitefish Lake Watershed and Surrounding Area*. The comprehensive, peer reviewed watershed assessment accomplishes three objectives: First, it summarizes natural and cultural historical records to describe the watershed; Second it analyzes WLI’s and resource management agencies’ data to provide a scientific water quality assessment; and lastly, it provides recommendations to address water quality issues through four specific areas: Restoration & Habitat Protection, Research, Education & Outreach, and Governmental Regulations & Policy.

“The report points to key time periods in Whitefish Lake’s history and how water quality and the lake’s food web have been affected. Ultimately, a number of research parameters indicate that Whitefish Lake is at a *tipping point* in water quality,” notes WLI Executive Director, Mike Koopal. “The data shows the lake near a trophic state transition suggesting it could be heading in the direction of poorer water quality which requires continued vigilance and a renewed stewardship ethic.” Like other lake-based communities, clean and healthy water is one of the chief assets driving economic demand in the Whitefish area. Community leaders, resource managers, and citizens have become increasingly aware of the long-term impacts of human development activities on the health of the watershed. It is clear that investing in and protecting our natural assets is not only good for people, wildlife, and natural resources, but it also makes financial sense.

The full report including supporting maps is available online at: <http://www.whitefishlake.org/download/index.php>. WLI plans to develop a community version of the report and to hold a community forum in Q1 of 2016 to discuss the results. The report was funded by a Department of Natural Resources & Conservation large watershed planning grant awarded to the City of Whitefish. Additional funds were provided by the Whitefish Community Foundation through its annual grants program and the Whitefish County Water District.

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.

Media Contact:

Lori Curtis, Science & Education Director
lori@whitefishlake.org
550 East 1st Street #103, Whitefish, MT 59937
Phone: 406.862.4327 ■ Fax: 406.862.0686

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