Water is one of our most valuable resources. Lakes and rivers provide drinking water and support tourism, fisheries, industry, agriculture and power generation. Many lakes offer excellent beaches and are home to a wide variety of fish and other aquatic life. Unfortunately, water quality in many lakes and rivers is deteriorating.

**Algal Blooms are Harmful**

Excess phosphorus and nitrogen (nutrients) are increasing the frequency and severity of algal blooms in many waterways. Algal blooms spoil drinking water, ruin beaches, reduce property values and damage fish and other aquatic life. Some algae produce toxins that can be dangerous to people, livestock and pets. Algal blooms also have a negative effect on our economy by decreasing tourism and over time, may reduce the productivity of commercial and recreational fisheries.

**Reduce Nutrients**

We all contribute nutrients to lakes and rivers through our daily activities. Nutrients come from wastewater, agriculture, golf courses and urban areas through storm water and runoff from yards. Land use changes such as the loss of wetlands and increased drainage are also causing nutrients to move more quickly from land to water. During floods, more nutrients also move quickly from land to rivers and lakes. Nutrients that run off land and into rivers and lakes also represent a lost resource that could otherwise be used to grow food.

A co-ordinated, sustained effort is needed to reduce nutrients in rivers and lakes. Because we all contribute nutrients through our daily activities, we all need to work together to reduce nutrients.

**Make the Commitment - Be Part of the Solution**

Therefore, as signatories to this Lake Friendly Accord, we commit to the shared goal of improving water quality by reducing nutrients in rivers and lakes through the engagement of all.

**Lake Friendly Accord Objectives**

- Reduce nutrients in waterways.
- Reduce the frequency and severity of algal blooms in waterways.
- Improve aquatic ecosystem health.
- Recycle and reuse nutrients with innovative technologies.
- Develop and share innovative ways to reduce nutrients with other stakeholders.
- Enhance environmental, community and economic benefits from water.
- Enhance collaboration between those working to reduce nutrient loading to waterways.
- Increase awareness of the need and ways to reduce nutrients in waterways.
Lake Winnipeg

While algal blooms occur in many waterways, Lake Winnipeg provides an important example of how nutrients can negatively impact water quality. Lake Winnipeg, the world’s 10th largest freshwater lake, plays a critical role in tourism, recreation, commercial and sport fisheries, and hydroelectric generation in Manitoba. The lake is home to abundant aquatic life including fish, invertebrates, and plants. Over 23,000 permanent residents live in 30 communities along the shores of Lake Winnipeg, including many First Nation and Métis communities. Lake Winnipeg’s world-class beaches attract many visitors to the province and offer many opportunities for swimming, paddling, sailing, and windsurfing on the east and west shores of the south basin. Each year, approximately 800 commercial fishers operate on Lake Winnipeg, catching a variety of species including world-class walleye, goldeye, sauger, whitefish, plus others. Sport anglers find many places to fish while enjoying the lake’s beauty.

Water quality is deteriorating in Lake Winnipeg. Nutrients have increased and the frequency and severity of algal blooms is increasing. The Lake Winnipeg watershed is large, stretching across two countries, four provinces and four states. Nutrients are contributed from many of our activities across the watershed. It is our collective responsibility to work together across the watershed to improve water quality in Lake Winnipeg and locally. Reducing nutrients will improve water quality not only for Lake Winnipeg but for all waterways in the watershed.

We acknowledge that significant efforts are already underway to reduce nutrients and protect water quality. We recognize that existing agreements and memorandums of understanding that guide inter-jurisdictional and collaborative efforts will continue to be supported and enhanced.

As a signatory to the Lake Friendly Accord, we/I ___________________________ commit to taking action to reduce nutrient loading and improve water quality. We/I commit to share our plans and progress on our action to meet the goals and objectives of the Lake Friendly Accord, on at least a yearly basis.

We/I agree to develop specific commitments to meet the goal and objectives of the Lake Friendly Accord. Our commitments will be included in an Annex to the Accord.

_________________________  ___________________________
(signature)               (date)

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