

Something Fishy on the Pembina River

A fisheries study has been completed on the Pembina River that will help local people make improvements for fish and fish habitat. The Pembina River system is a jewel in south-western Manitoba and an important sports fishery for the province. Pelican, Rock and Swan Lakes are part of the Pembina system and also provide a great recreation and fisheries destination. The study area included the larger tributaries of the Pembina River from the western headwaters in the Turtle Mountains to Swan Lake.

Tiger Hills, Turtle Mountain and Pembina Valley Conservation Districts collaborated to undertake the study with a \$30,000 grant from the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, “Healthy Waters Fund” and the Province of Manitoba through the “Fisheries Enhancement Initiative.” Conservation Districts all have a stake in the Pembina Watershed and have a mandate to work with landowners to ensure that our natural resources, including the Pembina River, are protected for future generations. The Provincial Department of Water Stewardship along with local municipalities provides base funding for Conservation Districts who have a mandate to deal with natural resource issues.

Fisheries Biologist John Donetz was contracted to do the study and come up with recommendations to make this a better fishery. Fish need healthy and productive habitat to live and thrive in and for the most part, the Pembina River provides that. The proof is in the fish stories that you hear from local and visiting fishers alike. Perch, pickerel and northern pike are the predominant sports fish in this system. John Donetz is a local Manitoba fisheries consultant that has a lot of experience in Manitoba streams having studied several in great detail. Part of his work puts him in the water tracking fish movements, measuring baseline water quality, riparian condition and fish habitat. Looking at the bugs in the water also tells John about the health of the system.

The study identified areas that need work to improve the river and lake ecosystems that we all need for a healthy and sustainable environment. All interested stakeholders can help direct this process by contacting and discussing the problems and options with your local Conservation District. Come out and learn more at 2 upcoming open houses. John Donetz and your Conservation District reps will be hosting open houses on Nov 7th at the Pilot Mound Friendship Center and Nov 8th at the Ninette Community Hall. The open houses will be from 3pm – 5pm and 7pm – 9pm with a presentation at 730pm – 830pm. Everyone is welcome and phone your local Conservation district for more information. To review the report visit <http://pvcd.ca> for the Upper Pembina River Watershed Fisheries & Riparian Area Study.