

# Summary of Activities

**Date:** November, 2016

**To:** Ian Kitch  
Manitoba Sustainable Development  
cc. Lloyd Rowe, Jonathon Stephens  
Don Stokotelny, ISFE  
Ken Kennedy, Child Lake  
Harvey Sawchuck, Singush Lake  
Duane Whyte, Glad/Wellman Lake  
Alvin & Linda Weibe, Wellman Lake Lodge  
Arch & Dawn Dowsett, Blue Lakes Resort

**From:** Holly Urban, Brock Koutecky &  
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Fishing Enhancement Technical Staff  
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**Subject:** 2016 Beautiful Lake Walleye Transfer

**Location:** Beautiful Lake, Duck Mountain Provincial Park, MB

**Summary:** Every year walleye fry are stocked in Beautiful Lake from a provincial hatchery (either the Whiteshell Hatchery & Swan Creek Hatchery) in efforts to rear them to sub adult and adult sizes. These fish are then captured using various methods (mainly live trap netting or electroshocking), and transferred to other recipient walleye lakes in the area. The Walleye Transfer Project consists of transferring young of the year (YOY), juvenile, sub-adult and adult walleye as this method of stocking returns higher survival rates and increases angler quality within recipient water bodies.

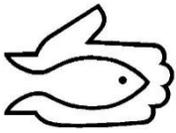
The 2016 Adult Walleye Transfer Project was conducted during the month of September (Sept 12 - 21). This marked the 7<sup>th</sup> year in which the project was funded through the Fisheries Enhancement Fund. 2016 catches were primarily 0+ walleye stocked in the spring of 2016, however approximately 75 fish captured were age 1+ (2015 stock), and about 3 fish were age 2+ (2014 stock). Resulting in 0.5% of total catch being walleye which over-wintered low dissolved oxygen level in 2015/2016 winter.

**Table 1: 2016 recipient lakes**

2016 BEAUTIFUL LAKE WALLEYE TRANSFER	
<u>Lake Stocked</u>	<u>Total Fish Transferred</u>
Wellman Lake	2,680
Spray Lake	868
Verral Lake	603
Child's Lake	3,086
Singush Lake	3,536
Marge Lake	1,530
Vermillion Reservoir	363
Beaver Lake	1,916
Cache Lake	602
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,184</b>



**Figure: Average sized walleye (0+)**



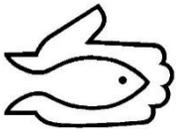
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The 2016 transfer was very efficient due to recommendations from the 2015 transfer and from past experiences; (1) *Keep stress to a minimum during transfer time* (2) *Continue with transfer project on an annual basis* (3) *Utilize or purchase fishing gear more specific for transfer* (4) *Continue stocking efforts on priority lakes and review this list annually with all stakeholders and* (5) *minimize handing/sampling of fish*

SVSFE is always striving to improve our efforts to ensure the survival of the fish and work efficiently in order to keep project costs to a minimum. In terms of trap-netting, we cannot accentuate enough how important it is to “play the wind” and watch the weather. Fishing the windy shore with trap-nets always increases walleye catch rates in Beautiful Lake significantly. 10,954 were captured through trap netting over 421.75 efforts hours (29.5 fish/hour). In terms of electrofishing, a total of 4,230 were captured via electrofishing over 6 nights for a total fishing effort of 10.58 hours (399.8 fish/hour). The best habitats for electrofishing were the north and west shores of the lake, hugging bulrush islands within the dense areas of submerged coon-tail. The continuation of this combined effort and partnerships will help sustain the success of future transfers.





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Over the past seven years, Swan Valley Sport Fishing Enhancement and Manitoba Sustainable Development - Fisheries Branch have developed an unique partnership with many user groups including Intermountain Sport Fishing Enhancement, various Cottage Owners Associations and school groups to make this project one of the most valuable projects to our fisheries. The totals from 2009 - 2016 display this success (below). In fact, 2016 marked a record year in terms of the walleye transfer where we captured and relocated over 15,000 walleye, overcoming the totals from the past 6 years. Anglers can see the results in their angling experience almost instantaneously and appreciate the projects initiative of "giving fish a helping hand".

**Beautiful Lake Walleye Transfer**

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total by Lake
Wellman Lake	48	522	222	153	144	360	1,005	2,680	5,134
Spray Lake	0	50	41	75	0	285	0	868	1,319
Verrall Lake	0	74	57	132	0	100	394	603	1,360
Child's Lake	230	0	0	0	0	368	1,000	3,086	4,684
Singush Lake	650	0	0	77	200	662	814	3,536	5,939
Line Lake	0	539	54	89	0	0	0	0	682
Chain Lake	0	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	40
Marge Lake	0	399	585	125	0	569	50	1,530	3,258
Vermillion Reservoir	0	20	300	200	324	200	195	363	1,602
Swan River	0	395	54	0	0	124	0	0	573
Beaver Lake	0	0	548	90	882	737	865	1,916	5,038
Cache Lake	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	602	602
West Blue Lake	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	50
Langan Lake	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	50
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>928</b>	<b>2,089</b>	<b>1,861</b>	<b>991</b>	<b>1,550</b>	<b>3,405</b>	<b>4,323</b>	<b>15,184</b>	<b>30,331</b>

Average size:	29cm	35cm	34.5cm	27.6cm	17.5cm	24.4 cm	32.2cm	17.0cm
TRAP METHOD	ES	TR	TR	TR	TR	TR & ES	TR & ES	TR & ES

A special thank you to all who were involved in this year's transfer; Fisheries Branch staff - Ian Kitch, Ken Kansas (retired), Jonathon Stephens, Lloyd Rowe, Trevor Iwankow, Parks Staff - Emil and Curtis, SVSFE volunteers - Doug Marzoff, Duane Whyte, Child's Lake Cottage Owners Association volunteers - Lou and Joyce Phaneuf, Glad/Wellman Lake Campers and Cottage Owners Association - and to the many others who supported this project in various ways.

Future suggestions for the Walleye Transfer Project include developing optimal stocking rates for recipient lakes. Achieving this will involve further investigations in stocking success of lakes which received walleye from Beautiful Lake plus further literary review. In addition partners should consider the idea of changing the frequency of the program to alternate years. This will allow both the forage and benthic community to bounce back after heavy stocking years and help ensure the long-term sustainability of the program.