

# Prince Albert Model Forest Association Inc.



## Prince Albert Model Forest Partners Support Innovative Lake Trout Research Technique



The partners of the Prince Albert Model Forest, including Parks Canada, Saskatchewan Environment and the Saskatchewan Research Council, are improving the quality of fish population assessments using an innovative new research method called *hydroacoustics*.

The hydroacoustics method is borrowed from species such as whales and dolphins that hear underwater by interpreting patterns in reflected sound. The research equipment emits sound pulses and then detects sound waves reflected from fish and other organisms in the water column. It is a way of gathering information about fish sizes, population numbers and positions in the water column without disturbing the fish. This, in combination with netting or live trapping, was used to evaluate lake trout populations at Crean Lake in Prince Albert National Park. It is one way to gain a more complete picture of lake trout populations, which are important indicators of overall ecosystem health.

Saskatchewan Environment contributed the hydroacoustic equipment and its operator for the research at Crean Lake this past summer. Funding from the Parks Canada Ecological Integrity Innovation Fund allowed the Prince Albert Model Forest to hire an Aboriginal student to gain experience in conducting hydroacoustic research. The Model Forest also sponsored public information meetings and assisted with the establishment of the Crean Lake Trout Working Group. This local citizen group will help guide the research effort and future lake trout restoration actions. The Model Forest partnership will share its expertise of the technology and the study results with anglers, commercial fishers, fisheries managers and researchers across the country.

The Model Forest and its partners are committed to sustainable forest management meeting the needs of current generations while ensuring healthy forests for the future.

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