



MINNESOTA DEER HUNTERS ASSOCIATION

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BUILDING OUR HUNTING & CONSERVATION LEGACY THROUGH HABITAT, EDUCATION & ADVOCACY.

(For immediate release)

MINNESOTA DEER HUNTERS ASSOCIATION TAKES STRONG STAND TO PROTECT MINNESOTA'S WILD DEER HERD AGAINST CWD

At its annual meeting on February 23 in Grand Rapids, Minnesota Deer Hunters Association (MDHA) members voted to support a number of critical legislative initiatives intended to help protect Minnesota's wild deer herd from chronic wasting disease (CWD).

"MDHA members recognize that CWD is the biggest threat to Minnesota's, and North America's, wild deer herd," said MDHA Executive Director, Craig Engwall. "MDHA, as Minnesota's leading deer organization, will do everything it can to protect Minnesota's deer and deer hunting tradition."

MDHA is calling on the Governor and Legislature to agree to support and implement a number of key initiatives this year to fight CWD, including:

- Requiring double fencing on all captive cervid farms
- Mandatory depopulation of all cervids on farms with a CWD-positive test
- Moratorium on any new cervid farms and a voluntary buyout of existing cervid farms
- Prohibition of interstate movement of both captive and wild cervids
- Prohibition of interstate movement of any captive cervid byproducts including blood and semen
- Elimination of antler point restrictions (APR) statewide
- Dedication of an additional \$0.50 of current deer license fees to wild deer health, making the total from each deer license \$1.00

Engwall added: "With the discovery of a single CWD-positive wild deer within a half-mile of a CWD-infected captive cervid farm in Crow Wing County as well as the 40+ wild deer testing CWD-positive in Southeast Minnesota, it is imperative that Minnesota act now to protect its wild deer herd. CWD threatens not only Minnesota's deer and deer hunting tradition, it threatens the nearly \$1.0 billion economic impact that deer hunting contributes to Minnesota."

May 8, 2019

Dear Representatives Hansen, Becker-Finn, Persell, Fischer and Nelson:

Senators Ingebrigtsen, Ruud, Eichorn, Johnson and Tomassoni:

Thank you for allowing me to testify this morning. My name is Nancy Gibson and I am the co-chair of the Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). I was one of the first citizens appointed by Governor Pawlenty in 2006 when he signed the bill to add citizens with a qualified natural resource background to the Commission. I was re-appointed by Governor Dayton. In addition, I was one of the leaders in the 1998 campaign to get the Constitutional Amendment passed dedicating 40% of the net proceeds from the Lottery to the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. It overwhelmingly passed with 76% voter support.

I am here representing the citizens signed below. We support House File 2032. The stand-alone bill maintains the long standing arduous process of LCCMR. This bill reflects the hard work of the Commission that reviews hundreds of proposals. It is not easy. Each project is first scrutinized by staff followed by Commissioners, both using established criteria. Last year, 273 projects were proposed. In open debate we narrowed our priorities to 110 projects. We spent five full days hearing those 110 proposals. After a robust open discussion on July 8, 2018, we tapered down our package to 68 statewide proposals. A required super majority approval vote occurred on December 4, 2018.

That package was approved by the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Division. Unfortunately, eighteen of those projects were eliminated by Senate file 2314 and six new projects were added. One of the projects is for general operations and improvements of the DNR State Parks and Recreation Areas. That \$10 million allocation clearly supplants the established DNR budget and violates the law. We recognize the legislative role in this process. However, a significant change of this magnitude without any open discussion is cause for great concern. Those additions avoided the scrutiny of the process which oversees budgets, staff and most importantly the outcomes.

We encourage participation from our State's natural resource experts, agencies, communities, non-profits and innovators to apply to this fund. Many of these smaller projects lack a team of lobbyists to get to the finish line. We want to encourage these statewide projects not erode the process. We are extremely fortunate to have this resource backed by the voters.

We were pleased to see the bond correction in early in this Legislative session. This allowed those debt service funds to be allocated within the parameters of LCCMR. House file 2032

restored funding to projects that were eliminated in the previous package that financed debt service related to appropriation bonds. In addition, the House bill took the initiative to allocate \$6.5 million in wastewater loans.

Loans are the operative word. The Constitutional Amendment that went into effect 19 years ago states in the second sentence, "Loans may be made of up to five percent of the principal of the fund for water system improvements as provided by law". Senate bills 2314 and 2201 "grant" \$11.9 million to wastewater projects from LCCMR appropriations. We strive to honor the Constitutional language.

There is no doubt that wastewater projects are critically important. LCCMR has appropriately spent \$6 million in the last 8 years for research and pollution prevention for wastewater issues. The Legislative bond correction in March added approximately \$59 million into GO bonds for wastewater projects. This is the traditional method of financing and also uses a well-established method prioritizing funds.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify and hope you will strongly consider restoring the LCCMR recommended projects from the past two years. In addition, the compliance to the Constitutional Amendment for wastewater "loans" reaffirms the voter intent.

We may be paid a small fee for our LCCMR work but the real satisfaction is participating in a rewarding and fair process. Our constituents are the waters, land and wildlife in Minnesota and the people who use them. We deeply appreciate being part of this strong investment in our natural resources.

Thank you,

Nancy Gibson, co-chair, LCCMR

Della Young, co-vice chair, LCCMR

Dr. William Faber, LCCMR Commission member

Nicole Kessler, LCCMR Commission member

Norm Moody, LCCMR Commission member

National Loon Center (non-profit 501c3)

Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund Bill



**ENVIRONMENT
AND NATURAL RESOURCES
TRUST FUND**

Pending



**BRAINERD
LAKES**

Chamber of Commerce

Operator & Maintenance



Central Regional Sustainable
Development Partnership

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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**US Army Corps
of Engineers[®]**

Lease-granting

Sustainable Design Strategies

Design Recommendation 4: Aim to Create a Zero Energy Building and Use Sustainable Building Design Guidelines and Regenerative Design Principles, and RFP Language that Supports These Goals.(Phase 1,2,3; Priority Level-Master plan online nationalooncenter.org

- Aim to create a zero energy building.
- Use Sustainable Building Guidelines.
- Use RFP language for building project for design and construction that clearly establishes targets.
- Select experienced professionals with demonstrated sustainable and regenerative design expertise.
- Plan on a RFP for consultants that indicates expertise in sustainable and regenerative design.



UMN Recommendation: 1. The building & landscape be created as a **teaching tool** for Minnesota's regional loon habitat and its protection 2. The building & landscape be **designed and constructed to highest green building standards** using the State of Minnesota's B3 Guidelines by qualified professionals 3. The **necessary investment be made** in developing a building and landscape in our state that will be a **national model!**



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Driven to DiscoverSM

Virajita Singh
 Senior Research Fellow/Adjunct Assistant Professor
 Design for Community Resilience - Center for Sustainable Building Research (CSBR) | www.csbr.umn.edu
 612 625-3447 | singh023@umn.edu | [@VirajitaSingh](https://twitter.com/VirajitaSingh)

HABITAT RESTORATION AREA: This demonstrates why we need to protect the shoreline with a boardwalk and be able to provide more environmentally friendly boat parking capability! Cross Lake shoreline/habitat damage where boats are currently mooring with steel cable. This damage can't be corrected without the protective boardwalk and docking components of the ENRTF funding for a defensive barrier to maintain mandatory usage for PUBLIC boat traffic to and from the Federal In-kind \$2.6M land lease (no land acquisition needed).



Our Shared Ecosystem: Humans and Wildlife: Loons need clean, fresh water to survive and thrive — and nobody is a better judge of the waters than the loons themselves. That's why we've created the National Loon Center: Freshwater Initiative, Boardwalk/Docks/Outdoor Exhibits and Habitat Restoration because the call of the loon is a call of change. Change we can help enact with interactive, hands-on, thought-provoking exhibits that won't just engage visitors, but will educate and inspire them.

Habitat RESTORATION needed:



This Habitat Restoration/Boardwalk/Docks is an innovative solution for the 130,000 current visitors that has both environmental and public education benefits.



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WIDSETH SMITH NOLTING Engineering Architecture Planning Environmental	
PROJECT NO. 18-001 PROJECT NAME: WETLAND CENTER AT THE MINNESOTA ZOO SHEET NO. C4.3	DATE: 08/15/2018 DRAWN BY: J. H. [unreadable] CHECKED BY: [unreadable]
CLIENT: THE MINNESOTA ZOO ADDRESS: 2400 CHASE AVENUE MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55425	SCALE: AS SHOWN DRAWING TYPE: SITE PLAN
PROJECT LOCATION: WETLAND CENTER AT THE MINNESOTA ZOO PROJECT DESCRIPTION: WETLAND RESTORATION AND BOARDWALK/DOCKS	
PROJECT NO. 18-001 PROJECT NAME: WETLAND CENTER AT THE MINNESOTA ZOO SHEET NO. C4.3	
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PROJECT: WETLAND CENTER AT THE MINNESOTA ZOO
 PROJECT DESCRIPTION: WETLAND RESTORATION AND BOARDWALK/DOCKS
 SHEET NO. C4.3
 SITE PLAN - WETLAND RESTORATION AND BOARDWALK/DOCKS

Docks Vs Shoreline Mooring of Boats

In the case of the National Loon Center....a **paradox** came to fore front:

Habitat Restoration, Reducing zebra mussel transport and loon mortality from boats

vs.

Meeting the current and future human needs.

UMN Study results: chooses a site that is already in town, on a lake, has 130,000 visitors annually and is a public use park. This site is likely preferable to disrupting another pristine or less developed site and adding more infrastructure to access the site. Federal Government (The Corps) supports this decision.

Challenge: How to refocus & educate existing boaters in order to restore the habitat, reduce erosion, AIS transport and loon mortality from boats and boat waves

Solution: Teach boaters to park on designated off-shore docks with outdoor exhibits for best environmental practices:

1. Habitat restoration outdoor exhibit with boardwalk for humans and docks for boats to block erosion
2. Boater outdoor exhibit on loon mortality from boat accidents and INCREASED NO WAKE ZONE in this area
3. Invasive Species outdoor exhibit at launch w/DNR (zebra mussel transport reduces when boats docks vs mooring on shoreline where mussel easily attach)
4. Get the Lead Out outdoor exhibit (at two current fishing piers to teach effects of lead poisoning)

The US ACE recreational area:

1. Corps public day use area and campground as 130,000 outdoor enthusiasts annually
2. 40-50 Boats are beached on shoreline with a steel cable for anchor on shoreline and wetland in summertime lakeside recreational and swimming park
3. Corps mission is recreation, environment and flood management
4. Public Lake front park and beach is one of the most popular in the state
5. Built in audience to teach high volume outdoor enthusiasts and boaters how to be good stewards of the environment
6. Current Shoreline and Wetland is eroded by boats and human foot traffic
7. Current Boat Launch is the busiest launch on the 9th largest body of water in MN
8. The Boat Launch can now accommodate 4 boats launching at one time

Land Acquisition:

1. The Federal Government (Corps) is granting the National Loon Center (NLC) a no-free lease In-KIND grant of \$2,600,000 to improve the recreational use in order to educate the public on environmental stewardship in a high use public park
2. No state dollars needed for land acquisition for Habitat Restoration and educational outdoor and indoor exhibits and demonstrations

Loons and Water Quality at this public recreational area:

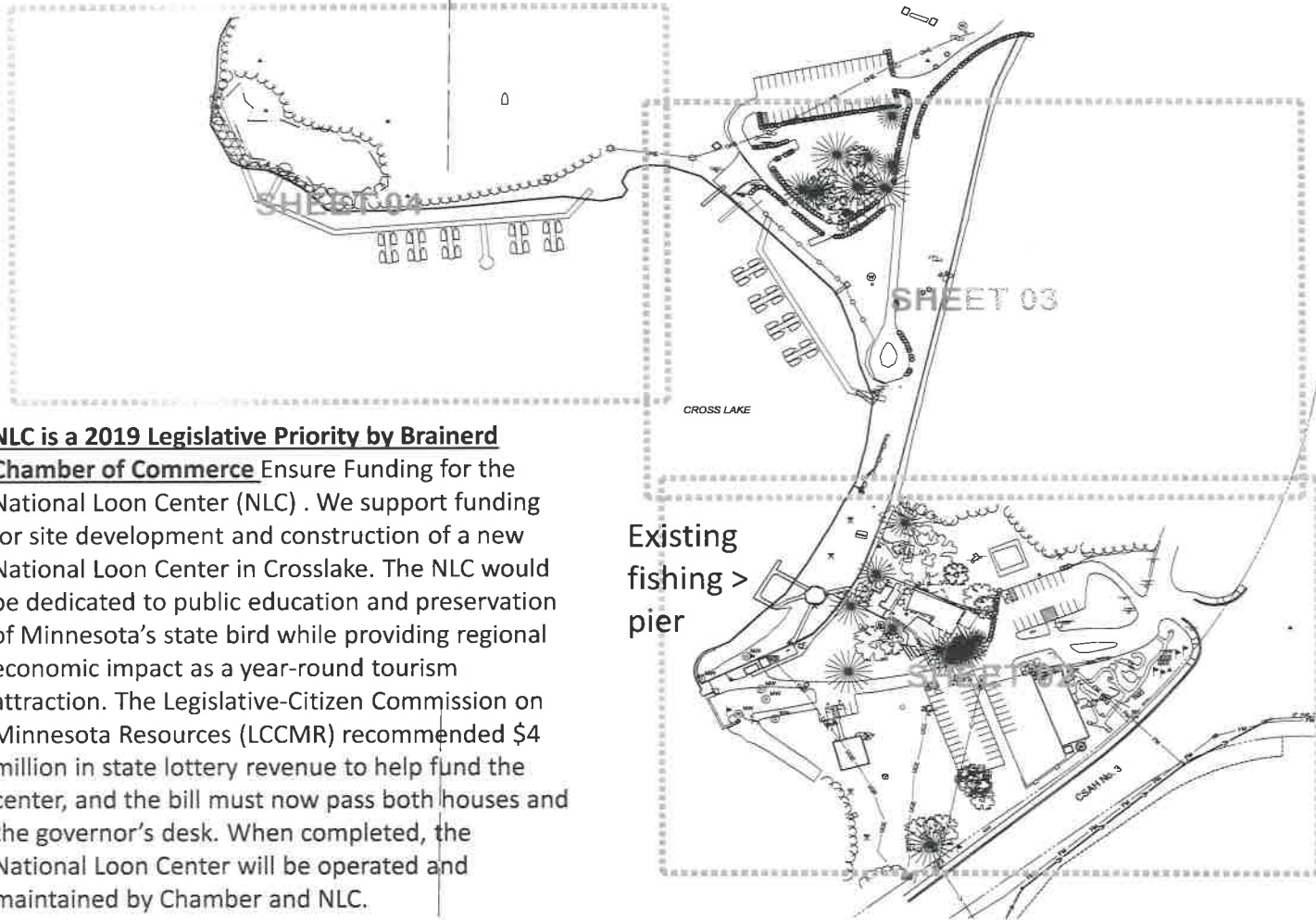
1. Family of Loons currently lives in the high traffic bay (we will increase support by Sherriff's department and WAYC for boater safety and buoy). Trauma is a major source of loon mortality. There were 63 loons diagnosed with traumatic injuries...Trauma is usually the result of being hit by boaters. The State of Vermont has the loon on the endangered species list, but by working with boaters and lake associations they are successfully restoring their loon population. **"Without question, a major reason for the successful comeback of loons in Vermont is that boaters and lakeshore owners have been made aware of what loons need, and they're eager to help,"** Hanson said. (source: <https://newportdispatch.com/2019/04/24/craftsbury-man-awarded-for-helping-save-the-common-loon-in-vermont/> re: boater education)
2. current Boat Launch is supported by DNR, Lake Associations (WAPOA)...but AIS research and volunteer Jon Kolstad : zebra mussels attach to boats on Beach a much fast rate than on boats on docks (**According to the US Geological, avian botulism from zebra mussels has killed over 100,000 birds in parts of the Great Lakes in 1999**)
3. This lake/chain has one of the largest rafting for migration in MN (**National Audubon Society predicts loons won't exists in MN by 2080 if we continue our current course**)
4. Current fishing piers: **lead poisoning is another leading cause of death in loons (sited by Carrol Henderson, retired MN DNR Non-game Wildlife Biologists and GET-THE-LEAD-OUT Campaign promoter, that mortality could be reduced by educational efforts to boaters)**
5. Current Steel cable of shoreline mooring of boats for decades has caused erosion and the Corps welcome NLC, ENRTF and Crow Wing CONSERVATION District, University of MN, Mn DNR and WAPAO help. **Loss of shoreline habitat involving transition to lakeshore lawns with riprap, and removal of emergent vegetation that might otherwise be used for loon nesting sites, have caused reduced loon habitat and concurrent declines in water quality.** These trends could be countered by advocacy and educational efforts for shoreline restoration involving local origin native plants, removal of invasive species, restoration of native emergent plants and planning docking systems for outdoor recreational enthusiasts and BOATS.

Fishing Boats & Pier Education- Get the Lead OUT

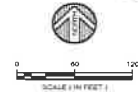
- **A conservation dilemma**
- In 2003 Minnesota's loon population was about 12,000 birds, and the numbers appear stable. There are, however, some potential threats to the long-term survival and status of loon populations. One of those is the threat posed by lead fishing sinkers and jigs.
- The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency did a study to examine loons for high mercury concentrations. The mercury study incidentally discovered that loons were dying from lead poisoning. Out of 101 dead loons that were analyzed, a total of seven died of lead poisoning and an equal number died from fish line entanglement. The fish line problem is fairly straightforward and can be reduced by urging anglers to avoid disposing of waste fish line in our lakes. The lead poisoning problem is more complex.
- Biologists have studied the effects of lead sinkers and jigs on water birds and birds of prey since the 1970s. In areas where loons breed, lead poisoning from sinkers or jigs may account for up to 50 percent of the dead adult loons found by researchers.
- For more information on how to "Get the Lead Out", check the Get the Lead Out page at Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

NLC is a 2019 Legislative Priority by Brainerd Chamber of Commerce Ensure Funding for the National Loon Center (NLC) . We support funding for site development and construction of a new National Loon Center in Crosslake. The NLC would be dedicated to public education and preservation of Minnesota's state bird while providing regional economic impact as a year-round tourism attraction. The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) recommended \$4 million in state lottery revenue to help fund the center, and the bill must now pass both houses and the governor's desk. When completed, the National Loon Center will be operated and maintained by Chamber and NLC.

Existing fishing > pier



SHEET 03



PRELIMINARY

NATIONAL LOON CENTER
THE NATIONAL LOON CENTER FOUNDATION
CROSSLAKE, MN

SITE PLAN - OVERALL

01

DATE	BY	REVISION

WIDSETH SMITH NOLTING
 Engineering | Architecture | Landscape Architecture

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Arizona has the Grand Canyon. Wyoming has Yellowstone. And Minnesota has the Boundary Waters. Although 200,000 people visit the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness each year, many Minnesotans have never had the opportunity to visit this spectacular wilderness area. This project aims to change this situation by connecting over 6,500 students (grades 6-12) to the Boundary Waters through classroom education and wilderness canoe experiences, targeting diverse and underserved students throughout Minnesota.

Program Components

Educational, classroom presentations about the Boundary Waters at schools across Minnesota, reaching at least 6,480 students. The lesson plan will not include materials related to copper-nickel sulfide mining.

Wilderness canoe experiences in the Boundary Waters for at least 250 students from across Minnesota.

Grant Request: \$450,000 over three years approved by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (lottery proceeds). The Minnesota Legislature needs to approve this grant request in the 2019 session.

Need: Younger people are not getting outdoors as much as previous generations. The average age of Boundary Waters users was 26 years old in 1969. By 2007, the average age had risen to 45.

Grant Applicant: Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness is a Minnesota 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that has worked for over 40 years to protect and connect people to the Boundary Waters.



Readers Write: Student wilderness trips, MNLARS, congressional gridlock

May 3, 2019 — 6:12pm

23-29 minutes

My life was transformed when, as a teenager, I had the opportunity to take a canoe trip into the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness through a program of Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness, a Minnesota nonprofit organization. At first, I was unfamiliar with the outdoors and had difficulty enjoying it. But then I was captivated by the beauty and solitude of the BWCA and the companionship of those on the journey with me.

The next year, I went on a longer canoe trip into the BWCA. I eventually canoed to the Arctic Circle, paddled the entire lengths of the Mississippi and Illinois rivers and participated in the Yukon River Quest.

Along the way, I challenged myself and persevered. I made lifelong friendships with people whom I never would have met in my St. Paul neighborhood. I recognized the possibilities in myself and in others. The lessons that I learned on that first trip to the BWCA have helped me years later in ways large and small.



I was elated when the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources recommended that the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness receive a state grant to expand the wilderness canoe trip program by another 250 students over three years and connect another 6,500 students to the BWCA through educational classroom programs. Because LCCMR projects are funded with the lottery and investment income, they do not use tax dollars and do not cause anyone's taxes to rise.

Too few kids get outdoors and have the opportunities that I have had. This grant would begin to change that. By providing access to the wilderness like the BWCA, we can create conditions for kids to thrive through leadership development, resilience and stewardship.

The Minnesota Legislature must approve the LCCMR recommendations. To my dismay, the Senate recently voted to strip this project to connect kids to the BWCA from the environmental bill, although the project remains in the House version of the bill. In an era of phone and computer screens, we need more programs like this, and the Senate's actions make no sense.

In the upcoming days, a House-Senate conference committee will try to reconcile the two versions of the environmental bill. As these elected officials engage in horse-trading, I hope they recognize that their actions affect real people. I urge them to follow the recommendations of the LCCMR and fund this project. Future generations of outdoor enthusiasts will thank them.

Lee Vue, St. Paul

CAR REGISTRATION

MNLARS transition was rough — but don't scrap it now that it works

I am one of the 187 deputy registrars in Minnesota, and I speak for myself and my office. I read that Gov. Tim Walz believes that MNLARS should be scrapped based on the findings of the Blue Ribbon Council and the opinion of the Republicans in the Legislature ("Car-registration system has been \$100M lemon; substitute may cost \$73M," May 2).

MNLARS did have a very problematic rollout. It has been a long, rough road for the state, the deputy registrars and the customer since July 2017. Last summer, there were hours of testimony before the Legislature relaying the problems, frustrations and the genuine anguish that we have all endured, but MNLARS has improved since then.

The public has been very patient. But I am afraid that the current suggestion that we scrap MNLARS may strain the patience of the taxpayer past a breaking point. MNLARS was extremely stressful to transition to and use because of myriad problems, but it has progressed in functionality tremendously. To throw out a \$100 million system after it now works fairly well would be extreme folly and an unconscionable disregard for the taxpayer's money. It has earned bad press, and rightfully so. But this would blacken the image of Minnesota's fiscal management for decades to come and would amount to political suicide for a number of politicians.

There will always be deputies and consumers who are quite vocal in their opinions about MNLARS, but I can tell you that my employees and the customers who are coming in find that the system works for us, and our work goes fairly smoothly. It does take longer to enter the data, but that is because the data entry area of work was shifted to the local deputies, whereas Driver and Vehicle Services had done that in the past. That is not due to a flaw in the system.

I would suggest that the governor and Legislature think again before taking the step of scrapping an investment of such magnitude.

Stephen Neiswanger, Austin, Minn.

CONGRESSIONAL GRIDLOCK

Work one day a week, and bash, blather and ingratiate on the others

After months of careful deliberation, I have come up with a potential solution to the gridlock that seems to have paralyzed Congress. We should have a law that requires the members of both the House and Senate to spend one full day per week passing laws and otherwise conducting the actual business of the legislative branch of the federal government. During the remaining six days, they would be free to run for president, verbally bash all members of the opposing party, blather on incessantly without saying much, ingratiate themselves to anyone with a checkbook and generally engage in the folly with which they presently occupy themselves. This may not be a perfect solution, but it would dramatically increase the

productivity of both the House and Senate. Unfortunately, to enact such a law, it would have to be approved by a majority vote of the members of both houses, which would require them to actually agree on something. Since that is highly unlikely, I guess this isn't such a great idea after all.

John Brennan, Plymouth

RENAMING SITES

Including 'Bdote' in Fort Snelling name is an opportunity for respect

We are writing in support of the Minnesota Historical Society and its ongoing acknowledgment of the full spectrum of Minnesota history at its Fort Snelling site. Including the traditional Dakota name, Bdote, at the Fort Snelling location is a mark of respect for some of the earliest inhabitants of the area and shows an appreciation of the broad and full history of our beautiful state. It also provides an opportunity for modern-day inclusivity, reminding us that Native American veterans serve in our country's armed services at a higher rate than any other group in the United States.

Lawrence and Barbara Sommer, Mendota Heights

WILLIAM BARR TESTIMONY

Grappling with the word 'suggest'

Many years have passed since I considered myself a young man. Throughout all those years, I don't believe I've ever seen a more embarrassing moment of congressional testimony as when Attorney General William Barr said he was grappling with the

word “suggest.” Several days have passed since that ignominious moment, and I’m guessing the word he is grappling with now is “integrity.”

Dale Jernberg, Minneapolis

Senator Carrie Ruud

95 University Avenue West
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3233
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: SF1691 and HF1729 -Modifying the Authority of the Lake Minnetonka Conservation District (LMCD)

Dear Senator Ruud:

I am writing to you as the ex-Mayor of Shorewood, past Board member of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, past president of the Minnesota Association of Watershed District, past years of experience as a former marina operator, and active lake user, and longtime steward of Lake Minnetonka **to encourage you and your fellow legislators to pass SF1691 and HF1729**. I have considerable experience working with the LMCD and believe the proposed legislation will eliminate unnecessary duplication and needless conflict with city zoning authority by creating a "bright line" between the LMCD's authority to regulate lake use and a city's authority to regulate land use.

A city's authority to regulate marinas and other businesses is well established in statute and case law. When regulating commercial activities, cities consider traffic, compatibility, public safety, and environmental protection. In the case of marinas, this often involves a complex process of negotiations and public hearings to issue zoning or conditional use permits (CUPs). Once issued, a zoning permit or CUP is a protected property right that is perpetual in nature and runs with the land. The LMCD has no legal standing to change a CUP or a city land use decision once issued.

In my tenure as a Mayor, the confusion caused by the LMCD's interference in the city's land use authority became problematic on several occasions. One which directly led to an unnecessary, long and expensive lawsuit. The LMCD has interpreted its enabling legislation to exert their authority on land – undermining a city's ability to effectively protect the interests of its community and protect its resources. This leads to mission creep and is an over step of authority.

I, and the public, see this as a confusing overlap of regulation and wasteful funding.

The proposed legislation will create the "bright line" that protects a city's ability to manage land and helps the LMCD to focus their resources to protect Lake Minnetonka.

Sincerely,
Woody Love
612.695.3001
Woody@WoodyLove.com



LAKE
MINNETONKA
ASSOCIATION

April 15, 2019

Dear Senator David Osmek
95 University Avenue West
Minnesota Senate Bldg, Room 2107
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Senator Osmek:

On behalf of the Lake Minnetonka Board (LMA) of Directors, I wish to thank you for your efforts to clarify the role of the Lake Minnetonka Conservation District (LMCD). Much has changed since the LMCD was created over 50 years ago and the proposed changes are well overdue.

The LMA supports efforts to reduce duplication, confusion and conflict in how Lake Minnetonka is managed. Currently, there are over 24 local, regional, or and state agencies directly involved in the management of the lake. This leads to confusing and often conflicting rules and programs.


As a former city councilperson, you clearly appreciate the ability, capacity, and importance for cities to address commercial land use zoning in their communities. However, at a recent meeting, LMCD Board members indicated the LMCD was somehow pivotal in helping cities regulate traffic, parking issues, and neighborhood concerns related to commercial marinas. This is absurd, cities deal with commercial zoning routinely – most with more parking and traffic issues than marinas generate.

The LMCD stated they need authority on dry land to assure consistency among all lake cities. However, the DNR shoreline rules and MCWD regulations already provide baseline shore land and water management standards that all cities on Lake Minnetonka are required to follow. The LMCD regulations above the ordinary high water level (OHW) are simply redundant and unnecessary.

The LMCD also says they need authority above the OHW to regulate boats in dry storage to control boat density and protect boater safety. This argument is confusing and spurious. The LMCD's own ordinance allows marinas to double the slips on land for each one removed from the water. There are over 62,000 launches from public accesses each year and over 6,000 private slips on the lake. The number of boats coming off dry storage at marinas make up less than 1% of the boats on the lake at any one time. The real boating safety issues on Lake Minnetonka are related to alcohol, lack of training, and carelessness. Dry storage simply does not create density or safety issues and make good sense environmentally.

Again, I appreciate your common sense leadership in helping to protect Lake Minnetonka.

Sincerely,



L. Eric Evenson, Executive Director
Lake Minnetonka Association

Sen. David Osmek

From: Mark Hanus <mahanus11@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2019 2:42 PM
To: Sen. David Osmek
Subject: SF 1691

Dear Senator David Osmek,

As a long term city official in several capacities, I am writing this in strong support of SF 1691.

There are already multitudes of agencies at many state and regional levels that govern activities on and around Lake Minnetonka. Some can even overrule local city land planning and zoning. For example, the Metropolitan Council dictates and overrules city's planning and zoning when they don't agree with city plans. Watersheds also can dictate to cities what they can and cannot do in many areas to include the shoreline. Cities are becoming less relevant each year as they have already lost a lot of the control they once had in planning their cities in accordance to their citizen's wishes. It is becoming extremely difficult and increasingly confusing for cities to wade through the myriad of regulatory agencies as they relate to land planning both near the lake and inland. The last thing cities need is to add more to the nearly untenable conditions as they are already facing.

We now have several layers of agencies that have direct control of Lake Minnetonka and it's shoreland through many ecological tools. These redundant controls only add to confusion to the system and lead to inefficiency and high costs. We don't need, nor do we want even more added.

The claim of the LMCD that they are doing cities a favor by helping with neighborhood friction or dislikes is crazy. No one knows the neighborhood issues better than the cities do. Cities are closer to neighborhood issues facing them everyday, and can deal with those far better and effectively than a regional body that would impose a "one size fits all" solution. The assumption of city powers and authority is less effective when usurped by those bodies, elected or appointed, further up the chain and further from the people.

The LMCD was originally granted its powers by assuming what would otherwise be DNR oversight. The DNR cannot cede powers to the LMCD that it doesn't have itself. The LMCD wrongly assumed it has these redundant powers. But this assumption by the LMCD must not be allowed to continue.

Sincerely,

Mark Hanus
Former Mound Mayor 8 years-2007-2014
Former Mound City Council 10 years-1995-2004
Former Mound Planning Commission 4 years-1991-1994



May 8, 2019

Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen, Chair
Senate Environment & Natural Resources Finance Committee
3207 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Rick Hansen, Chair
House Environment & Natural Resources Finance Division
407 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chairs and Members of the Conference Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Tourism Growth Coalition, the Minnesota Association of Conventions and Visitors Bureaus, and the Community of Minnesota Resorts, organizations representing Minnesota's tourism, resort and hospitality industry, we urge to you provide full funding to Explore Minnesota Tourism (EMT) at their existing budget levels, plus \$2 million in one-time funding for the EMT New Events Grant program.

The EMT New Events Grant program has successfully brought small, midsize and large events to communities across the state of Minnesota since the program was first funded in 2016. This successful and popular New Events Grant program shines a spotlight on Minnesota and attracts first-time visitors who often return for both tourism and business purposes.

The New Events Grant program is designed to generate economic impact and increase media awareness of the state as an event destination by securing or creating new events in communities across the state. Eligible events must be new to Minnesota and open to the public. Applicants must demonstrate support from a local tourism organization, have available lodging capacity, and agree to leverage other funding sources.

Since the program began, grants have been provided to communities and organizations from Rochester to Roseville, from Otter Tail County to Winona, from Lake of the Woods to Albert Lea, and from Cook County to Duluth to Minneapolis and more! These grants to directly to the attraction and operation of new events to the state of Minnesota.

Thank you for your past support of Explore Minnesota Tourism and we ask your support of full base budget funding plus funding for the New Events Grant program.

Sincerely,

Anna Tanski, President
MN Tourism Growth Coalition

Dee Schutte, Executive Director
MN Association of Convention
and Visitors Bureaus

Tom Marnick, President
Community of MN Resorts



May 6, 2019

The Honorable Rick Hansen
407 State Office Building
St Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support HF 2220, Minnesota Outdoor Recreation Office

Dear Representative Hansen:

On behalf of Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (ORR), and its members, we are writing to ask that you support the inclusion of language from HF 2220 in the final omnibus package to create a Minnesota Outdoor Recreation Office.

Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (ORR) -- the nation's leading coalition of U.S. outdoor recreation trade associations -- encourages the Environment and Natural Resources Conference Committee to seize this opportunity to strengthen the coordination, expansion and investment in outdoor recreation. Outdoor recreation in Minnesota is an economic powerhouse which generates nearly \$16.7 billion in consumer spending, contributes \$1.4 billion in state and local tax revenue, and directly supports 140,000 Minnesotan jobs.

The office will provide a focal point for all of Minnesota to engage a new and diverse generation of Minnesotans with the outdoors. It also will focus on growing and supporting local communities and local economies through recreation, while utilizing the expertise of all state agencies and resources.

Supporting the creation of a Minnesota Office of Outdoor Recreation represents a sincere commitment by state government to strengthen the outdoor economy and efficiently deploy the state's resources to expand the well-being of our children and communities. A recreation office will help businesses, nonprofits and conservation agencies utilize state programs, services, and incentives while facilitating partnerships among them to serve rural, urban and suburban communities.

We appreciate your recognition of the economic and social importance of outdoor recreation and ask that you to ensure the necessary language to create and sufficiently fund this office is included in the final omnibus package that is developed in conference.

Sincerely,

Alumacraft Boat Company
America Outdoors Association
American Sportfishing Association
The Corps Network
Crestliner, Inc.

Cummins, Inc.
Imperial Camper
Land 'N' Sea Distributing, Inc.
Lund Boats
Marine Retailers Association of the Americas
Montara Boats
National Association of RV Parks & Campgrounds
National Marine Manufacturers Association
PeopleForBikes
Rapala USA
River Valley Companies
RV Dealers Association
RV Industry Association
Snowsports Industries America
Specialty Equipment Market Association
Twin Cities Metro RV Dealers Association
USA Waterski and Wake Sports Foundation
Vista Outdoor
Water Gremlin Company
Willey's Marine
Winnebago Industries



Minnesota Center for
Environmental Advocacy

To: Senate & House Environment & Natural Resources Conferees
(Senators Ingebrigtsen, Ruud, Eichorn, Johnson, Tomassoni; Representatives
Hansen, Fischer, Persell, Becker-Finn, Nelson)
From: Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
Re: SF 2314 - Environment & Natural Resources Conference Committee
Date: May 7, 2019

As members of the Environment & Natural Resources Conference Committee, MCEA thanks you for your work to improve and protect Minnesota's water, air, and land. However, we do have significant concerns about the Senate version of SF 2314 (see S2314-3 of the side-by-side comparison document).

The Senate's overall budget target of -\$57 million in Article 1 forced deep cuts, shifts to dedicated funds, and other unsustainable budgetary sleights of hand. Article 2 disregards LCCMR approved projects and violates the Minnesota Constitution by spending money for purposes that have previously been funded by other traditional means. The policy provisions in Article 3 include sections that roll back protections of Minnesota's environment. For example, Article 3 contains provisions that give a 16-year free pass for industrial polluters, and limits the ability to extend public input periods when needed.

This memo outlines MCEA's concerns and suggests priority items that need to be removed from any final budget bill. We urge you to keep these in mind as you enter into final negotiations. Again, thank you for your work to improve and protect our state's natural resources.

Article 1: Makes deep and unnecessary general fund cuts to needed environment and natural resources programs

The Senate version of SF 2314 makes deep, disproportionate, and unnecessary cuts to Minnesota's environment and natural resource programs and agencies. The overall budget target of -\$57 million is inappropriate in a time of budgetary surplus. SF 2314 attempts to blunt the impact of this severe budget target through shifts to other funds (including the Environment Fund and the Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund) which puts these other funds on shaky ground. In particular, programs cut include St. Louis River Remedial Action, Environmental Impact Study of Nitrate Pollution in Southeastern Minnesota, Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Grants, Wetland Conservation Act Enforcement, and Drainage Work Group Technical Assistance. A particularly important oversight is the lack of any General Fund support for Soil and Water Conservation Districts who provide critical boots-on-the-ground conservation work.

Using the law and science to defend Minnesota's environment.

1919 University Avenue West, Suite 515, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104

651.223.5969 | info@mncenter.org | mncenter.org

Article 2: Violates the Minnesota Constitution

The whole of Article 2 should not be included in SF 2314. Traditionally, the LCCMR bill has traveled in its own bill. By including the LCCMR bill in SF 2314, the Senate made budget negotiations with the House more challenging. It also allows unconstitutional shifts of spending from traditional sources to the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF). Indeed, there are at least two clearly unconstitutional provisions.

- Section 2, Subdivisions 11(a) and 12(b) provide \$10.476 million funded through the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund “for grants for wastewater treatment projects under the water infrastructure funding program.” The appropriation for wastewater treatment violates the constitution because the Legislature would appropriate the money in the form of grants, rather than loans, as the Minnesota House currently does.
- Subdivision 9(l), a \$10 million appropriation for “state park and recreation area operations and improvements” violates the constitution because the authorizing statute for the ENRTF states that it “may not be used as a substitute for traditional sources of funding environmental and natural resources activities...” *Minn. Stat. § 116P.03 (2017)*. In addition, Subd. 9(l) also exempts this appropriation from reporting requirements and approval of a work plan by the LCCMR.

Lastly, this section deletes 18 projects vetted and recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). The LCCMR was established for the purpose of making recommendations on spending from the ENRTF – 2,200 of which have been approved by the Legislature. The wholesale unilateral changes made to the LCCMR recommendations would have strong negative impacts on the process. Future grant applicants may decide to bypass the LCCMR, and it may become more difficult to find members willing to serve on a committee that is ignored by the Legislature.

Article 3: Statutory Changes

MCEA has long been concerned with the trend of combining a large number of relevant policy provisions in the budget bills. There are policy committees charged with doing the work of creating policy bills, and there is an existing Environment and Natural Resources policy omnibus bill (SF 835) that is the appropriate vehicle for policy changes.

The statutory changes include a number of provisions that are noncontroversial, including land sales, game and fish regulation changes that have been worked on with the DNR, and other sections that have emerged through extensive stakeholder processes (e.g. the WRAPS/TMDL reforms in sections 92-106). However, it is also important to note that a significant portion of Article 3 traveled originally as SF 750, the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce’s preferred permitting rollback bill.

Sections of the Senate version of SF 2314 that MCEA supports

- Section 47 (Neonicotinoid use in WMAs)
- Section 126 (TCE ban)
- Section 154 (In-lieu fee for wetland replacement)

MCEA appreciated the Senate's inclusion of Sections 47 and 126 during the floor debate on SF 2314, and we hope that strong language on each can be negotiated between the House and Senate when the bills are conferenced.

Noncontroversial sections or sections that MCEA does not have a position on

These are sections that MCEA is neutral on or are outside of our core mission and that we have not worked on. Other organizations or state agencies may support or oppose these sections, their inclusion here is not an endorsement.

- Sections 1-12 (Deer farm management)
- Section 13 (State Land Boundaries)
- Sections 16-23 (ATV/OHV regulations)
- Sections 24-27 (AIS regulations)
- Section 28-30 (Trails)
- Sections 32-33 (Watercraft registration)
- Section 34 (Snow removal)
- Section 35 (Land valuation)
- Sections 36-37 (Permanent school fund)
- Sections 39-40 (Land transfers)
- Sections 41-46 (Fishing and Hunting regulations)
- Sections 48-63 (Fishing and Hunting regulations)
- Sections 64-65 (Technical changes to SWCDs)
- Sections 67-80 (WRAPS/ TMDL changes)
- Sections 86-89 (Well interference contested case hearings)
- Sections 90-91 (electronic submittals)
- Sections 92-106 (WRAPS/TMDLs changes)
- Section 117 (Solar on landfills)
- Section 118-119 (TCE stakeholder response)
- Section 125 (Truck washes not open-air swine basins)
- Section 127-128 (Loan changes)
- Section 130 (Pipeline definition)
- Sections 131-132 (Land sales)
- Section 133 (Sunset extension)
- Section 134 (Silica sand model ordinance)
- Section 136-149 (Land sales)
- Section 150 (Storm water rule applicability)

Section 151 (Fish hatcheries)
Section 152 (Antler point restrictions)
Section 157 (Aggregate Reclamation Guidance)
Section 158 (Solar on Closed Landfills)
Section 159-160 (Hunting and Fishing Education)
Section 161 (Electronic submittals)
Section 162 (Wright County inspections)
Section 163-165 (Revisor instructions and repealers)

Sections that we oppose, but are not core priorities for MCEA

We recognize that in any negotiation, there will be provisions that may not be desirable but that can be made workable or be accepted as part of a global agreement. The sections below are sections that MCEA opposes, or that partner organizations have opposed. Some are also sections that agency staff have testified in opposition to.

Section 14: Roads defined for endangered species takings
Section 31: State Park free days
Section 66: Limits on Lake Minnetonka Management authority
Section 82: One-sided economic analysis of groundwater use
Section 109: Unlined temporary sugar beet storage
Section 110: External Peer Review of Water Quality Standards
Section 120: Limit of 3 MPCA assistant commissioners
Section 121: 3% limit on MPCA grant administration
Section 124: Unadopted rules may not be enforced
Section 135: Sand Dunes special management restrictions
Section 153: Reducing DNR, BWSR and PCA appropriations for unfilled positions
Section 156: Hill Annex State Park required to operate at current levels until 2021

MCEA High Priority Provisions to Oppose

The following sections of the Senate version of SF 2314 are strongly opposed by MCEA and we believe must be removed (or significantly changed) in the final environment and natural resources budget.

Sections 15, 153: Wild Rice Stewardship Council

The Wild Rice Stewardship Council was a recommendation of the final report of Governor Dayton's Task Force on Wild Rice. However, Section 15 does not follow the membership recommendations of the Governor's Task Force that representatives of all 11 federally recognized tribes, bands, and native nations be included in the Council. The issue of wild rice is an appropriate subject for government-to-government consultation between the State of Minnesota and sovereign native governments, and the choice to

unilaterally include the Wild Rice Stewardship Council in SF 2314 would undercut this consultation. Until such consultation is completed, the Legislature should not act.

Section 38: Brines and nonfuel gases included in state mineral leasing program

The changes in Section 38 were introduced by amendment in the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee. Section 38 has not been heard by either the House or Senate Environment and Natural Resources Policy committees and has not received a full hearing with opportunities for public comment with advanced notice. Brines are a source of lithium, boron, bromine and other commodities, and no commercially viable sources have yet been discovered in Minnesota. Helium is extracted in a similar fashion to natural gas. In addition, since a significant portion of Minnesota property has split estates (where a private party owns the surface and the State of Minnesota owns the mineral rights) the Legislature should know what potential exists for private property to be affected by new mineral leasing. The Minnesota DNR website identifies about half the land area in the rest of the state as possible areas of interest. Much of this area is not currently considered as an area of interest for mineral leasing. We should not make this significant change to our mineral leasing without significant public input and full understanding of the impacts.

Section 81: Retroactive transfer of invalid water permit

Section 81 is a broad change to Statute to retroactively address the complaint of a single landowner. Section 81 prevents DNR from modifying the permit to account for evolving groundwater sustainability issues. Section 81 also prevents DNR from evaluating the full water use permit at the time of sale instead limiting it to only consider compliance with “the total volume allowed”. Water appropriation permits often contain additional permit conditions beyond the expiration date and the total volume appropriated.

Section 84: Groundwater Management gag rule

Section 84’s limitation of public information about Groundwater Management Areas to only information about public hearings and responses to direct public and media inquiries is vague and against the interest of the community and regulated parties. A workable groundwater management plan will only be possible with the early and full participation of the community and stakeholders and transparency from state agencies.

Section 85: Unsustainable water use allowed without scientific basis

Section 85 aims to write into statute a definition of sustainability that is not supported by science. This provision is less protective than what is recommended by DNR experts based on studies of the impacts of groundwater use on streams. It also is a one size-fits-all approach that doesn’t account for differences from one water body to another.

Sections 107, 113, 114, 115, 123: Fee increases require additional approval

User fees are a necessary component of funding state permit programs. The MPCA has not systematically increased water permit fees for 27 years. These fees cover the cost of reviewing applications, certifying laboratories, and certifying personnel for wastewater treatment and water supply systems. There is no need for additional approval.

Section 108: Pollution-prone inter-basin water transfer

Section 108 allows water transfer from polluted water bodies to cleaner ones without a permit. Water transfers risk moving pollution and aquatic invasive species from one body of water to another, which is why permits may be needed. Minnesota should ensure that permits remain an option when water transfers threaten water quality.

Section 111: One of 87 counties can veto a stronger statewide water quality standard

Section 111 transfers responsibility for approving water quality standards from the MPCA, which has federally delegated authority to implement the Clean Water Act, to all 87 county boards in Minnesota -- a scientific and technical task that county boards are not equipped to do. Section 111 allows rollbacks of water quality standards to proceed without such approval, but stronger standards could be vetoed by one county board.

Section 112: 16-year free pass from water quality standards for industrial polluters

Section 112 gives industrial polluters a blanket 16-year exemption from complying with stronger water quality standards following wastewater treatment upgrades. This violates the federal Clean Water Act and would result in regulatory uncertainty as legal challenges are likely.

Section 122: Prevents enforcement of National & State Air Quality Standards

Section 122 prevents the MPCA from enforcing a national or state ambient air quality standard as an applicable standard unless the permit is a temporary permit. This violates the federal Clean Air Act. Permit holders should not be exempted for air quality standards, regardless of whether the source is temporary or stationary. Section 122 also includes a provision that requires the use of units of measurement that creates inconsistencies with federal requirements.

Section 129: Limited public participation in environmental review

Section 129 restricts the ability of the public to participate and comment on environmental review, a report on the environmental impacts of projects. Responsible agencies and local governments should be able to extend public input periods when facts justify. Project proposers should not be the deciders to grant an extension. Short extensions of comment periods are uncommon. For example, in 2018, local farmers in the midst of harvest season were granted a 15-day extension of a comment period. Agricultural industry groups challenged the extension in court and lost.



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Summary of Minnesota DNR Wolf Management Plan February 2001

Under the direction of the wolf management bill passed by the 2000 Minnesota Legislature and signed into law by Governor Ventura, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, in consultation with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, developed a wolf management plan with the goal of **ensuring the long-term survival of the wolf in Minnesota while resolving conflicts between wolves and humans.**

Management Zones. Minnesota is divided into Zone A and Zone B. Zone A is identical to Wolf Management Zones 1-4 in the 1992 *Federal Recovery Plan for the Eastern Timber Wolf* and is roughly the northeastern one-third of the State. It is estimated that 83 percent of Minnesota's wolves are in Zone A. Zone B is identical to Wolf Management Zone 5 in the 1992 Federal Recovery Plan and includes about 64 percent of the State.

Taking of Wolves. The taking or harassing of gray wolves in Minnesota is allowed as follows. Taking of wolves in any other manner is a gross misdemeanor.

1. **In defense of human life** - Wolves may be taken by any person anywhere in the State in defense of the person's own life or the life of another person.
2. **Harassment to discourage wolves from contact or association with people or domestic animals** - Wolves may be harassed anywhere in the State if they are within 500 yards of people, buildings, dogs, livestock, or other domestic animals. Wolves may not be purposely attracted, tracked, or searched out in order to harass them. Injurious harassment is prohibited.
3. **To eliminate immediate threat to livestock, guard animals, or domestic animals and pets** - Wolves may be shot or destroyed anywhere in the State by the owner or the owner's agent if the wolf is in the act of stalking, attacking, or killing livestock, guard animals, or domestic animals and pets (in the case of a pet, the wolf may be taken only by the owner of the pet and the pet must have been under the supervision of the owner.) Livestock or guard animals must be on property owned, leased, or occupied by the owner of the animals. Following such taking of a wolf as a result of threats to livestock or guard animals, the county extension agent shall recommend livestock best management practices that may prevent future depredations; carrying out those practices is voluntary.
4. **To protect animals in Zone B** - Wolves may be taken in Zone B at any time to protect a person's livestock, domestic animals, or pets by (1) shooting them on land owned, leased, or managed by the person or by (2) employing a certified predator control trapper, who may trap wolves on such land, or within one mile of such land with the permission of the landowner.
5. **In Depredation Control Areas** - If wolf depredation (mortalities) on livestock, domestic animals, or pets is verified and if the owner requests wolf control, the DNR Commissioner

shall open a predator control area, not exceeding a one-mile radius, around the depredation site. Taking of wolves in the depredation control area must be done by state-certified predator controllers and only with the permission of the landowner. Predator controllers (except USDA Wildlife Services personnel) will be paid \$150 by the State for each wolf taken.

- In **Zone A** - The depredation control area is open for up to 60 days and can only be reopened if additional wolf depredation is verified.
- In **Zone B** - Verified wolf depredation (mortalities) of livestock, domestic animals, or pets within the previous five years can open a predator control area for up to 214 days. The owner can request reopening the area in subsequent years if still within five years of the verified depredation.

Reporting Wolf Takings. All takings of gray wolves, except as done by certified predator controllers, must be reported to a conservation officer as soon as practicable, but no later than 48 hours, and all evidence must be protected.

Compensation. The owner of livestock killed by a wolf, or livestock so injured by a wolf that they must be destroyed, will be compensated at the fair market value of the animal(s).

Cooperative Agreement with U.S. Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services. DNR will develop an agreement for USDA Wildlife Services to continue their control program to trap and remove problem wolves, to conduct training for state predator controllers and investigating agents, to develop a wolf depredation handbook, and to perform other functions.

Public Hunting or Trapping. There will be no open season for the trapping or hunting of gray wolves for five years following the Federal delisting of the gray wolf, and then only after public comment.

Population Management. Wolves will be allowed to continue to naturally expand their range within the state. The minimum statewide winter population goal is 1600 wolves; there is no maximum goal. The DNR will take the appropriate actions to remedy the situation if the wolf population falls below the minimum goal. Other than removing (1) wolves that threaten human life, (2) depredating wolves, or (3) potentially depredating wolves in Zone B, the Management Plan contains no actions that will limit the State's wolf population.

Habitat Management. The Management Plan does not guarantee the implementation of specific habitat management activities aimed at preserving wolf habitat. Rather, it indicates that by providing habitat and other management to maintain adequate populations of wolf prey species (white-tailed deer and moose) the DNR will also be providing for the needs of wolves in the State.

Wolf Monitoring. A comprehensive statewide estimate of wolf distribution and abundance will be completed in the first and fifth years following Federal delisting of the wolf; similar estimates subsequently will be made at five-year intervals. Annual changes in distribution and abundance will be monitored by continued review of wolf depredation complaints, data from autumn scent station surveys and winter furbearer track surveys, and observations from field personnel from all natural resource agencies within the State. Monitoring activities will include the use of

computer modeling to predict wolf population trends, as well as analysis of biological samples from captured wolves, necropsies of dead wolves, and analysis of wolf scats.

Hybrid and Captive Wolves. Wolf-dog hybrids may not be released into the wild. Captive wolves may not be released without a permit from the DNR.

Plan Review. The Minnesota DNR will periodically convene an advisory group to evaluate the Management Plan's implementation and impacts. The advisory group will include, but will not be limited to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Michigan DNR, Wisconsin DNR, Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, 1854 Authority, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture - Wildlife Services, U.S. Forest Service, and wolf researchers.

This summary was developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3, Division of Endangered Species, Ft. Snelling, MN, with the assistance of the Bloomington, Minnesota, Ecological Services Field Office.



NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION, INC.

Headquarters: 11 Mile Hill Road, Newtown, CT 06470-2359
400 N. Capitol Street NW, Suite 475, Washington, D.C. 20001
203-426-1320 ext. 217 ncole@nssf.org

Nephi John Cole

Director, Government Relations-State Affairs

May 8, 2019

The Honorable Bill Ingebrigtsen
The Honorable Rick Hansen
Minnesota State Capitol
St. Paul, MN 55155-4046

Re: Prohibition of Lead Ammunition for Hunting

Position: Opposed

Dear Senator Ingebrigtsen and Representative Hansen,

On behalf of the National Shooting Sports Foundation (“NSSF”), I express strong opposition to attempts to ban the use of traditional, or lead, ammunition while hunting on private or public lands in Minnesota.

As the trade association for America’s firearms, ammunition, hunting, and recreational shooting sports industry, NSSF seeks to promote, protect, and preserve hunting and the shooting sports. Our members are more than 12,000 manufacturers, distributors, firearms retailers, shooting ranges, and sportsmen's organizations in the United States.

Eliminating lead shot as a choice will have a detrimental impact on hunters, businesses and wildlife in Minnesota. It affects sportsmen and women, Minnesota's outdoor recreation and tourism economy, and wildlife conservation efforts in Minnesota.

Recent efforts to ban traditional ammunition, by Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (“DNR”) on WMAs, were met with strong opposition by both hunters and wildlife conservation groups. Maintaining choice and selection in ammunition is vitally important to Minnesota's hunting and wildlife conservation community.

We know that provisions banning traditional ammunition create artificial barriers that decrease the numbers of sportsmen and women in the field. In Minnesota, this means a loss of hunting opportunities and heritage for future generations.

We understand that lead components in traditional ammunition represents a target of opportunity for some animal rights and anti-gun groups. However, there is no credible scientific evidence supporting the hypothesis that current uses of traditional ammunition in hunting pose a threat to the public's health, individual hunters, or to Minnesota's wildlife populations.

Special interest groups will continue to press state legislatures and agencies around the country to support bans on traditional ammunition. We understand the concerns, but data doesn't support the approach. We look forward to additional research. We are confident that research will, as it has in the past, show the concerns are unwarranted. At a minimum, Minnesota should study claims of toxicity in humans prior to considering prohibitions on the use of traditional ammunition.

Our industry has a strong presence and economic impact in Minnesota. We are proud of it. We are mindful of the important role sportsmen play in Minnesota's economy. Our membership in Minnesota includes both "mom-n-pop" businesses and large manufacturers, such as Federal Premium Ammunition. A ban on the use of traditional ammunition will have significant negative effects on the full spectrum. It will be disproportionately felt in rural communities - harming businesses that bring tax revenue and jobs to residents in small towns.

Actions taken that reduce hunter participation (creating barriers, removing public access, etc.) negatively affect conservation. The bulk of funding for wildlife management and habitat conservation comes from our industry and sportsmen/sportswomen. For example, NSSF member, Federal Premium Ammunition, contributes approximately \$85 million annually to conservation through the Pittman-Robertson Act - funding wildlife conservation nationally as well as in Minnesota. We live in the golden age of wildlife conservation.

We believe that many who consider lead ban proposals do so with best intentions. But these actions are unwarranted. To suggest them for conservation sake "cuts off the nose to spite the face". We at NSSF strongly oppose the attempts to ban the use of lead ammunition, or lead shot, also known as traditional ammunition in these circumstances.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nephi Cole". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Nephi Cole
Director, Government Relations-State Affairs
The National Shooting Sports Foundation