



MINNESOTA ZOO

January 22, 2019

Representative Rick Hansen
Chair, Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
407 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Hansen:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with information regarding the effects of the Federal shutdown on the Minnesota Zoo.

The Minnesota Zoo has \$81,000 in federal funding toward the Prairie Butterfly Conservation Program for the state FY 2019. This funding supports the Minnesota Zoo's efforts to help save the critically Endangered Poweshiek skipperling from extinction, for personnel, out-of-state travel, and supplies costs. The grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife through Great Lakes Restoration Initiative requires the Zoo to first pay out charges through a separate account and then request full reimbursement of expenses from Federal funds after the fact. However, due to the timing of this funding, our staff will remain unaffected unless the shutdown continues through March 31, 2019 at which time this grant expires. If this happens, the Zoo will be need to offset the charges through other Zoo funds and at the expense of other FY 2019 Zoo priorities.

Beyond the financial impact, the logistical loss for Poweshiek skipperling conservation from the shutdown is large and mounting. Winter is the key planning phase for all annual Poweshiek skipperling actions, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the central coordinating body. At the end of February, the Minnesota Zoo is planning to host a multi-day planning meeting for 2019 Poweshiek skipperling conservation actions with all of the key U.S. and Canadian partners, but the meeting may need to be cancelled since roughly half of the 40 attendees are from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Some Poweshiek skipperling conservation actions may be delayed or even impossible to execute in 2019 if the shutdown continues beyond February.

Sincerely,

John Frawley
Director, Minnesota Zoo