

March 9, 2025

Re: Support of H.F. 1218– Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund Appropriation Bill

Dear Chair Torkelson and Members of the Committee,

Environmental organizations across the state are dedicated to protecting the people and places Minnesotans love. The Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund has helped further this mission, providing over \$900 million in innovative funding for natural resource management projects. Last November, Minnesota voters overwhelmingly voted to continue sending a portion of the state lottery proceeds to the Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund with 77% approval. We are proud to support the Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund Appropriations Bill, which continues this special Minnesota tradition of environmental stewardship.

The Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund benefits current citizens and future generations by providing long-term, consistent, and stable funding for projects to protect, conserve, and enhance Minnesota's "air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources." While it is challenging to summarize the accomplishments of projects over more than thirty years, since 1991, the Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund has provided approximately \$1.1 billion to over 1,700 projects benefitting every county in the state.

Every year, Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund dollars contribute to Minnesotans having cleaner water, healthier forests and prairies, world-class hiking and biking trails, cutting-edge natural resources research institutions, opportunities for enriching and educational environmental programming, and abundant fish and wildlife. The Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund helps all types of entities from all over Minnesota to protect, conserve, preserve, and enhance Minnesota's natural resources: small towns to large urban cities, counties and watershed districts, Minnesota's colleges and universities, non-profits and private companies, and federal and state agencies.

Among the many accomplishments that ENRTF has been instrumental in funding, include:

Supporting critical research developing tools to detect and combat Chronic Wasting Disease, establishing long-term lake ecosystem monitoring through the creation of the DNR's Sentinel Lakes program, facilitating ground-breaking research to prevent, detect, and mitigate invasive species, reintroducing bison, introducing tens of thousands of students to wilderness canoeing, building and improving hundreds of miles of trails, including the Superior Hiking Trail, Mesabi Trail, and Glacial Edge Trail.

We appreciate and acknowledge the extensive vetting done by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota's Natural Resources. The breadth of projects in S.F. 506 is critical to protecting and enhancing Minnesota's environment and natural resources. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Audubon Upper Mississippi River  
Austin Audubon Society  
Austin Coalition for Environmental Sustainability  
Bike Minnesota  
Central Minnesota Audubon Society  
Citizens' Climate Lobby Minnesota  
Climate Land Leaders

Clean Water Action  
Conservation Minnesota  
CURE  
Ducks Unlimited  
Environmental Initiative  
Environmental Justice Coordinating Council  
Freshwater  
Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness  
Friends of the Mississippi River  
Great River Greening  
Izaak Walton League – MN Division  
Lakeville Friends of the Environment  
League of Women Voters Upper Mississippi River Region ILO  
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy  
Minnesota Conservation Federation  
Minnesota Environmental Partnership  
Minnesota Land Trust  
Minnesota Ornithologists Union  
Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter  
Minnesota Valley Trust  
Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society  
MN350  
Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness  
Northern Waters Land Trust  
Prairie Lakes Audubon Chapter  
Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota  
Pheasants Forever, Inc  
Pollinator Friendly Alliance  
Quails Forever  
Rainbow Research  
St. Paul Bird Alliance  
The Conservation Fund  
The Nature Conservancy  
Trout Unlimited  
Trust for Public Land  
Urban Bird Collective  
Vote Climate  
Wild River Audubon  
Zumbro Valley Audubon Society