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Representative Fue Lee
485 State Office Building
House Capital Investment Committee
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

February 8, 2023

Dear Chair Lee and Members of the House Capital Investment Committee,

As the Committee reviews the Governor's capital budget recommendations for the Department of Natural Resources, we write to share our support for proposed investments in programs that will benefit people and nature and will support communities across the state. We are particularly pleased to see:

- A proposed appropriation for investments to modernize components of the state forest nursery as part of a larger \$43,680,000 for Betterment of Buildings. Specifically, The Nature Conservancy recommends an investment of \$10 million for the replacement and modernization of that facility.
- A proposed appropriation in reforestation, or replanting and seeding trees after timber harvests, included in the recommendation of \$18,000,000 for Acquisition and Betterment of Public Lands. The Nature Conservancy recommends an investment of \$10 million for reforestation. An analysis conducted by The Nature Conservancy and American Forests identifies nearly 3 million acres of Minnesota lands that could support additional reforestation or afforestation. The state's forests provide multiple benefits for carbon sequestration, climate resiliency, water quality and quantity, habitat, natural resources-based economic activity, and outdoor recreation. In the face of a changing climate, it is imperative that we invest in one of the state's best assets: trees.

As this committee considers capital investments that can also address climate change and make Minnesota more resilient, we encourage you to include these forest investments among a suite of other natural climate solutions.

Thank you for your work on behalf of Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Pinkalla
Government Relations Director
The Nature Conservancy in Minnesota

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