



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**



May 3, 2021

To: Members of the Conference Committee

Re: SF 959 Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Omnibus Bill

Dear Legislators,

On behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity and the Humane Society of the United States and our members and supporters in Minnesota, we are writing regarding the final environment and natural resources finance and policy omnibus bill you will be putting together. In particular, we want to express our concerns with SF959, 3rd Engrossment, Article 2, Section 68 (page R46 on the side by side), which requires the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to prescribe an annual open season on wolves so long as they are not listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. This provision is not based on sound science, humane ethics, or Minnesota values, and we ask that do not include this section in the final bill.

The DNR is already [in the process of updating](#) the state's 20-year-old Wolf Management Plan through a public process with the input of diverse stakeholder groups, a technical working group, consultation with tribal nations, and input from the general public. Rather than rushing to mandate a trophy hunting and trapping season, it is crucial that we let this public process continue. Indeed, the DNR has [explained](#) that it "opposes the language in the bill" because "it will circumvent the important science-based work and the public consensus based process currently underway."

The current estimated wolf population in Minnesota is [2,699 wolves](#). [According to the DNR](#), "In the last several decades since the wolf population has become relatively stable, changes in wolf numbers have fluctuated primarily in response to the abundance of white-tailed deer." This statement aligns with research that demonstrates that wolves regulate their own populations based on available prey, habitat, and their own territorial and social nature.

Conflicts between livestock and wolves are [already rare](#) in Minnesota and science shows that killing wolves [will not solve](#) the few conflicts that do occur. Rather, killing wolves can actually exacerbate conflicts by sending young, inexperienced wolves off to fend for themselves. Furthermore, arbitrarily killing wolves through hunting and trapping seasons [will not reduce conflicts](#) either, as they do not target the individual predating wolves. In 2019, just 1.4% of the 5,150 Minnesota beef cattle farms in occupied wolf territory experienced conflicts with wolves. The best remedies for [preventing conflicts](#) are non-lethal deterrents such as guardian animals, sanitary carcass removal, and flagged fencing known as "fladry."

Wolves are shy and elusive and do not pose a significant threat to people or pets. In fact, there have been no fatal wolf attacks ever reported in Minnesota or anywhere else in the lower 48 states. The first

and only confirmed wolf attack in Minnesota was in 2013 when a wolf bit a teenager in the head in Bemidji. The wolf was trapped and killed by agency officials, who described the wolf as having a deformed jaw and missing one of its primary canine teeth. Tom Provost, regional manager of the DNR [said at the time](#) that the wolf “would have really struggled with capturing and killing prey.”

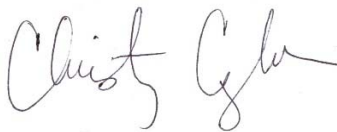
Numerous studies also demonstrate that wolves keep deer and moose herds healthy and can help mitigate the spread of deadly diseases, including chronic wasting disease. A [2017 DNR study](#) found that at least 40% of the moose killed by wolves in Minnesota had other serious health issues that may have predisposed them to predation.

Wolf trophy hunting and trapping goes against sound science and societal values. Wolves are vital to keeping our ecosystem healthy and biologically diverse, and the benefits they provide have been [well documented](#). Scientific research demonstrates that such seasons cause a [cascade of harms](#) resulting in death and disruption beyond the individual killed. Killing a single adult wolf can result in the loss of an *entire pack*, causing the [loss of dependent offspring](#) and disrupting the pack’s social structure. Additionally, studies have shown that allowing wolf trophy hunting and trapping can [increase wolf poaching](#) as well.

Finally, as demonstrated by a [2019 survey](#) conducted by the DNR in partnership with the University of Minnesota, Minnesotans value wolves. That survey found that not only do more than two-thirds of state residents have a positive attitude toward wolves, but 86% said they would like to see the same number or more in Minnesota. More residents oppose a wolf hunting season than support it, and a majority of residents oppose a wolf trapping season. As such, circumventing the DNR’s current public process and mandating a hunt will only undermine the trust of Minnesotans in the state’s ability to serve as a steward of its wildlife in a scientific, ethical, and transparent way.

It is crucial that this legislature does not circumvent the public process underway by mandating a hunt that is not supported by science or the majority of Minnesotans. For the reasons stated above, **we urge you to not include a mandated wolf hunting and trapping season** in the final Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Omnibus Bill.

Sincerely,



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POLLINATOR FRIENDLY ALLIANCE
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Support for House Environment Omnibus SF959, Article 5, section 30: Prohibit neonicotinoid and chlorpyrifos insecticide use in protected areas for fish and wildlife preservation.

Date: May 13, 2021

To: Minnesota House Environmental Committee

Pollinator Friendly Alliance strongly supports a ban on the use of neonicotinoid and chlorpyrifos insecticides within protected wildlife areas to include the following DNR managed lands - Minnesota state parks, state forests, aquatic management areas, scientific and natural areas, and wildlife management areas (especially leased crop land).

[Pollinator Friendly Alliance](#) is a Minnesota grassroots pollinator conservation organization. We understand the [science and importance of removing lethal and sublethal toxins](#) from the natural environment to preserve and protect pollinators and other wildlife.

Protected wildlife lands are set aside for fish and wildlife preservation. Protecting biological diversity and integrity and conserving the system's wildlife are the central tenets of a refuge system's mission. Neonicotinoids are neurotoxic pesticides that have proven negative impacts on pollinators, migratory birds, and other wildlife. The use of pesticides that have lethal and sublethal effects on wildlife and there should not be a question since these areas are intended to be a refuge for wildlife species.

Chlorpyrifos were scheduled to be federally banned but are still used in Minnesota. Chlorpyrifos are implicated in brain disorders of children and highly toxic to animals, pollinators and contaminates drinking water. Chlorpyrifos is an organophosphate pesticide known for its damaging effects on the human nervous system. These neurological effects pose especially elevated risks for children as their brains and nervous systems develop. Chlorpyrifos contamination of air and drinking water is also of concern; Minnesota named the pesticide a "**chemical of concern**" for this reason, and the **U.S. EPA** noted that chlorpyrifos use poses "drinking water exposure concerns in small sensitive watersheds." For animals and pollinators that are highly sensitive to chlorpyrifos, exposure to minute concentrations can be lethal. The EPA indicates that a single application of chlorpyrifos poses significant risks to water, humans and animals.

Some protected wildlife areas such as regional parks and DNR scientific and natural areas, lease land for agriculture. Genetically modified (GMO) seeds are often developed to be resistant to a certain pesticide, like a neonicotinoid, ensuring that the pesticide can be used freely without harming the crop yield. Banning the pair (GMO and pesticide-coated seed) and pesticide sprays within wildlife areas protects the lands and wildlife from harmful chemicals.

This bill is not a big ask, park districts, county and regional parks have already removed systemic insecticides and neonicotinoids from their land management toolkits years ago. Currently, there is a verbal or written agreement to prohibit neonicotinoid use in some of these areas, but not all.

Neonicotinoid and chlorpyrifos use is still discretionary, and a law banning their use needs to be enacted to remove this harmful chemical. For lands leased for crops, the lease needs to specifically prohibit the use of pesticide coated seeds and insecticide sprays. *No neonicotinoid or chlorpyrifos insecticides (active ingredients acetamiprid, clothianidin, imidacloprid, thiamethoxam, chlorpyrifos) may be used in the treated seed application or as a spray.*

Recent science shows that neonicotinoid and chlorpyrifos insecticides kill pollinators outright or sicken them at sublethal doses, and contaminate water ([Five surface water pesticides of concern, Minnesota MDA 2020](#)), birds are affected ([Neonic reduces migration in songbirds, Eng 2019](#)) and most recently effect large mammals ([Effects of neonics on physiology and reproduction of white-tailed deer, Berheim 2019](#)). The DNR is about to release data collected in Minnesota from deer spleens showing levels of accumulated neonic pesticides. Two flagship species, monarch butterfly and rusty patched bumble bee (Minnesota state bee) are under the watchful eye of pollinator researchers and the latest 2021 data shows [declining numbers of monarchs](#). This is critical - pollinator populations are declining more than ever, while animal, bird and insect species continue to disappear.

Thank you,
Laurie Schneider, Executive Director,
and the Members of the Board of Directors
Pollinator Friendly Alliance
laurie@pollinatorfriendly.org
www.pollinatorfriendly.org

Selected support references:

PESTICIDES IN MINNESOTA WATERS: Minnesota Department of Agriculture, *surface water pesticides of concern* (2020)
<https://www.mda.state.mn.us/surface-water-pesticides-concern>

Neonic-treated seed in ag landscape harmful to wildlife
study: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6793935/>

POLLINATOR DECLINE: Xerces Society: *The science behind the role neonics play in harming bees*. Jennifer Hopwood, Aimee Code, Mace Vaughan et al. (2016)
https://xerces.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/16-023_01_XercesSoc_ExecSummary_How-Neonicotinoids-Can-Kill-Bees_web.pdf

NEONIC EFFECTS ON LARGE MAMMALS: Scientific Reports: *Effects of Neonicotinoid Insecticides on Physiology and Reproductive Characteristics of Captive Female and Fawn White-tailed Deer*. Elise Hughes Berheim, Jonathan A. Jenks, Jonathan G. Lundgren, et al. volume 9, Article number: 4534 (2019)
<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-019-40994-9>

NEONIC EFFECTS ON SONGBIRDS: Science: *A neonicotinoid insecticide reduces fueling and delays migration in songbirds*. Margaret L. Eng, LeBridget, J. M. Stutchbury, Christy A. Morrissey. Issue 13 Sep 2019: Vol. 365, Issue 6458, pp. 1177-1180.

<https://science.sciencemag.org/content/365/6458/1177>

German study looks at 63 nature preserves and found that 75% of insect biomass declined from 1989 to 2013 due to nearby agricultural intensification.

<http://www.bouldercountybeekeepers.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Orbrioch-Nature-reserve.pdf>

Facts about chlorpyrifos. <https://www.panna.org/resources/chlorpyrifos-facts>

Center for Disease Control, US Dept of Health and Human Services – toxicology of chlorpyrifos:

<https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxprofiles/tp84.pdf>



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Support for House Environment Omnibus SF959, Article 4, section 48 rulemaking to require better stewardship of corn and soybean pesticide coated seed

Date: May 13, 2021

To: Minnesota House Environment Committee

Pollinator Friendly Alliance supports rulemaking to better steward the disposal, storage and re-use of neonicotinoid-treated seed. Currently, there are not adequate federal or Minnesota state safeguards for the health of people and the environment from pesticide contamination from coated seed nor is pesticide coated seed currently regulated as a pesticide in Minnesota.

[Pollinator Friendly Alliance](http://WWW.POLLINATORFRIENDLY.ORG) is a Minnesota conservation organization with a membership of citizens, scientists, businesses and ecologists from around Minnesota. We urge state legislators to step up in the absence of a fail-safe system to protect our waters, land and people from pesticide seed contamination. This is not a big ask to simply strengthen the existing system for better stewardship and the rewards for health are great. Some countries have banned neonicotinoid pesticides entirely and communities around the U.S. are further restricting use. Almost fifty Minnesota communities have adopted resolutions to cease neonicotinoid pesticide use.

The wealthy pesticide industry can sell more insecticide seed using a loophole in federal pesticide law - **“treated article exemption” which permits seeds to be coated with highly toxic pesticides without assessment by the EPA for health or environmental effects.** This allows pesticide coated seeds to be used without proper oversight. The result of this negligence is evidenced by water contamination in Minnesota and an entire community in [Nebraska taking ill from pesticide coated seed contamination](#). Labels do not always protect us from improper handling, storage or mis-use either. Labels are very difficult to enforce because they are often impossible to interpret, the meaning is unclear and often not defined – for example what is a “measurable residue”? The label does not explain if the seed can be burned or re-used such was the case in the Nebraska catastrophe. The label needs to be specific and cover all important points.

I come from a farm family and live in a rural area, so I know first-hand corn and soybean farmers often drill 1,000’s of acres of pesticide coated seed at a time. The pesticide dust floats and moves through the air, and afterward piles of seed are leftover laying in fields where birds and wildlife eat them, and ground water is contaminated. Suggested best practices are not going to protect us or wildlife and the environment. A law is needed to require proper stewarding of pesticide-coated seed.

Neonicotinoid contamination has been studied repeatedly and reported on for years – it is no secret that neonicotinoid insecticides on coated seeds are toxic. Recent science shows neonic pesticides kill pollinators outright and sicken them at sublethal doses, neonics contaminate water ([Five surface water pesticides of concern, Minnesota MDA 2020](#)), birds are effected ([Neonic reduces](#)

[migration in songbirds, Eng 2019](#)) and most recently large mammals such as deer ([Effects of neonics on physiology and reproduction of white-tailed deer, Berheim 2019](#)). Two flagship species- monarch butterfly and rusty patched bumble bee (Minnesota state bee) - are under the watchful eyes of pollinator researchers and declining numbers of monarchs tell us that pollinators are at a critical point for extinction requiring immediate action.

This small step to steward neonicotinoid coated seed will help keep Minnesota communities, pollinators and wildlife safe and healthy from neonicotinoid pesticide contamination.

Thank you,
Laurie Schneider, Executive Director,
and the Members of the Board of Directors
Pollinator Friendly Alliance
www.pollinatorfriendly.org

Selected support references:

PESTICIDES IN MINNESOTA WATERS: Minnesota Department of Agriculture, *surface water pesticides of concern* (2020)
<https://www.mda.state.mn.us/surface-water-pesticides-concern>

INSECTICIDE COATED SEED CONTAMINATES NEBRASKA COMMUNITY AT ETHANOL PLANT
January 2021: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/jan/10/mead-nebraska-ethanol-plant-pollution-danger>

NEONIC EFFECTS ON LARGE MAMMALS: Scientific Reports: *Effects of Neonicotinoid Insecticides on Physiology and Reproductive Characteristics of Captive Female and Fawn White-tailed Deer*. Elise Hughes Berheim, Jonathan A. Jenks, Jonathan G. Lundgren, et al. volume 9, Article number: 4534 (2019)
<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-019-40994-9>

RESULTS OF PESTICIDE STUDY OF NEONIC EXPOSURE TO WHITE-TAILED DEER IN MINNESOTA
March 1, 2021, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/news/2021/03/01/preliminary-results-pesticide-study-show-widespread-neonicotinoid-exposure-minnesota-white-tailed-deer>

NEONIC EFFECTS ON SONGBIRDS: Science: *A neonicotinoid insecticide reduces fueling and delays migration in songbirds*. Margaret L. Eng, LeBridget, J. M. Stutchbury, Christy A. Morrissey. Issue 13 Sep 2019: Vol. 365, Issue 6458, pp. 1177-1180.
<https://science.sciencemag.org/content/365/6458/1177>



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Support for House Environment Omnibus SF959: full funding of Lawns to Legumes provisions in the bill and full funding for the LCCMR pollinator projects.

Date: May 13, 2021

To: Minnesota House Environment Committee

[Pollinator Friendly Alliance](http://www.pollinatorfriendly.org) is a Minnesota conservation organization with a membership of citizens, scientists, businesses, farmers, land managers and ecologists from around Minnesota. We urge state legislators to support the full funding of Lawns to Legumes provisions and full funding for the LCCMR pollinator projects in the House Environment Omnibus.

We urge you to support these small steps in the right direction for Minnesota farmers, beekeepers, consumers, and citizens.

Thank you,

Laurie Schneider, Executive Director,

and the Members of the Board of Directors

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Support for House Environment Omnibus SF959, Article 5, sections 16 and 17: Empower cities to make choices on pesticide use in their own community

Date: May 13, 2021

To: Minnesota House Environment Committee

Pollinator Friendly Alliance strongly supports delegating control over pollinator-lethal pesticides to local communities. Currently, Minnesota state pesticide preemption law denies local residents and leaders their democratic right to decide if minimum pesticide use standards set by state and federal law (“the label is the law”) are appropriate for their own communities. As you may know, compliance of the label is impossible to monitor and police. The EPA federal label is NOT the answer.

[Pollinator Friendly Alliance](http://WWW.POLLINATORFRIENDLY.ORG) is a Minnesota grassroots conservation organization. We understand the **importance of community pride and empowerment** for local people to invest in their own neighborhoods. During the pandemic, people are at home and in their communities now more than ever and realize the importance of being good stewards for the health of their own community. We also believe in community intelligence and the ability of local people to make good decisions on their own behalf.

Local people and leaders know their own community best and it’s time to empower cities to make their own decisions on the pesticides being used near their homes, schools and businesses. Pesticides that can make us sick and contaminate water, land and our food source. Local control on pesticide choices was taken away in 1989 in Minnesota. Bill HR718 will restore those rights such as other U.S. states enjoy. These are historical times and policymakers such as yourselves have the responsibility to make important decisions to sustain a healthy world for the future.

For example, recent science shows that neonicotinoid pesticides not only kill pollinators outright but also sicken them at sublethal doses, and recent studies show neonics contaminate water ([Five surface water pesticides of concern, Minnesota MDA 2020](#)), birds are affected ([Neonic reduces migration in songbirds, Eng 2019](#)) and most recently effect large mammals ([Effects of neonics on physiology and reproduction of white-tailed deer, Berheim 2019](#)). Chlorpyrifos pesticides were going to be federally banned but are still in use in Minnesota. Chlorpyrifos is an organophosphate pesticide known for its damaging effects on the human nervous system with neurological effects especially for children, and also a chemical of concern in Minnesota. The EPA noted “chlorpyrifos poses drinking water exposure concerns in small sensitive watersheds”. For animals and pollinators that are highly sensitive to chlorpyrifos, exposure to minute concentrations in air or water can be lethal. The EPA indicates that a single application of chlorpyrifos poses significant risks to air, water, humans and animals.

This bill is not a big ask, and it allows a thoughtful approach and is farmer friendly. It allows a city to discriminate between cosmetic use of pesticides in urban areas and agricultural use and provides for a tiered decision-making process to allow only what is necessary. Currently, fifty Minnesota communities passed [Pollinator Protection Resolutions](#) pledging to remove pollinator-lethal pesticides, so we know this is a need. Granting local control does not guarantee increased regulation – rather it allows communities the chance to do what is appropriate in their own backyards, school yards, parks and local public areas for a healthy community. **Please support HF718 by voting YES to keeping Minnesota communities healthy and strong.**

Thank you,
Laurie Schneider, Executive Director,
and the Members of the Board of Directors
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Selected support references:

PESTICIDES IN MINNESOTA WATERS: Minnesota Department of Agriculture, *surface water pesticides of concern* (2020)

<https://www.mda.state.mn.us/surface-water-pesticides-concern>

POLLINATOR DECLINE: Xerces Society: *The science behind the role neonics play in harming bees*. Jennifer Hopwood, Aimee Code, Mace Vaughan et al. (2016)

https://xerces.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/16-023_01_XercesSoc_ExecSummary_How-Neonicotinoids-Can-Kill-Bees_web.pdf

NEONIC EFFECTS ON LARGE MAMMALS: Scientific Reports: *Effects of Neonicotinoid Insecticides on Physiology and Reproductive Characteristics of Captive Female and Fawn White-tailed Deer*. Elise Hughes Berheim, Jonathan A. Jenks, Jonathan G. Lundgren, et al. volume 9, Article number: 4534 (2019)

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-019-40994-9>

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<https://science.sciencemag.org/content/365/6458/1177>

CHLORPYRIFOS and PUBLIC HEALTH: *EPA science says chlorpyrifos exposure threatens public health*. Cara Schulte, July 2019.

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/07/22/trump-administration-refuses-ban-neurotoxic-pesticide#>

Bluestem Prairie: *Corteva to stop manufacturing chlorpyrifos by end of year; MN lawmakers asked for ban in 2017*. Sally Sorenson, February 2020.

<https://www.bluestemprairie.com/bluestemprairie/2020/02/corteva-to-stop-manufacturing-chlorpyrifos-by-end-of-year-mn-lawmakers-asked-for-ban-in-2017.html>

POLLINATOR PROTECTION RESOLUTION: *Model resolution for cities, counties, state agencies, school districts*. Pollinator Friendly Alliance, Humming for Bees, Pesticide Action Network, Pollinator Minnesota 2020.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59fcf40ab1ffb6ee9911ad2a/t/5f8fb7dcac3e6348089291a2/1603254237712/MODEL+resolution+2020.pdf>



Friends of Minnesota Scientific & Natural Areas

May 13, 2021

Representative Rick Hansen and Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen, Co-Chairs
Environment and Natural Resources Conference Committee (SF 959)
Via e-mail only: Peter.Strohmeier@house.mn

Re: SF 959: Omnibus Environment and Natural Resources Bill
Support ban of neonicotinoid insecticides and chlorpyrifos on state land (House
version, Article 5, Section 30)

Dear Representative Hansen, Senator Ingebrigtsen, and Conference Committee Members:

Friends of Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas (FMSNA) is a Minnesota non-profit, tax-exempt [“501(c)(3)”] corporation organized to protect and enhance Minnesota’s Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs).

These 168 SNAs are the crown jewels of Minnesota’s state land base, protecting some of Minnesota’s rarest and most sensitive plant and animal species and the ecosystems upon which they depend.

The Omnibus Environment and Natural Resources Bill (SF 959) contains the following language in the House version (Article 5, Section 30, lines 191.17 – 191.20):

“Sec. 30. **[84.9735] INSECTICIDES ON STATE LANDS.**

A person may not use a product containing an insecticide in a wildlife management area, state park, state forest, aquatic management area, or scientific and natural area if the insecticide is from the neonicotinoid class of insecticides or contains chlorpyrifos.”

Our organization **fully supports this language** as another step towards protecting public health, along with a healthy ecosystem.

Public education efforts to discourage the use of neonicotinoid insecticides and chlorpyrifos have failed to result in meaningful change. Although educational efforts to increase public awareness remain important, **legislation is required to adequately address neonicotinoid and chlorpyrifos insecticide pollution.**

Friends of Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas thanks you in advance for your favorable vote.

Very truly yours,

Thomas E. Casey

Thomas E. Casey

Board Chair

Friends of Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas, Inc

Please send correspondence to:

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May 3, 2021

To: Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Conference Committee

Re: SF 959 Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Omnibus Bill

Dear Legislators,

Thank you for your service to Minnesotans and your diligent work during this difficult session. Thank you also for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding SF 959, Article 2, on behalf of members and supporters of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) in Minnesota. The HSUS is a nonprofit organization working for the protection of all animals for more than 60 years. There are a couple provisions we request you include in the final bill and several we respectfully ask you to keep out.

Please include:

Nontoxic shot required for taking small game in certain areas

(page R21 of the side-by-side)

Senate: *No Language.*

House: Unofficial Engrossment, Article 5, Section 71

This provision requires the use of non-toxic shot on wildlife management areas in the farmland zone. Both lead shot and lead bullets have proven to be toxic to numerous wild species in Minnesota and detrimental to our natural resources. As nontoxic alternatives are available, we ask you to include this House provision in the final bill.

Ending commercial turtle harvest

(page R51 of the side-by-side)

Senate: 3rd Engrossment, Article 2, Section 78

House: Unofficial Engrossment, Article 5, Section 78

The House provision eliminates the turtle seller's license, ending the commercial harvest of wild-caught turtles in Minnesota. The Senate version removes the restriction that a turtle seller's license may be transferred only once, creating the potential for licenses to be maintained into perpetuity, resulting in increased harvest of Minnesota turtles.

Turtles are an important part of Minnesota's ecosystems. In our state, turtle populations face many threats, including habitat loss, pollution, disease, climate change, and over harvest. Turtles are also long-lived animals, and many species take a decade or more to mature. Once mature, an adult female may lay eggs for 50 or more years. Consequently, losses of adults due to harvest result in significant population-level effects because they deprive individuals of decades of reproduction. Thousands of turtles are still harvested annually by remaining Minnesota licensees and there is no limit on their harvest. These existing threats, combined with turtles' biology, require an end to their commercial harvest in Minnesota. We ask you to adopt the House position in the final bill.

Penalties: night vision equipment

(page R38 of the side by side)

Senate: 3rd Engrossment, Article 2, Section 55

House: No Language

This provision revokes hunting privileges for five years if night or thermal vision equipment was in possession during specific violations, including taking wild animals in closed season, closed hours, or while trespassing. While the HSUS does not take a position on subsistence hunting, we do oppose the use of certain methods, including night vision and thermal imagery devices, that many hunters also agree violate the time-honored principles of fair chase, sportsmanship, and respect for the hunted. The use of thermal imaging and night vision devices may increase the risk of poaching, and the use of night vision devices constitutes a threat to the safety of Minnesota residents, as well as to pets, livestock, and non-target wildlife. Enacting these penalties is good for wildlife and public safety. We request you include this Senate provision in the final bill.

Night vision equipment enhanced with infrared illuminator

(page R45 of the side-by-side)

Senate: 3rd Engrossment, Article 2, Section 65

House: No Language

This provision allows infrared illuminators to be used to enhance night vision equipment and prohibits night vision equipment from being used to take coyote or fox during the regular firearms deer season. Please see preceding paragraph; we oppose allowing infrared illuminators to be used to enhance night vision equipment, but we support prohibiting night vision equipment from being used to take coyote or fox during deer season.

Provisions of concern:

Required bear relocation

(page R46 of the side-by-side)

Senate: 3rd Engrossment, Article 2, Section 67

House: No Language

This provision requires the DNR to issue permits for wildlife control operators to take nuisance bear by live tracking and relocation. The provision presents concerns primarily because managing nuisance bears should stay within the purview of the DNR's biologists and wildlife managers. While on its face, relocating nuisance bears may appear to be a humane approach, the provision presents concerns largely because relocation does not resolve the underlying problem and it may cause problems elsewhere. If the attractant hasn't been removed, another bear may come in; relocating a nuisance bear may move the problem to a new area; and relocated bears may be killed if moved to territory where there are existing bears. The response to human-bear conflicts should be primarily focused on identifying and removing access to attractants that are at the root cause of human bear conflicts. We request you leave this Senate provision out of the final bill.

Mandated wolf hunting and trapping season

(page R46 of the side-by-side)

Senate: 3rd Engrossment, Article 2, Section 68

House: No Language

This provision requires DNR to prescribe an annual open season on wolves so long as they remain unlisted under the federal Endangered Species Act. The DNR is already in the process of updating the state's 20-year-old Wolf Management Plan through a public process with the input of diverse stakeholder groups. It is vital this process be allowed to continue. Please see the detailed letter we submitted with the Center for Biological Diversity outlining concerns with a mandated wolf hunting and trapping season, which include information about the stability and self-regulation of the wolf population, effective methods for resolving wolf-livestock conflicts, benefits wolves bring to the ecosystem, and recent survey showing Minnesotans' overwhelming support for wolves in our state. *We request you leave this Senate provision out of the final bill.*

Moratorium on egg addling to manage Canada goose populations

(page R174 of the side-by-side)

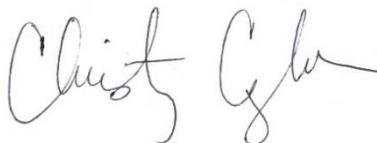
Senate: 3rd Engrossment, Article 2, Section 165

House: No Language

This provision places a moratorium on special permits to take Canada goose nests and eggs via egg addling. This will hamper Minnesota cities' ability to respond to the safety and water quality goals set in regard to year-round resident Canada goose populations. Due to a number of factors, communities around the state can experience conflicts with resident Canada geese. In some locations, conflicts reach an inflection point where localities make decisions to round up geese and kill them during the molt when adults and goslings are flightless. This method carries with it significant welfare impacts as well as the likelihood that it will have to be repeated in the future. However, other Minnesota communities have elected to resolve human-goose conflicts using comprehensive approaches that may include curtailing reproduction (egg oiling/addling). Egg addling is an effective and humane option for Minnesota cities that need to manage populations of resident Canada geese and a moratorium will have a negative effect on management options available to Minnesota cities. *We request you leave this Senate provision out of the final bill.*

Thank you again for the opportunity to share our perspective. I am happy to discuss any of the above with you anytime: ccoughlin@humanesociety.org.

Sincerely,



Christine Coughlin
Minnesota State Director
Humane Society of the United States

Written Testimony, Submitted in support of the Pesticide Ban in Wildlife Refuges (in) Environment Omnibus, Article 5, Section 30.

Prohibit neonicotinoid and chlorpyrifos insecticide use in protected areas for fish and wildlife preservation.

Date: May 13, 2021

I am writing in support of a pesticide ban in wildlife refuges in Minnesota. Neonicotinoid and chlorpyrifos insecticides have no place on the DNR-managed lands (*Minnesota state parks, state forests, aquatic management areas, scientific and natural areas, and wildlife management areas*) that have been acquired with public funds for protection of the natural features therein. These insecticides have been widely proven to be harmful to pollinators, which have a profoundly important role in ecosystem (and human) health, but also have deleterious effects on other non-target species in these natural systems.

It is notable that the Minnesota Department of Agriculture designates these chemicals as Pesticides of Concern, as stated on MDA's website: "On February 10, 2020, a notice was published in the Minnesota State Register of the Commissioner's preliminary decision to designate three neonicotinoid insecticides, clothianidin, imidacloprid, and thiamethoxam, as "surface water pesticides of concern" ([State Register Volume 44, Number 33](#)).

There is no reasonable justification for use of these insecticides on these public lands (including any acreage leased out to farmers). Scientific and Natural Areas, in particular, were preserved for the purpose of protecting high quality, intact examples of the state's native plant communities and rare, significant natural features. The state and the people of Minnesota have invested in the protection of these lands, and their management should be consistent with safeguarding that investment. Use of these toxins in such areas negatively impacts the biodiversity and functioning of the natural systems they were designated to protect.

I have served on the Minnesota DNR's Commissioner's Advisory Committee, and understand the value of these lands and the biodiversity they contain, as well as the many efforts underway to address the alarming decline in pollinators. We must do everything possible on public lands to support these efforts.

This bill is common sense and long overdue. Please help to ensure that it becomes law.

Laurie Allmann, Marine on St. Croix, MN.

Dear Representative Strohmeier,

Please vote to support a pesticide ban in our Wildlife Refuges and vote to end the commercial harvesting of turtles in Minnesota. Our pollinators need a few refuges from the chemical assault and many turtle species are in decline.

Sincerely,

Craig Prudhomme
91140 Horizon Trails
Sturgeon Lake, MN 55783
612-280-3742

May 15th, 2021

Minnesota Senate & House of Representatives,
Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee

Xerces Society Testimony in Support of Select Items in House Version of SF 959

Sarah Foltz Jordan, Senior Pollinator Conservation Specialist
Aimee Code, Pesticide Program Director
The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation

The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation supports the following items in the Environment Omnibus Bill: **rulemaking for disposal of neonicotinoid-treated seed; local control of pollinator-harming pesticides; prohibition of neonicotinoids and chlorpyrifos on state lands; and full funding for Healthy Soils initiatives, Lawns to Legumes Program and LCCMR pollinator projects.**

Article 4, Section 48 requires rulemaking for neonicotinoid-treated seed disposal. This formal process is essential to ensuring that these pesticides are disposed of in the most appropriate, environmentally-sound matter.

Article 5, Section 16 & 17 allows targeted local control over pesticide use beyond what state law allows. Towns and cities face unique concerns from pesticide use. With the enactment of this bill, communities would have the ability to take strategic and well-defined steps to help support this imperiled species.

Article 5, Section 30 will prohibit use of neonicotinoids and chlorpyrifos insecticides on select state lands. This new state legislation is not a big ask. Since these lands have been set aside specifically for the conservation and enjoyment of Minnesota's biodiversity and natural resources, banning the use of pesticides that directly and indirectly threaten those resources is common sense.

Finally, we strongly support the funding allocations for the Healthy Soils initiative, Lawns to Legumes program and LCCMR pollinator projects.

Thank you,

Sarah Foltz Jordan, Senior Pollinator Conservation Specialist, Xerces Society
Aimee Code, Pesticide Program Director, Xerces Society