

## **Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals**

*An independent association of current or former resource or conservation professionals  
Whose mission is to promote science-based stewardship of natural resources, including air, water, land,  
native plants, fish, and wildlife and supporting aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems*

April 2, 2010

Senator Satveer S. Chaudhary, Chair  
Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Capitol Building, Room 205  
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606

Representative Kent Eken, Chair  
Environment Policy and Oversight Committee  
575 State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Senator Chaudhary and Representative Eken:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals (MACP) concerning the portions of SF 1657 and HF 2084 pertaining to establishing an Advisory Committee to study a new structure of administering Minnesota's environmental and natural resource policies. We discussed this proposal at our February annual meeting, and made a decision at that time to communicate our views to the Legislature.

The MACP membership is open to current or former conservation or natural resource professionals in Minnesota, including, for example, those who have worked in state and federal agencies, local government, the private and non-profit sectors, and academic institutions. Our organization is not a union, and in the past has been primarily involved in substantive and policy issues involving natural resources and environmental management.

We believe that an Advisory Committee, if established, should be objective and include a full range of stakeholders. Our members are very much aware of the large number of stakeholders that will be interested in the deliberations of such a Committee, since we are spread in small and large communities all over Minnesota. In addition, the Committee should consider organizational structures that could most efficiently administer and manage acquisitions, easements, and other habitat and clean water projects approved through the Legacy Amendment, since the consequences of this Amendment are so far reaching and not including it in deliberations would become awkward. Finally, we note that one of the purposes of the Advisory Committee listed in the proposed legislation would be to reduce political influence in environmental and natural resource decisions. We endorse the inclusion of this purpose.

Because of these factors, we strongly recommend that membership on the Committee include representatives from professional natural resource organizations. Such organizations include The Wildlife Society, American Fisheries Society, Society of American Foresters, the Society of

Conservation Biology and our own organization. We also recommend that members of the academic community be considered. Individuals in these organizations are dedicated, influential, and conscientious citizens of Minnesota.

We feel that membership on the Committee from such organizations could provide important perspectives about how environmental and natural resource management actually works in Minnesota communities, as well as provide important historical perspectives about successes and failures in delivering these services to Minnesotans. Such membership would also help meet the goal of reducing political influence in the Study Committee's deliberations.

We greatly appreciate your careful consideration of our proposal, and thank you for it. If you have any questions, please give me a call at 218-435-1138.

Sincerely,

Paul Stolen  
Board Member  
37603 370<sup>th</sup> Ave SE  
Fosston, MN 56542

c: Senator Mary Olson  
MACP Web Site  
Mike Kilgore