

FRESHWATER

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Freshwater Society is a nonprofit organization working to inspire and empower people to value and preserve our freshwater resources.

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March 9, 2022

Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen
Chair
Senate Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee
3207 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Senator Ingebrigtsen;

I write to express Freshwater Society's support for SF3509 that would provide funding to the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) to develop and assemble the material required under Code of Federal Regulations, title 40, section 233.10, for the state to assume the section 404 permitting program of the federal Clean Water Act (CWA).

Freshwater supports science-based implementation of water protection and restoration programs at the level of government closest to water resources, having demonstrated capacity to sustain the programs. Assumption of Section 404 authority would result in state-level implementation rather than federal implementation of the authority. Minnesota is a leader among states in water resource protection, having developed professional regulatory expertise and specific watershed studies to support such a program.

There are many details still to be fully understood about assuming Section 404 authority of the CWA in Minnesota. We appreciate the work that BWSR, the Department of Natural Resources and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency have already done to study its feasibility, share information and seek input from governmental and non-governmental organizations. We will work with the BWSR Executive Director in hopes of continuing that process.

If you have any questions about Freshwater's position, please contact me.

Sincerely,



John Linc Stine, Executive Director
Freshwater Society
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(6510 468-7075 mobile)

cc: Senator Justin Eichorn

