



March 22, 2022

TO: Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee, Chair Ingebrigtsen  
FROM: Justin Hanson, Cedar River Watershed District Administrator  
RE: SF 3020 Conservation Reserve Program Incentives

Dear Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee,

I understand that your Environment and Natural Resource Finance Committee will host a hearing on March 22nd regarding SF 3020. This bill, as currently drafted, establishes funding for Minnesota landowners to work with their conservation partners and accelerate the enrollment of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) for Minnesota. CRP has been one of the most important tools for conservation organizations like the Cedar River Watershed District.

CRP establishes strategic prairie grasses that clean our streams, recharge our groundwater, reduce flood damage and provide excellent wildlife habitat. The ag community is experiencing inflation of land rent and inputs. In these times, it is difficult for landowners to justify conservation programs like CRP.

On behalf of the Cedar River Watershed District and board, I support CRP incentives.

CRP incentives are one tool in an expansive bucket of Federal, State and Local conservation programs that are delivered to the public through our County Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD). The SWCD's are the only organization that presently connects conservation programs like CRP incentives with private landowners across the State.

This bill, along with SWCD Aid bill (SF 3913 and HF 3719) would provide the essential needs for SWCD's to work with Watershed Districts and accomplish uncommon outcomes for Minnesota's land and water resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Justin Hanson', is positioned above the printed name.

Justin Hanson  
Cedar River Watershed District Administrator