

Support the Reauthorization of the Constitutional Lottery Dedication to the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

Members of the Minnesota State Legislature,

We, the undersigned organizations, ask that Minnesotans be given the opportunity to extend and enhance the dedication of state lottery proceeds to the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund through a constitutional amendment, allowing voters to pass on a tradition of conservation to the next generation.

In 1988, Minnesota voters overwhelmingly passed constitutional amendments to establish a state lottery and to create the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF), a permanent trust with principal funding provided by a portion of net lottery proceeds. Proving popular with Minnesotans, the ENRTF has been reapproved by two additional constitutional amendments. In 1990, 75.31% of voters upgraded the use of lottery proceeds from a statutory dedication to a constitutional dedication expiring in 2001. And in 1998, 73.95% of voters extended this dedication until 2025. Today, support for the ENRTF remains strong, with 73% of survey respondents favoring the rededication of lottery proceeds to the Trust Fund.

For over three decades, the ENRTF has offered a stable, long-term funding source for unique, innovative projects conducted by local and Tribal governments, non-profit and community organizations, colleges and universities, and federal and state agencies. Using funding recommendations from the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR), the Legislature has appropriated over \$900 million from the Trust Fund for the protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources. This crucial investment has protected ecosystems, aided local communities, promoted outdoor recreation, improved health outcomes, pursued environmental equity, bolstered agricultural resiliency, and supported strong businesses and good-paying jobs across the state.

We believe that Minnesotans deserve the opportunity to vote to renew the constitutional dedication of lottery proceeds to the ENRTF while dedicating additional lottery proceeds to the environment and reducing barriers for local organizations and communities to receive funding. The ENRTF will play a critical role in addressing emerging challenges to our natural resources. It's vital that we protect this funding for the years to come.

We have a rare chance to continue a tradition of stewardship in Minnesota and to improve and extend the effective use of our state lottery proceeds. We respectfully urge the Legislature to support placing the constitutional rededication of lottery proceeds on the ballot in 2024.

Sincerely...



