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Senator Scott Dibble
Senate Transportation Committee
3107 Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Ave W.
St. Paul, MN 55155

February 27, 2023

Dear Chair Dibble and Members of the Senate Transportation Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support for SF718, a bill to establish and fund a Highways for Habitat program and living snow fences under the Department of Transportation.

We write to express our support for the activities included in SF718 that would expand habitat and support the health of Minnesota's habitat and tree cover. Science affirms that natural climate solutions, including tree planting, soil health practices, and land restoration and management, are critical to reaching Minnesota's climate goals and deliver other important co-benefits for Minnesotans. These programs would invest in the state's natural infrastructure while also providing important co-benefits for wildlife, pollinators, clean air, and clean water.

In addition to these programs, The Nature Conservancy recognizes there are many tools in the toolbox to sustain and grow the health of our forests and working lands by using a right-fit approach for each type of landowner and landscape. We encourage the legislature to consider the programs in SF718 in addition to complementary natural climate solutions investments in Scientific and Natural Areas, Wildlife Management Areas, Aquatic Management Areas, floodplain protection, water storage, and tree-planting in forests and communities across the state.

Thank you for considering SF718 and your work on behalf of Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Pinkalla
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