

Chair Foug Hawj  
MN Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy  
1150 Minnesota Senate Building  
95 University Ave W.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

SF 4898 - Hoffman: Native rough fish provisions and aquatic farm licenses and taking and possessing fish conforming changes

Dear Chair Sen Hawj and committee members,

On behalf of the Minnesota angling community, I wish to offer support for HF4898.

Subjected to limitless exploitation and treated as trash, some species of Minnesota native fish are maligned due to their position next to truly invasive fish and are collectively called “rough fish”. For years, many ecologically significant native fish species in Minnesota have been unfairly persecuted at the hands of well-meaning yet ill-informed anglers who see **anything called a rough fish as bad**.

With HF4898 on the horizon, Minnesota is uniquely poised to change this narrative in support of species that function as ecologically significant, positive members of their ecological communities.

These native rough fish:

- Serve as hosts for imperiled native freshwater mussels
- Function as prey for terrestrial and aquatic predators including eagles and larger fish
- And provide genuine recreational and culinary opportunities to the angling public

I once guided a family from California who had never seen a redhorse sucker in person. They had never heard of a sucker, never heard the term rough fish, and only fished for largemouth bass. When we caught a handful of redhorse suckers adorned in their red spawning colors, the family told me that the redhorse sucker was their favorite fish they caught among the smallmouth bass, catfish, bluegill, and yellow perch we caught alongside them. Without the negative preconceptions that the sole term rough fish conveys, these species can start to be seen as ecologically, recreationally, and socially important by the existing angling public and by new anglers.

Thank you for hearing this bill. I believe that the Committee should advance the bill and continue to support this landmark native fish initiative to help break down misconceptions and support Minnesota’s native fish.

Hiroto Hayashi

Minnesota Angler, Writer, Photographer, and Fishing Guide