



Chair Founj Hawj
95 University Avenue W.
Room 3231
Minnesota Senate Bldg
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: SF 4898- Support of legislation regarding native rough fish

Dear Chair Hawj and committee members

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a letter in support of SF 4898. This bill comprehensively addresses many of the issues surrounding the reclassification of native fish in the state of Minnesota. Native rough fish are an integral part of aquatic ecosystems in Minnesota. This legislation will help ensure that our state statutes fully recognize the value of these fish and allow our state agencies to manage the fish for their long term population conservation and health.

After taking part in the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Native Rough Fish Work Group it was clear to our organization that many native fish species not classified as "game fish" are not being managed in a manner consistent with the critical ecosystem services they provide. The Minnesota Conservation Federation supports the recommendations for legislative action as outlined in the Department of Natural Resources Native Fish Conservation Report that was provided to the legislature. SF 4898 addresses many of the recommendations in the report.

The legislation outlined in SF 4898 and its house companion bill HF 4015 will make Minnesota a national leader in recognizing the ecological value of native rough fish species while also differentiating them from other invasive nonnative fish. It is exciting to see Minnesota as a leader in native rough fish conservation and this legislation bolsters the state's conservation legacy. The Minnesota Conservation Federation supports the passage of SF 4898.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Gausman", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brad Gausman
Executive Director
Minnesota Conservation Federation
brad@mncf.org