



Chairs Karin Housley and Sandra Pappas
Senate Capital Investment Committee
95 University Avenue West
St. Paul, MN 55155

January 27, 2025

Dear Sen. Housley, Sen. Pappas, and Members of the Capital Investment Committee:

As the Committee reviews the Governor's 2025 capital budget recommendations, we write to share our support for proposed investments in programs that will benefit people and nature, and will support communities across the state. We are particularly pleased to see the following investments and encourage the committee to consider investment at or above these levels:

- \$6.5 million for Natural Resources Acquisition and Betterment of Public Lands for the Department of Natural Resources

There are many important acquisition and betterment activities that are essential to ensure Minnesota's public lands provide multiple benefits for people and nature. The Nature Conservancy recommends an overall investment of \$18 million for forestry related efforts at DNR that would fall into the Acquisition and Betterment of Public land category, including reforestation and forest stand improvement, to include response to forest pests threatening one of the state's best assets -trees- on state forest lands.

The state's forests provide multiple benefits for carbon sequestration, resiliency, water quality and quantity, habitat, natural resources-based economic activity, and outdoor recreation.

- \$9.3 million for the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Program at the Board of Water and Soil Resources

This program helps advance water quality, water storage, and provides carbon and habitat benefits through a roughly 3:1 matching agreement of federal to state dollars through the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

While there are other worthy investments proposed to benefit the state's natural resources and drinking water, we emphasize those above. As this committee considers capital investments that can also address the challenges of climate, biodiversity loss and making Minnesota more resilient, we encourage you to include these investments among a suite of natural climate solutions.

Thank you for your work on behalf of Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Pinkalla
Government Relations Director
The Nature Conservancy in Minnesota