

Working Memorandum Number 3

July 1968

NATURAL RESOURCES

STATE OF MINNESOTA

Prepared for the  
Governor's Council on Executive Reorganization

by  
Public Administration Service

## Introduction

Conserving, protecting, and promoting the wise use and management of the state's natural resources is an important state function that has been given added emphasis in recent years. It has become apparent that we have been less than faithful to our trust in protecting our water and air resources. Difficult battles were fought to protect fish, birds, and game and now equally as difficult ones are being fought to protect the even more basic resources of air and water.

Typically, the management and protection of natural resources includes game and fish, forests, and soil and water resources, as well as the regulation of the exploitation of consumable resources. Control and protection of these resources requires the enforcement of many laws and regulations to ensure their wise and restrained use in the public interest.

Several state agencies are presently engaged in the conservation, protection, promotion, and regulation of the state's natural resources. The Department of Conservation now has the major responsibility. It is in charge of public lands and is responsible for: public and private forest management; fish and game protection, promotion, and development; soil and water conservation and use; mineral use regulation; and parks and recreation programs. Unfortunately a number of commissions and agencies have also been created over the years with overlapping responsibilities in the fields of soil and water conservation and mineral resources management. The Pollution Control Agency has broad responsibilities in air and water pollution; the Water Resources Board has broad responsibil-

ilities in promoting the wise use of water resources and specific responsibility for establishing watershed districts; and the Soil Conservation Commission promotes water and soil conservation by encouraging the formation of soil and water conservation districts and administering laws applicable to such districts. The Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Commission is charged with developing natural resources and training people in areas where iron resources have been depleted. Other agencies perform related activities. The Land Exchange Review Board reviews proposals for land exchange of state lands for federally or privately owned lands. It makes recommendations to the Land Exchange Commission which must approve all exchanges. The State Geographic Board determines the official names of lakes, streams, and geographic areas and the correct spellings of such names. The State Historical Society acquires and develops historical sites, buildings, and facilities.

It is generally recognized that the character and importance of natural resources are such that many diverse interests have a legitimate part to play in the public activities affecting them. The problem of administrative organization is how to deal with conflicts between the objectives of long term resources conservation, and the stimulation of immediate economic or use benefits. Minnesota has done extremely well in this field but the one great gap is in water resources management. There are too many agencies with responsibilities and programs in this vital field. Water is an integral part of all natural resources management and should be brought into an administration organization that will permit sound policy development, coordinated planning, and consistent execution of approved programs for all the state's resources.

## Proposed Organization

It is recommended that a Department of Natural Resources be established with broad responsibilities for sound policy development, coordinated planning, and effective and consistent execution and administration of programs related to the state's natural resources. The proposed department would be structured around the present Department of Conservation. The accompanying chart depicts the suggested structure of the proposed department. Proposed major units and their responsibilities would be as stated below.

### The Commissioner

The Commissioner would be appointed by the Governor and be responsible for the administration and direction of the entire department including the promulgating of regulations and the holding of hearings as authorized by law.

### Joint Executive-Legislative Land Exchange Commission

Such a commission should be created and be appointive by the Governor to approve all land exchanges of state owned lands for federally or privately owned lands. Such approval would be sought and recommended by the Commissioner of Natural Resources. The proposed joint commission should replace the present constitutional Land Exchange Commission comprised of the Governor, the Auditor, and the Attorney General.

### Natural Resources Advisory Board

Such a board should be created to be appointive by the Governor.

It should serve as an advisory body to the Commissioner on policy formulation and other matters as required. Its membership should include lay representatives of the general public of demonstrated knowledge and interest in natural resources protection, development, and management.

The Advisory Board should also advise the Commissioner on official names of lakes, streams, geographical sites and locations. The State Geographic Board which presently performs this function should be abolished. In addition, the Advisory Board should advise the Commissioner on projects and programs for the development of natural resources and vocational training in areas where iron range resources have been depleted. The Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Commission which presently approves such programs should be abolished.

#### Administrative and Staff Services

Functions of this unit would include personnel, budgeting, accounting, program planning and management, data processing, engineering, legal, public information, and general services for the entire department. Tourist information services of the Department of Conservation should be transferred to the proposed Tourism Division of the Department of Agriculture and Economic Development.

#### Fish and Game Division

This division would manage and protect fish and wildlife populations to assure sustained levels and would operate hatcheries and conduct research and surveys on fish and wildlife.

#### Lands and Forests Division

Functions of this division would include fire prevention and protec-

tion for, and multiple use management of, private and public forest lands. The division would also be responsible for the management, sale, or lease of state or other publicly owned lands.

#### Field Services Division

This division would be responsible for enforcement and public service associated with water sports, hunting and fishing and would conduct related safety programs. In addition it should issue hunting, fishing, and boat licenses.

#### Physical Resources Division

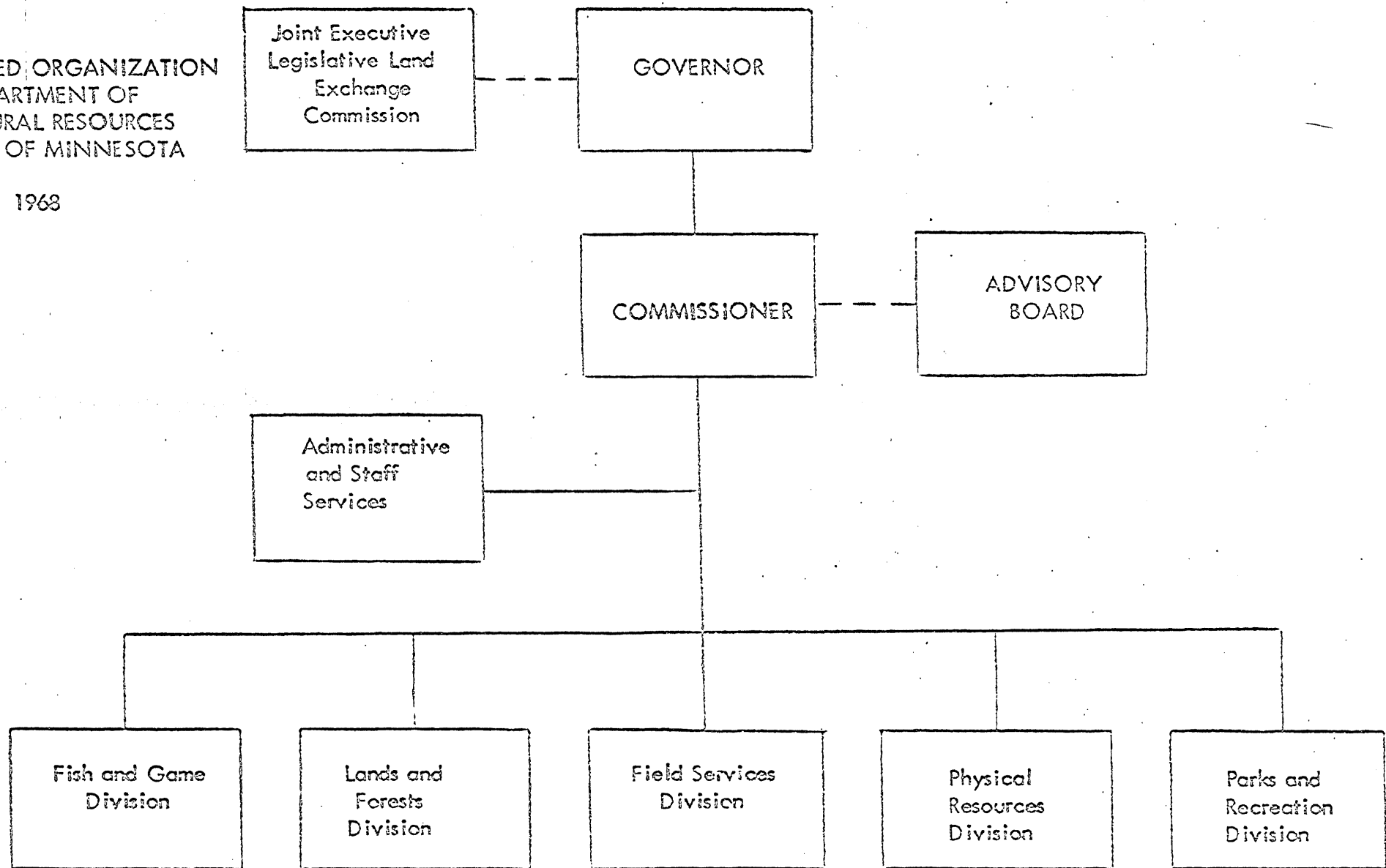
This division would administer programs and enforce regulations pertaining to air and water pollution control and generally should safeguard air, water, soils, minerals, and other natural physical resources.

#### Parks and Recreation Division

This division would acquire, develop, maintain, and operate parks, recreational reserves, wayside areas, and scenic and historical monuments and sites.

PROPOSED ORGANIZATION  
DEPARTMENT OF  
NATURAL RESOURCES  
STATE OF MINNESOTA

1968



## Proposed Functions and Their Derivatives

This section is devoted to an enumeration of the specific functions of major operating divisions of the proposed Department of Natural Resources and to their sources or derivation from existing units of the state government.

### Fish and Game Division

This division would:

1. Protect, develop, and manage fish and wildlife resources.
2. Manage fish and wildlife populations.
3. Conduct fact finding studies and surveys on game and furbearing species.
4. Acquire and develop public hunting grounds and wildlife management areas.
5. Conduct fact finding studies and surveys of fish, lakes, and streams; operate fish hatcheries; stock lakes and streams; and conduct rough fish control programs.
6. Issue permits related to fish and game management.
7. Control and give advice regarding the elimination of predator and nuisance birds and animals.

All of the above functions are presently performed by the Game and Fish Division of the Department of Conservation except item 7 which is performed by the Plant Industry Division of the Department of Agriculture.

### Lands and Forests Division

This division would:

1. Provide fire protection and prevention services to public and private forest lands.
2. Administer multiple use management programs of state forests; and administer timber sales on state lands.



3. Furnish technical assistance to owners of small forest tracts.
4. Maintain public campgrounds in state forests.
5. Operate nurseries for tree planting stock for public and private use.
6. Regulate the transportation of Christmas trees.
7. Cooperate with the Department of Health and Social Services on work projects for persons assigned to Youth Conservation Camps.
8. Conduct neighborhood Youth Corps projects in conjunction with federally financed Community Action Programs.
9. Administer, sell, and lease state owned lands outside state forests.
10. Act as agent for public school districts and the University of Minnesota in leasing or selling lands owned by them.
11. Conduct a program of land exchange with the federal government and private owners.
12. Investigate, hold hearings, and make recommendations on all land exchange proposals through the Commissioner to the Joint Executive-Legislative Land Exchange Commission.

Items 1 through 11 are presently performed by the Lands and Forestry Division of the Department of Conservation. Item 12 is presently performed by the Land Exchange Review Board which should be abolished.

#### Field Services Division

This division would:

1. Enforce game and fish laws, rules, and regulations.
2. Conduct investigations of purported violations of game and fish laws, rules, and regulations.
3. Conduct firearms safety programs including youth firearms safety programs.
4. Enforce firearms laws, rules, and regulations as applicable to hunting and fishing.

5. License and regulate boats and snowmobiles.
6. Issue hunting and fishing licenses including commercial fishing licensing and regulation.
7. Enforce water safety laws, rules, and regulations; conduct water safety training programs.

Items 1 through 4 are presently performed by the Enforcement and Field Service Division, item 5 by the Administration Division, and item 6 by the Game and Fish Division of the Department of Conservation. Item 7 is presently the responsibility of county sheriffs.

#### Physical Resources Division

This division would:

1. Protect public waters from encroachment; issue permits for the appropriation of water; and issue construction permits for work in the beds of lakes and streams and for bridges and crossings.
2. Conduct hydrologic surveys and other studies relating to water resources; and coordinate the collection of basic hydrologic data.
3. Represent the state in matters affecting public waters including boundary waters.
4. Prepare reports to county boards and district courts on plans for public drainage projects.
5. Administer the leasing, explorations, and development of public school district and University of Minnesota owned minerals and mineral rights.
6. Act as agent for counties in leasing mineral rights on tax forfeited lands.
7. Formulate and execute plans for the protection, improvement, development, utilization, and management of water resources of the state.
8. Conduct research on low grade minerals and promote the exploration and development of such minerals.

9. Plan and initiate programs and projects for the development of natural resources and for vocational training and rehabilitation of residents of counties where iron range resources have been depleted.
10. Administer all laws, rules, and regulations relating to the control and abatement of pollution of surface and ground waters of the state including the administration of the construction grant program for sewage treatment and disposal facilities.
11. Investigate, study, and report on problems of air pollution, land use as it relates to air and water pollution, and solid waste disposal.
12. Conduct hearings and approve the establishment of watershed districts.
13. Promote the systematic administration of state water policy.
14. Promote the formation of soil and water conservation districts; and administer laws applicable to their formation and operation.

Items 1 through 8 are presently performed by the Water, Soils, and Minerals Division of the Department of Conservation. Item 9 is the responsibility of the Commissioner of the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Commission which, as noted earlier, should be abolished. Items 10 and 11 are performed by the Pollution Control Agency which should be abolished. Items 12 and 13 are the responsibility of the Water Resources Board which should be abolished. Item 14 is performed by the Soil Conservation Commission which should be abolished.

#### Parks and Recreation Division

This division would:

1. Acquire, develop, maintain, and operate parks, recreational reserves, wayside areas, and scenic and historical sites, monuments, and facilities; and acquire access sites.
2. Operate revenue producing services such as lodges, cabin rentals, camping sites, wood sales, souvenirs, electric energy sales, and ice sales.

3. Conduct naturalist programs for entertainment and educational purposes.
4. Designate and coordinate recreational development such as hiking trails and canoe routes.
5. Maintain close liaison with the State Historical Society in the society's program of acquiring and developing historical sites, buildings, and monuments.

All the above functions are presently performed by the Parks and Recreation Division of the Department of Conservation.

## Staffing

If existing staffing patterns for the activities enumerated above were maintained, the personnel complement of the proposed Department of Natural Resources would total approximately 1,171 employees. Personnel for the several organizational units of the proposed departments would be drawn through transfer from the following existing sources:

### Administrative and Staff Services

From the Administration Division of the Department of Conservation	86
Sub-total	<u>86</u>

### Fish and Game Division

From the Game and Fish Division of the Department of Conservation	350
Sub-total	<u>350</u>

### Lands and Forests Division

From the Lands and Forestry Division of the Department of Conservation	329
Sub-total	<u>329</u>

### Field Services Division

From the Enforcement and Field Service Division of the Department of Conservation	153
From the Administration Division of the Department of Conservation	6
From the Game and Fish Division of the Department of Conservation	10
Sub-total	<u>169</u>

### Physical Resources Division

From the Water, Soils, and Minerals Division of the Department of Conservation	76
From the Water Resources Board	2
From the Pollution Control Agency	46
From the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Commission	28
Sub-total	<u>152</u>

Parks and Recreation Division

From the Parks and Recreation Division of the Department of Conservation

Sub-total  $\frac{85}{85}$

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Approximate Grand Total 1,171

ADDENDUM

Working Memorandum Number 3

NATURAL RESOURCES

(Steering Committee Meeting, July 9, 1968)

The general consensus was overwhelmingly in support of a comprehensive Department of Natural Resources as proposed in the memorandum. It was agreed, however, that the Physical Resources Division was too large and perhaps too strong, vis a vis the other proposed divisions, and should be placed under a Deputy Commissioner for Physical Resources and subdivided into two divisions, viz., a Division of Water and Air and a Division of Soils and Minerals. Changes to reflect this agreement and other specific points are as follows:

Organization Chart -- make changes reflecting above agreement.

Page 5, Physical Resources Division -- change to read Deputy Commissioner for Physical Resources. Line 1; substitute "Deputy Commissioner" for "division", and insert the following new units after ". . . physical resources."

Water and Air Division

This division would administer programs and enforce regulations pertaining to air and water pollution control and water management.

Soils and Minerals Division

This division would administer programs in the management, protection, and development of soil and mineral resources and administer the soil conservation district programs and laws.

Page 7, item 10 -- change "outside" to read "within".

Page 8, item 7 at top of page -- should be changed to read "Assist local authorities in the development and enforcement of water safety laws,

rules, and regulations and . . . etc." In the paragraph following item 7, insert "and 7" after "4". Also delete the last sentence beginning "Item 7 . . . ."

Page 8 -- Physical Resources Division should be deleted and "Water and Air Division" substituted therefor; the functions by numbers to be performed by this division as 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 11, 12, and 13. This should be followed by: Soils and Minerals Division which would perform the functions enumerated as items 5, 6, 8, and 11. Item 9 would also be performed by this division except for those matters concerned with vocational rehabilitation which would be transferred to a Vocational Rehabilitation Division discussed in Working Memorandum Number 7.