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# **FULL EMPLOYMENT OF MINNESOTA'S NATURAL RESOURCES**

**-- A SPECIAL MESSAGE --**

**To Members of the Sixty-third Legislative Session  
by  
Governor Karl F. Rolvaag,**



LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE  
STATE OF MINNESOTA

**Monday, April 8, 1963**

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Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, and Members of the  
Sixty-third Session of the Legislature of the  
State of Minnesota:

A vital part of the program which I believe should be enacted this session for the good of our state, concerns the full employment and rational redevelopment of the natural resources with which we have been so generously endowed. I know that we have a mutual desire to protect these resources from spoilation and abuse.

I firmly believe in a comprehensive and realistic program for the development of these resources and have advocated one for a long time. I outlined the essentials of this program in an address to the Hibbing Chamber of Commerce on July 31, 1962. It has now been updated with the knowledge, assistance and concurrence of the Minnesota Natural Resources Council. They have endorsed this program.

The objectives of such a program are universally accepted and must be approached in a nonpartisan spirit. The federal government has long been engaged in such a program. New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, all have within recent years enacted legislation in this field. I recognize that interested citizens in this state have and are working hard for such a program and I urge them to redouble their efforts. They have my earnest support in their endeavors.

A program to protect and conserve our natural resources today is practical and farsighted. The investment now is substantially less than it will be in the years to come. As our population grows, possible park sites may well disappear or become too costly to acquire; the shores of lakes and streams are being heavily developed and, as a result, the cost of access will become prohibitive or otherwise impossible; wetlands are disappearing; and soil and water conservation programs are suffering from conflicting jurisdictional and philosophic problems, overlapping agencies and differences in state and federal law.

The program which I advocate would be a positive aid to the economic development of the state. The tourist and forest industries would be greatly benefited. Topographic mapping and hydrologic studies are urgently needed by state and municipal governments and would be of great and vast assistance to industry. These benefits are not exclusive, as you well know.

We have the knowledge, the available facilities and the men who have made a career in natural resources who can do the job. We cannot disregard the situation any longer, the duty to enact a comprehensive program rests solely with us. It should be one program that coordinates all efforts in the true sense of total conservation.

Minnesota is a bountiful state and you, as representatives of the people, are conservators of this bounty. By the establishment of a program on natural resources such as I recommend, this can be one of the most historic sessions of the legislature.

I, therefore, respectfully recommend to you and request your most thoughtful and immediate attention to the following program:

1. I recommend a speed up of purchase and development of public access to lakes. Minnesota has over 12,000 lakes but there are only about 500 public accesses and I recommend that we acquire 4,500 more by 1970.

We should increase the wetlands, game refuge, public hunting grounds and wildlife production acreage to 250,000 acres. We should acquire 250 new natural pike spawning areas.

Only one-half of our lakes have been mapped and surveyed. I recommend that we map and survey the remaining lakes so that effective game and fish management practices may be established. Presently, over 2,000 Minnesota lakes have neither fish nor fowl. I recommend development of 1,000 additional lakes for waterfowl production. In addition to reclamation of 50 lakes by chemical treatment to remove undesirable fish populations and stocking them with stream trout, I recommend the acquisition and development of stream banks throughout the state at the rate of 100 miles per year. Water control structures and food and cover plantings are essential to wildlife development. The investment required for this comprehensive plan would be approximately \$12,050,000 over the ten year period.

2. Over 5 million acres of Minnesota forest land need reforestation. Because of the new and dramatic developments in using pulp wood stock, of which Minnesota can be a super abundant source, it is imperative that we push forward with a program to produce rapidly growing varieties of timber. More than 5,000 products are today made from timber crops available in Minnesota. Sales of Minnesota wood products in 1961, amounted to \$219,000,000. Yet, according to the Forest Products Information committee, the surface has barely been scratched. It anticipates that Minnesota, if it plans and acts now, can in another decade double its present income from forest products to \$460,000,000 annually!

We must prepare now for the future. I propose that we invest during the next ten year period \$5,000,000 for timber stand improvement, site preparation and tree planting including aid to counties; \$1,500,000 for improvement and extension of forest roads for fire protection, timber access and hunting, fishing and recreational access; \$100,000 per year for increased nursery tree production and tree planting; \$100,000 per year for developing new forest campgrounds and rehabilitating old campgrounds; \$2,000,000 for acquisition of 100,000 acres of erodible lands along and tributary to the Mississippi River from St. Paul to the Iowa border, the Memorial Hardwood Forest.

3. It has been estimated that 24 tourists coming into a Minnesota community daily are the equivalent of having a local industry with a \$100,000 annual payroll! With an increasing tourist trade and an expected state population increase of 600,000 by 1970, more demands will be placed on our already inadequate recreation facilities. In the last few years alone demand for camping facilities in Minnesota increased by over 600 percent!

The challenge and the necessity are clearly here. During the next ten years I recommend the establishment of 40 new state parks, totaling 50,000 acres, at an acquisition cost of \$3,750,000. In addition, I recommend the addition of 10,000 acres to existing parks at a cost of \$750,000. These two acquisitions will provide total park area near the recommended minimum requirements for present needs. Further expansion should be considered in the near future. In addition, we should provide a system of state aids to county and local parks systems.

We must expand, develop and build new camp sites and picnic areas. There is an immediate need to expand and develop new children's group camps. We need new boating and bathing facilities throughout the state park system.

7. Our topographic mapping must be completed. Topographic mapping is essential to a Full Employment of Natural Resources program. Such maps are necessary for all planning and development, flood control, drainage, irrigation, sewage disposal, recreation, and in all water resource studies; for planning of soil conservation practices and projects, and as a base for soil mapping; as a base for geologic mapping, and in exploration for mineral resources; in land classification and the formulation of land management policies; in forest administration, forest inventory, planning of access roads and fire protection; in the planning and development of parks and other recreational areas; in the recreational use of water; in administration and improvement of fish and wildlife habitat; in planning public access to lakes.

At present less than 40 percent of the State of Minnesota is adequately mapped. At present costs, mapping of the entire state can be substantially completed in about ten years at a cost to the state of about \$4,000,000 with the federal government, under its present policies, assuming about half of the cost.

8. Aids from the state must be provided to watershed districts and soil conservation district programs to pay for public benefits arising from works of improvement in the districts. I recommend that the state provide \$2,500,000 for up to 50 percent of the cost of dam construction, cost of land for fish and wildlife development, lake improvement and recreation areas. Such funds are not otherwise available and many soil conservation programs are unable, as a consequence, to proceed.

9. Finally, I recommend a statewide natural resources and recreation committee to assist in planning natural resource development and recreational activity in Minnesota.

This Full Employment of Resources program is practical, feasible and urgently needed. It will pay heavy dividends. It is flexible in that it can be reviewed by you each biennium and readjusted to the needs of the time.

To finance the program I recommend a tax of 1¢ per package on cigarettes. The proceeds of this tax will permit the program to get under way immediately. As the program progresses, I recommend a study of sources of future revenue to permit reaching our present goals within ten years. Federal funds will be available to assist us in some areas.

This task is important. It is necessary. It cannot wait. Members of this Sixty-third Session, let us work in concert with one another for Minnesota. Let us work hand in hand with nature and with God and together renew the face of the earth in Minnesota.