



Friends of Minnesota Scientific & Natural Areas

March 6, 2023

Representative Rick Hansen, Chair, and
House Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee

VIA E-MAIL ONLY

Peter.Strohmeier@house.mn.gov

Re: Support of Minnesota Swan Protection Act (HF 2368)
For Committee Hearing, Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Dear Chair Hansen and Committee Members:

Friends of Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas (FMSNA) is a Minnesota non-profit, tax-exempt [“501(c)(3)”] corporation organized to protect and enhance Minnesota’s Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs). SNAs are the “crown jewels” of Minnesota’s state land base, protecting some of Minnesota’s rarest and most sensitive plant and animal species and the ecosystem upon which they depend.

First, it is important to state that FMSNA recognizes and fully supports the Minnesota Constitution, including Article XIII, Section 12, which states: “**Hunting and fishing** and the taking of game and fish are a valued part of our heritage that shall be **forever preserved** for the people and **shall be managed by law and regulation for the public good.**” [Emphasis added.]

FMSNA also recognizes that the science is clear. Lead is a potent neurotoxin, for which **no safe exposure level exists.** <https://www.lung.org/clean-air/at-home/indoor-air-pollutants/lead> [Last visited 3/4/23.]

Therefore, FMSNA supports the Minnesota Swan Protection Act (HF 2368) as an important legislative step forward, for “the public good”, towards “getting the lead out” of our hunting and fishing activities. If this bill is adopted, we urge the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to consider “swan resting areas”, in or near Minnesota’s Scientific and Natural Areas, as a high priority for designation.

As a reminder, we are on record advocating that the Minnesota Legislature adopt comprehensive legislation to require the phase out of lead ammunition and lead fishing tackle – state-wide -on all Minnesota land and waters. Our advocacy is consistent with the Minnesota Environmental Partnership Collaborative Priorities 2023. (See attachment.)

FMSNAs looks forward to working with you – and other legislators on both sides of the aisle – to promote the passage of Minnesota Swan Protection Act (HF 2368) and to adopt subsequent legislation to **phase out the use of lead ammunition and lead fishing tackle on all of Minnesota’s land and waters.**

Rep. Rick Hansen, Chair
House Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee
March 6, 2023

On behalf of FMSNA, I **thank you** in advance for your kind consideration. Please contact me any time, if you have questions or comments.

Very truly yours,

Thomas E. Casey

Thomas E. Casey
Board Chair
Friends of Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas, Inc.

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Enclosure:
MEP Collaborative Priorities 2023 (page 5)

The Following 16 Organizations Have Signed On In Support of This Letter:

Audubon Minnesota Iowa Missouri
Austin Coalition for Environmental Sustainability
American Bird Conservancy
Clean River Partners
CURE (Clean Up the River Environment)
Friends of the Cloquet Valley State Forest
Friends of the Mississippi River
Minnesota Center of Environmental Advocacy
Minnesota Division, Izaak Walton League of America
Minnesota Environmental Partnership (MEP)
Minnesota Herpetological Society
Minnesota Ornithologists' Union (MOU)
Minnesota Well Owners Organization (MNWOO)
Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society
Sierra Club North Star Chapter
St. Paul Audubon Society