

Friends of Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas

A Minnesota Non-profit, Tax-Exempt Corporation
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May 29, 2018

Governor Mark Dayton
130 State Capitol
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Chapter 208, 2018 Session Laws (HF 3423)
Outdoor Legacy Funds – Hunting, Trapping, and Fishing on Scientific and Natural Areas

Dear Governor Dayton,

Friends of Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas (FMSNA) is a Minnesota non-profit, tax-exempt [“501(c)(3)’] corporation whose mission is to advocate for the protection, management, and perpetuation of Minnesota’s 160+ Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs) in an undisturbed natural state.

On May 21, 2018, the Minnesota Legislature presented to you Chapter 208 (HF 3423) regarding Outdoor Legacy funds. The Scientific and Natural Areas (“SNAs”) program is cited on page 2. Unfortunately, page 26, lines 25.14 to 26.15, states that lands acquired with these funds must be “...open to public taking of fish and game.” This language is **unconstitutional**; it does **not** conform to Minnesota Constitution (Article XI, Section 15), which states “Land acquired in fee with money deposited in the outdoor heritage fund ... must be open to the public taking of fish and game **unless otherwise provided by law.**” [Emphasis added]

Our organization has consistently advocated that SNAs were never intended to be open to all forms of public hunting, trapping, and fishing. Instead, hunting, trapping, and fishing should only be allowed on an SNA if there is a sound biological basis to manage the species - and there is no “feasible and prudent alternative.”

SNA enabling legislation supports this view. The purpose of a Scientific and Natural Area is "... to protect and perpetuate in an **undisturbed natural state** those natural features ..." [Minn. Stat. 86A.05, Subd. 5(a). Emphasis added.] Furthermore, "State scientific and natural areas **shall** be administered ... in a manner consistent with the purposes of this subdivision to preserve, perpetuate, and **protect** from **unnatural** influences the scientific and educational resources within them." [Minn. Stat. 86A.05, Subd. 5(c). Emphasis added.]

FMSNA respectfully requests that, if you decide to sign this bill, you state that the legislation should be interpreted such that SNA acquisitions are closed to hunting, trapping, and fishing - unless there is sound biological basis to manage the species and there is no feasible and prudent alternative.

On behalf of Friends of Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas, I **thank you** in advance for your kind attention.

Please contact me any time if our organization can be of any assistance.

Very truly yours,

Thomas E. Casey

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

cc: Board of Directors - FMSNA