



To: House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Division

Re: Please Support HF 1569: Working Lands Drinking Water Protection Program

March 27, 2019

Dear Representative,

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to express our strong support for HF 1569, the Working Lands Wellhead Protection program, which is a landmark opportunity to invest in Minnesota's health, rural economies and communities, and water quality.

Getting to Water Quality with the Crops of the Future

Cities across the state are facing increased levels of nitrate pollution and escalating costs for dealing with them. This program is a long-term, market-based approach to demonstrate how perennial and winter annual crops can protect farmers' prosperity as well as community drinking water.

Using perennials and winter annual crops leave the land covered – and working – through much more of the year. Compared to systems that leave more bare soil, these plants capture more sunlight and rain to produce not only profitable crops for farmers, but healthier soil, cleaner water and better climate protection.

At a recent gathering, Commissioner Peterson shared that he is seeing an exploding interest among farmers in new cropping systems and options for profitability. This Working Lands Wellhead Protection program is ready for take-off to serve Minnesota farmers and their communities.

Please support this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Morse".

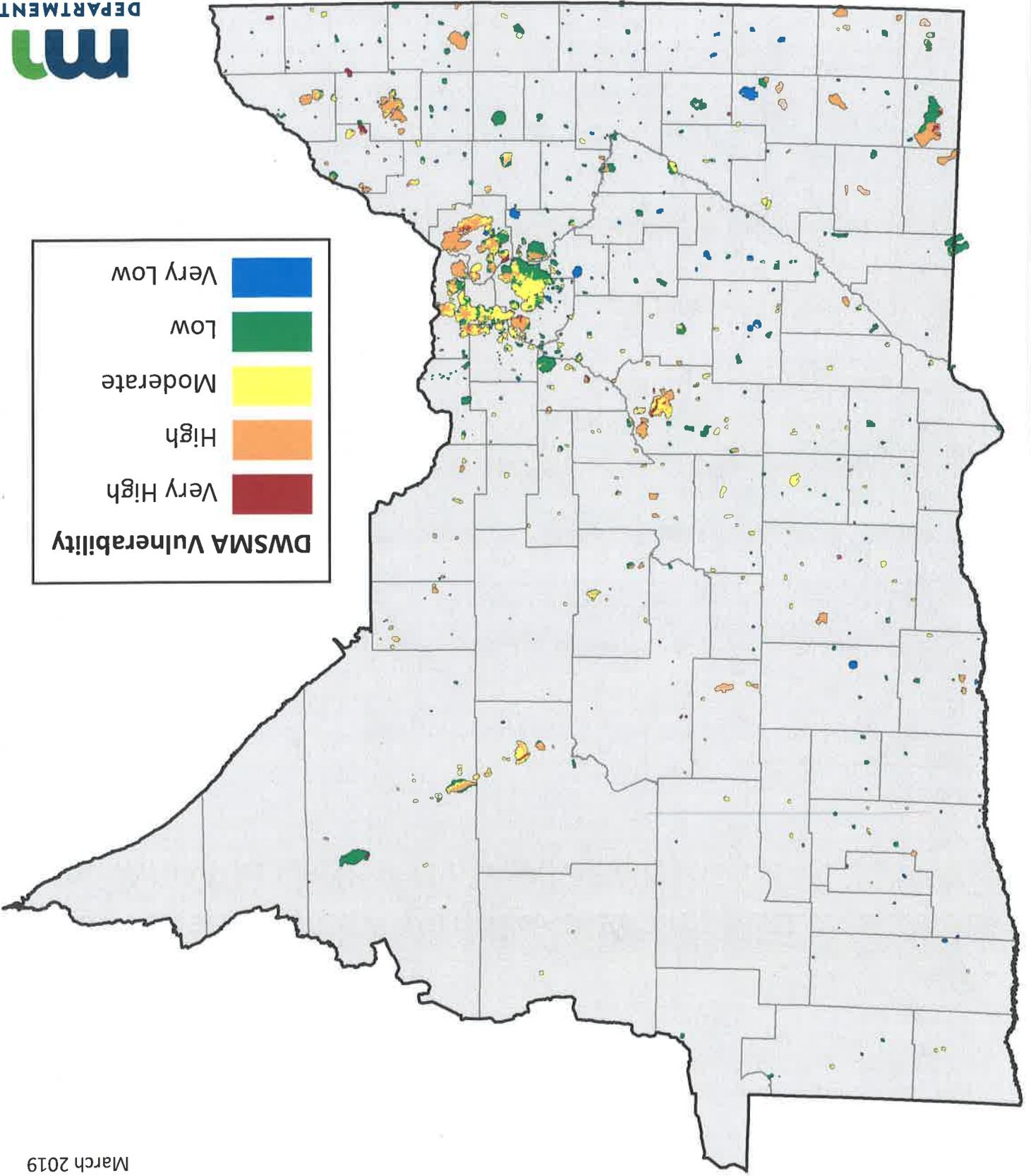
Steve Morse
Executive Director

Alliance for Sustainability
A.C.E.S. (Austin Coalition for Environmental Sustainability)
CURE (Clean Up Our River Environment)
Clean Water Action- Minnesota
Environment Minnesota
Environmental Working Group
Freshwater
Friends of the Cloquet Valley State Forest
Friends of the Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas
Friends of the Mississippi River
Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

Minnesota Native Plant Society
Minnesota Ornithologists Union
Minnesota Trout Unlimited
MN350 Action
Izaak Walton League – MN Division
Land Stewardship Project
Renewing the Countryside
Save Our Sky Blue Waters
St. Croix River Association
Wilderness in the City

Drinking Water Supply Management Areas (DWSMAs) in the State of Minnesota

March 2019





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Mr. Trevor Russell
Friends of the Mississippi River
101 East 5th Street, Suite 2000
Saint Paul, MN 55101

St. Paul, MN - March 26, 2019

Dear Mr. Russell,

We would like to comment on the importance to agriculture of the Working Lands bill that you and others are supporting with the Minnesota Legislature. As you know, we are strong advocates for this bill and we have provided testimony to this extent to various committees of Minnesota Congress in recent months.

We are highly enthusiastic about the program goal to accelerate and broaden commercialization of additional crops for Midwest agriculture, including new winter-hardy annual crops and perennial crops. From our point of view, these crops can significantly enhance to the productivity and resilience of Midwest agriculture. Furthermore, these crops are innovative in addressing sustainability issues such as soil protection, water quality, and nutrient use efficiency and run-off.

These crops are bound to enable the development of new food and beverage products. Some of these crops, like Kernza as example, are attractive for their high-value nutritional content which makes them ideal new ingredients for our products. As you know, we are already funding research projects related to some of these crop characteristics and we are likely to continue in this endeavor in the future. Furthermore, we value the aspect of this project aimed at developing supply-chains as critical to connect growth in supply and demand for these new crops.

Last, the Forever Green program that has developed these crops and is moving them now into commercialization is the only significant program of which we are aware worldwide that is succeeding in addressing the complex intersection between sustainability, farm income, and end-use altogether. While the request in the Working Lands bill is focused on Minnesota, the outcomes of this and other projects part of Forever Green are bound to have impact on agriculture research and supply chains far beyond our state and country.

Sincerely,
Gabe Gusmini
R&D Director, Agro Discovery

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gabe Gusmini".



March 11th, 2019

Dear members of the House Water Division Committee,

My name is Tracy Singleton and I own the Birchwood Cafe in Minneapolis and I wholeheartedly support the funding proposal for the Working Lands for Drinking Water Protection Program.

At the Birchwood, we've been serving food made from local and sustainably sourced ingredients for over two decades, we call it "Good Real Food". We were first attracted to the perennial wheat Kernza after learning about its environmental benefits as a super crop, protecting both our water and soil. In 2014 we were one of the first restaurants in the country to offer Kernza on our menu and since then we have incorporated it into more than a dozen menu items, also featuring foods made with it at the State Fair through our partnership with the Minnesota Farmers Union. Our customers love it, both the taste and the story of the grain's potential and the interest and demand for Kernza is growing.

To date, we have relied on personal connections with the University of Minnesota and Green Lands Blue Waters for the grain and are only able to get it in flour form. Funding the Working Lands Drinking Water Protection project will help to provide an orderly production ramp up of crops like Kernza and other perennial and winter annuals that are conservation super crops. This development of supply is essential to commercialization and supply chain development which will make the grain more accessible and allow for innovation so that we can get Kernza processed in a variety of ways (puffed, steel cut, rolled etc...) that we look forward to serving to our customers. The Forever Green initiative is good for the environment and good for small business.

Please support this measure to protect public drinking water supplies while enabling the development of production methods and supply chains for this next generation of agricultural super crops.

Sincerely,
Tracy Singleton
Birchwood Cafe Owner/CEO

11 March, 2019

We are Sandy and Jay Boss Febbo, founders, co-owners and co-brewers of Bang Brewing in Saint Paul.

With this letter, we are expressing support for the Working Lands Drinking Water Protection Program. We are excited for the potential for this program to improve Kernza availability and economics.

We have been working with the University of Minnesota, Green Lands Blue Waters, and The Land Institute for more than two years to acquire Kernza for brewing. We successfully brewed the first Kernza beer in the region in 2017 and have since produced three additional Kernza beer styles showcasing this grains broad potential for brewing while introducing it to curious consumers.

As brewers dedicated to the use of sustainably farmed ingredients and as members of the NRDC's Brewers for Clean Water Campaign we are very impressed by how Kernza can offer major environmental benefits as well as grain production. Our customers have been very receptive to our Kernza beers and want to help create an agriculture that increases both production and conservation.

Despite our sincere interest and commitment to using Kernza we have had significant challenges in obtaining a stable, reliable and affordable supply of Kernza and believe this program will help solve current supply chain issues. Funding the Working Land Program is good for the environment, and for business as it would allow us the opportunity to expand production.

Best regards,

Sandy and Jay Boss Febbo
Owners/Brewers
Bang Brewing
2320 Capp Road
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55114

