

April 22, 2020

Melissa Barrick, District Manager
Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District
322 Laurel Street, Suite #13
Brainerd, MN 56401

RE: Letter of Support: Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District

Dear Ms. Barrick:

On behalf of MN-ND-SD chapter of The Nature Conservancy, we offer our support in the form of indirect costs for Crow Wing SWCD's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund proposal titled "**Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Forest Restoration and Enhancements**". This restoration and enhancement proposal developed in partnership with the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape program targets lands that represent the critical ground water recharge areas for local rivers, lakes, private and community drinking water sources. Both the SWCD and Great River Greening are a valued partner within the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape partnership representing a critical coalition working to implement watershed protection projects in the Mississippi Headwaters.

The Mississippi Headwaters forests, grasslands and wetlands provide critical habitat, clean air and drinking water benefits for over one million Minnesota's. Many of the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape area watersheds are listed in the top ten within the US Forest Service Northeast Region for their ability to produce clean water. Habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation are substantially altering the lands and waters of this vital landscape. Wetland loss and deforestation rates in Minnesota are the first and second highest in the country, respectively, with the majority of this loss happening squarely within the Mississippi Headwaters region. This land use alteration has a direct and profound impact on habitat and water quality, regional wetlands and associated upland communities. The Crow Wing SWCD proposal will help to conserve water quality, wildlife habitat, and forest productivity on critical lands within the Mississippi Headwaters.

The Conservancy, as a sub-award recipient, will provide, as leverage, indirect expenses totaling approximately \$59,000 to help support Crow Wing SWCD's ENRTF proposal. Note that these indirect expenses will not be tracked or reported and should not be construed as match to the ENRTF Award.

We support the Crow Wing SWCD proposal protecting critical minor watersheds through restoration and enhancement in the Mississippi Headwaters. Thank you for the opportunity to share our support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Shaw', written in a cursive style.

Douglas Shaw Ph.D.
Assistant State Director
The Nature Conservancy, MN-ND-SD Chapter