



## The Toro Company

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April 24, 2020

Eric Watkins  
Professor, Horticultural Science  
University of Minnesota  
1970 Folwell Ave.  
St Paul MN 55108

Dr. Watkins,

I am writing to express strong support of your grant proposal *Optimizing Youth Sports Fields to Reduce Environmental Impact*, the objectives of which have great merit and will provide much-needed information to stakeholders such as sports field managers, communities, and public policy officials. I serve as Senior Principal Research Scientist in the Center for Technology, Research, and Innovation at The Toro Company, which is a leader in the production of landscape maintenance equipment and technology. In that role, we seek to develop innovative products that improve the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of the industry.

The research you have proposed to conduct through the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources offers the exciting opportunity for collaboration across several unique disciplines as well as between the University of Minnesota and The Toro Company. Toro is excited to offer the use of our state-of-the-art mobile sensor platform known as the Precision Sense 6000 (PS6000). This device is capable of characterizing field surface and soil characteristics using georeferenced data and has been shown to produce unique insights for sports turf professionals and land managers, alike. Moreover, we welcome close collaboration with the University through which we can share our more than 20 years of experience in precision landscape management and look forward to learning alongside the research team. Leveraging technology like the PS6000 in the context of the social, environmental, and economic expertise of the project team can fundamentally change our understanding of sports field management. Simply put, we will better understand how to optimize sports field management to produce safe and sustainable fields using our innovative products.

Again, I would like to reiterate my strong support for your proposal and I look forward to the significant benefits that are sure to result from your work.

Sincerely,

Joshua C. Friell, Ph.D.  
The Toro Company