



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of Governor Tim Pawlenty

130 State Capitol ♦ 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155

September 7, 2005

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Commissioner, Department of Agriculture
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Gene Merriam
Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources
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Commissioner, Department of Health
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Sheryl Corrigan
Commissioner, Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155

Ron Harnack
Executive Director, Board of Water and Soil Resources
520 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Commissioners and Director Harnack:

Minnesotans take seriously the importance of protecting our valuable wetlands. In that regard, I am writing to you in your capacity as members of the Clean Water Cabinet (CWC) concerning the *2001-2003 Minnesota Wetland Report* issued by the Board of Water and Soil Resources. With the backdrop of this valuable data, we can now make decisions and take appropriate actions.

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Based on this report, Minnesotans can be comforted that significant efforts have been made by the agricultural and conservation communities to improve wetlands and associated uplands through voluntary programs like the Wetland and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Programs (WREP and CREP). These gains will enhance water quality and wildlife habitat throughout our state.

However, I believe we should consider doing more to limit the loss of wetlands through the regulatory mechanisms of the state's Wetland Conservation Act (WCA).

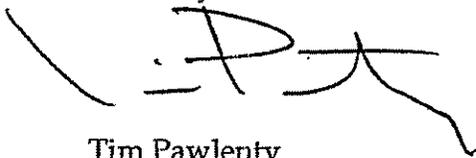
Specifically, I ask that the CWC report to me on the following issues so that we may more closely align with the principle of "no net loss:"

1. Improvements to the accounting and reporting system for wetlands.
2. Alternatives to the existing WCA exemptions.
3. Alternatives to the existing replacement ratios.
4. Improvements to voluntary efforts that build on the success of the past but require a minimum of additional resources.
5. Other recommendations you deem appropriate.

It is my sincere hope that through the combined efforts of regulatory enhancements and voluntary efforts, Minnesota will further protect our important wetlands.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Pawlenty', written over a horizontal line.

Tim Pawlenty
Governor