

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
**ADVANCING
CONSERVATION**

I've always believed that solving big problems happens only when enough people come together around a new way of doing things. Today, we face many challenges, but with them come opportunities. I'm confident this moment can spark innovative solutions that protect the places we cherish, address the threats of climate and water pollution, and create a future where your zip code does not dictate your access to health, opportunity, and the wonders of Minnesota's outdoors.



Paul Austin
Executive Director

To build this future together, we need responsible, forward-looking leaders willing to take courageous actions while working to find common ground. This fall, Minnesotans will elect a governor, state senators, state representatives, and municipal leaders. Find out who's running for local offices in your community at: myballotmn.sos.state.mn.us

This special edition of our newsletter is designed to help both candidates and voters understand the conservation issues important to Minnesotans. We hope you'll seek out opportunities to speak to your candidates to find out if they share your conservation values and have the resolution to act.

If you are a candidate yourself, thank you! Running for public office is itself an act of courage. Our policy team is here to support you with answers to your questions about conservation issues at: info@conservationminnesota.org

Together, I know we can protect all that makes Minnesota special.

The work of Conservation Minnesota is guided by your values and priorities. We listen to Minnesotans and focus on solving the conservation problems that matter most to you.

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**CONSERVATION
MINNESOTA**

**CONSERVATION
GUIDE**

for

**VOTERS &
CANDIDATES**

ELECTION 2022

ENSURING HEALTHY FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES FOR ALL

Minnesota has an opportunity to address historic disparities and ensure that no community is disproportionately impacted by pollution and that everyone has opportunities to benefit from nature.

To realize this future, we need elected officials willing to do the hard work with the knowledge of what it takes for communities to prosper.



Improving Clean Water

In Minnesota, we expect the lakes and rivers we use for boating, fishing, and swimming to be clean and the water we drink to be safe. But roughly half of our lakes and rivers don't meet water quality standards, and communities across Minnesota are challenged to provide contaminant-free drinking water.

Initiatives to improve water quality include:

- **LEAD SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENT**

An estimated 100,000+ lead service lines carry drinking water into Minnesota homes. To provide safe water, funding must be secured to map and replace all lead service lines.

- **PHASING OUT PFAS**

Studies continue to find more toxic PFAS chemicals in our environment and drinking water. These “forever chemicals” have been linked to immune system impairments, decreased fertility, and increases in some cancers. Nonessential uses of PFAS should be eliminated to protect public health.

Learn more about the issues and our priorities at: conservationminnesota.org



Protecting & Enhancing Natural Resources

Minnesota is celebrated for its parks, trails, and open spaces but protecting our outdoors and ensuring everyone has the same access to enjoy these spaces takes funding and vision.

Initiatives to adequately fund our natural resources include:

- **PROTECTING DEDICATED CONSERVATION FUNDS**

The Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) and the Clean Water, Land, & Legacy Amendment were created to provide dedicated funding for conservation. In previous years, the Legislature has attempted to raid these funds. Elected officials should instead work to protect and enhance these funding sources.

- **LOTTERY REDEDICATION**

State lottery proceeds have invested over \$900 million through the ENRTF in the last 30 years, but this will expire in 2025. The Legislature should pass a ballot measure to reauthorize the constitutional dedication and provide additional resources that address inequities in access to safe drinking water, pollution prevention, and access to parks and trails.



Tackling Climate Change

All levels of government must do their part to prevent the worst impacts of climate change. Our state needs to eliminate climate pollution and improve air quality, especially in communities already disproportionately impacted by pollution. We can guide a transition that drives innovation, creates jobs, and mitigates climate consequences.

Initiatives to prevent climate impacts include:

- **100% CLEAN ELECTRICITY & NET-ZERO GOAL**

Minnesota can commit to carbon reduction by setting an economy-wide Net-Zero Goal by 2040 for greenhouse gas emissions. We can help reach this goal with a 100% Clean Electricity Standard to ensure renewable power generation.

- **CLEAN FUEL STANDARD**

Transportation and agriculture are two of our largest sources of climate pollution. Our innovative agricultural industries are well positioned to lead in carbon reductions in both sectors if we adopt a Minnesota-based Clean Fuel Standard.

- **ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) INFRASTRUCTURE**

67% of Minnesotans say they would consider buying an EV as their next vehicle. More charging locations must be built across the state to match the demand of a growing EV market.

- **GRID INFRASTRUCTURE & ENERGY STORAGE**

Ensuring the reliability and resilience of our clean energy future requires investment in grid infrastructure. Innovative financing and grants can accelerate the development of smart-grid technology, energy storage, and transmission capability.



above The Yellow-headed Blackbird is one of many Minnesota birds who are projected to lose half their habitat in coming decades due to climate change.

left Jay Cooke State Park

cover Aerial view near Duluth

