

FRESHWATER

March 20, 2024

Chair FOUNG HAWJ
Minnesota Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee
3231 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Support for Clean Water Council supplemental funding recommendations

Dear Chair Hawj and committee members,

Thank you for considering the Clean Water Council recommendations for supplemental funding projects. With more than \$25 Million available for appropriation, this is an important opportunity to make headway on clean water issues across the state.

Freshwater staff members regularly attend the Clean Water Council monthly meetings, and we have provided input to the Council on many policy issues – and on their new strategic plan. Overall, we have been impressed with the robust discussion and thoughtful consideration that Council members have given to issues ranging from urban stormwater runoff to rural drinking water wells, a topic that has gained considerable attention this session.

We strongly support the Clean Water Council's latest supplemental funding recommendations, which were approved unanimously by the Council at their March 18 meeting. We believe that your approval of these recommendations would achieve the following:

- Address urgent water issues such as **nitrate contamination of private drinking water wells**, and **chloride pollution of lakes and streams** from excessive application of deicing salt.
- Provide a **long-term monitoring network** for Minnesota waters, which will help track the progress of state efforts to improve land-use practices.
- Fund **conservation easements** on private lands to protect and restore water quality.
- Reinforce support for the **Clean Water Council** and its careful stewardship of the Clean Water Fund, which is a nation-leading model for water conservation.

Thank you for considering these recommendations, and for helping to protect Minnesota waters this legislative session.



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Freshwater is a nonprofit organization working to inspire and empower people to value and preserve water.