

# FRESHWATER

May 9, 2025

Senator Fong Hawj and Representative Josh Heintzeman, and  
Representative Peter Fischer  
Environment and Natural Resources Conference Committee  
State Capitol Room 123  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

**Re: S.F. 2077 - Omnibus Environment and Natural Resources Conference Committee**

Dear Senator Fong Hawj, Representative Josh Heintzeman, Representative Peter Fischer, and members of the Omnibus Environment and Natural Resources Conference Committee,

Freshwater is grateful for your leadership and thoughtful approach to understanding and addressing environmental issues across Minnesota. As you consider how to reconcile the Environment and Natural Resources Omnibus bill, we would like to encourage you to support funding for water and infrastructure efforts including:

- Support for Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund appropriations as proposed by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (line 37.30).
- Support for Water Use Permit Fee Increases (line 109.24).
  - These fee increases are needed to stabilize operations against future reductions in federal funding, offset rising costs, and evaluate the increasing potential for water use conflicts across the state.
  - With the increases, the fees are still very low, below the market value of resource use. For example, the proposed water-use permit fee is \$15 for 1,000,000 million gallons of water. This translates to just one cent for the use of 667 gallons of water.

Again, thank you for your work this session to address these large and complex environmental issues, given changes in federal and state funding, and for your ongoing partnership in protecting and restoring Minnesota waters.

Sincerely,



Michelle Stockness, PE  
Executive Director, Freshwater

2550 University Ave Suite 212N | St. Paul, MN 55114 | 651.313.5800 | [freshwater.org](https://freshwater.org)

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