

Budget for One Minnesota



NATURAL RESOURCES

The Department of Natural Resources' mission is to work with Minnesota residents to conserve and manage the state's natural resources, to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, and to provide for commercial uses of natural resources in a way that creates a sustainable quality of life. The Walz-Flanagan budget supports the DNR's mission and promotes community prosperity throughout Minnesota by protecting our natural resources, promoting smart decisions based on good information, connecting people with the outdoors, and addressing critical operational needs. Key initiatives within this budget package are summarized below.

PROTECTING OUR NATURAL RESOURCES



Sustaining Minnesota's White-Tailed Deer / Addressing Chronic Wasting Disease

White-tailed deer are one of the most popular species to hunt in Minnesota. Deer hunting provides a \$500 million economic boost to the state's economy. Chronic wasting disease (CWD), a fatal neurological disease that affects deer, threatens this treasured tradition. The governor supports an urgent response to combating CWD to protect Minnesota's economy and community prosperity. The governor recommends \$4.57 million from the General Fund in fiscal years 20-21 and \$1.1 million annually thereafter to combat the disease, including surveillance and response, enforcement, and outreach to landowners. This initiative also includes \$1.8 million from the Game and Fish Fund in fiscal years 20-21 for deer management research. The goal is to respond aggressively to protect Minnesota's deer herd and deer hunting experience.



Minnesota Forest Management

Good forest management includes periodic review of timber harvest levels and their impact to the greater forest ecosystem and economy. In March 2018, the DNR set a new 10-year sustainable timber harvest target to offer 870,000 cords for sale each year from DNR-managed forests, plus an additional 30,000 cords of ash and tamarack for sale annually. The decision came after more than a year of rigorous scientific analysis, public input, and discussions with key partners in conservation organizations and the forest industry. The governor recommends \$2 million from the Forest Management Investment Account (FMIA) in fiscal years 20-21 to support the sustainable timber harvest target to maintain clean water and air, support wildlife, provide recreation opportunities, sustain biodiversity, and provide a reliable source of wood for Minnesota's forest products industry.



Protecting Our Public Waters

Protecting Minnesota's public waters is fundamental to maintaining our quality of life. Surface waters are affected by a range of civic and commercial activities. The DNR's public waters protection program ensures a balance between conservation and use. The governor recommends investing \$1.6 million from the General Fund and \$716,000 from the Water Management Account in fiscal years 20-21 for public water protection work. This investment allows DNR to provide needed services to the public in important water management activities such as: responding to floods and lake level concerns; assisting local governments with water-related land-use decisions; and providing technical assistance to lake shore owners, other landowners, communities, and state and federal agencies.

MAKING SMART DECISIONS



Angler Surveys to Inform Fisheries Management

Minnesota's 1.4 million anglers contribute over \$4 billion annually to state's economy. Fishing is an integral part of our culture and contributes to our high quality of life. Angler survey information is critical for tracking trends in fishing pressure, angler catch, harvest, and angler attitudes and preferences. The data are also critical for monitoring the effectiveness of special and statewide angling regulations. The governor recommends \$278,000 in fiscal year 20 and \$532,000 thereafter from the Game and Fish Fund to expand angler surveys beyond the state's ten largest lakes.

CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH THE OUTDOORS



State Trail Maintenance

Minnesotans enjoy unforgettable trail-based experiences that inspire them to pass along the love for the outdoors to current and future generations. State trails operations and maintenance funding has not kept pace with a growing trail system and rising costs. For example, while the number of paved trails has grown by 150 miles over the last decade, operations and maintenance funding has fallen by \$900/mile. With an estimated traffic of 1.8 million visits each year on 1,500 miles of trail, state trails generate substantial tourist travel and economic benefit supporting businesses and communities across the state, especially in greater Minnesota. The governor recommends \$2 million General Fund investment in fiscal years 20-21 for state trail maintenance, to promote healthier communities and strong local tourism economies.