

Minnesota Conservation Federation
Annual Meeting

September 8, 2013

Resolution #5

Owatonna, Minnesota

Wildlife Management Areas

WHEREAS, Minnesota has 1,440 public wildlife management areas (WMA's) totaling 1.29 million acres of habitat, and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota WMA system is one of the largest WMA system in the country, and

WHEREAS, Minnesota's WMA's range from prairies and wetlands to forests and swamps, and

WHEREAS, Minnesota's WMA's provide recreational hunting opportunities for upland game, waterfowl, and deer, and

WHEREAS, Minnesota's WMA's provide wildlife watching opportunities for sandhill cranes, herons, prairie chickens, shore birds, waterfowl, and

WHEREAS, since 1951 when the state started its "Save the Wetlands Program," the state has invested millions of dollars in WMA's, and

WHEREAS, since 1939 Minnesota has received over \$210 million from Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration funding, and

WHEREAS, Pittman-Robertson funds to a state are based on a federal wholesale tax on guns, ammo, bows, and arrows and is distributed to states based on hunting license sales, and

WHEREAS, hunting and wildlife watching are a \$1 billion industry in Minnesota, and

WHEREAS, the WMA system in Minnesota is the backbone of the DNR's wildlife management efforts in Minnesota, and

WHEREAS a recent newspaper article pointed out that federal Pittman-Robertson funds have been diverted from WMA management in other states for other purposes, and

WHEREAS, The Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife admits on its website that in the 1940's their state's WMA's consisted of 80% early-successional habitat and 20% mature forest, and

WHEREAS, today, due to a lack of investment in management of WMA's in Eastern states, the WMA's have matured to 90% forests including 92% in Massachusetts;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnesota Conservation Federation at its annual meeting in Owatonna, Minnesota on September 8, 2013 encourage the Department of Natural Resources to prepare a report to the legislature and Dayton administration regarding the investment of state and federal dollars in the Minnesota Wildlife Management Areas program and the status of management practices by county, and

NOW BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Minnesota Conservation Federation strongly encourages the Minnesota congressional delegation, the Dayton administration through the DNR, and the state legislature to review the trends of Pittman-Robertson funds investments in Minnesota and the management status of WMA's in Minnesota.

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