

MINNESOTA CONSERVATION FEDERATION
ANNUAL MEETING

September 8, 2013

Resolution #4

Owatonna, Minnesota

Wetlands: Protect them or lose them forever

WHEREAS, according to an Environmental Working Group(EWG) report Minnesota lost 200,000 acres of wetlands and surrounding buffers to agricultural conversion between 2008 and 2012, and

WHEREAS, 200,000 acres equates to 312 square miles of valuable wetlands and the natural vegetation, and

WHEREAS, 312 square miles is an area about 5.7 times the size of Minneapolis, and

WHEREAS, since 2008 rural landowners nationwide have plowed up 11,300 square miles of wetlands and highly erodible land, and

WHEREAS, according to the EWG, the loss of wetlands has been the greatest in the Dakotas and Minnesota with a total of 1,142 square miles, and

WHEREAS, according to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, from 2012 to 2013 Minnesota lost a net of 155,328 acres of habitat on private land enrolled in government conservation programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program, and

WHEREAS, much of the wetlands loss can be traced to record prices for corn and other commodities that are driving farmers to convert natural lands like native prairies, grasslands, and wetlands at a rate not seen since the 1930's, and

WHEREAS, the wetlands and surrounding grasslands of Minnesota and the Dakotas have traditionally been called the "Duck Factory," because it provides habitat and nesting grounds for more than half of North America's migratory water birds, and

WHEREAS, there have been "positive wetlands" created in Minnesota but many of these newly created wetlands will never provide the habitat value and benefit for migratory waterfowl and reduce soil and nutrient losses that "true wetlands" provide.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnesota Conservation Federation at its annual meeting in Owatonna, Minnesota on September 8, 2013 encourages the United State Congress, the Obama Administration, Governor Dayton, and the State Legislature do more in terms of protecting existing native prairies, grasslands, and wetlands rather than allowing them to be plowed and farmed,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THE Minnesota Conservation Federation urges the United State Congress, the Obama Administration, Governor Dayton, and the State Legislature to develop and provide incentive plans and programs that encourage farmers and other land owners to maintain native prairies, grasslands, and wetlands.

| Sponsored by Steve Maurice and Joe Hoffman