

I am writing in regard to HB 1009. I strongly oppose the appropriation of \$200,000 from the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) as listed on page 3 line 23 of this bill. The OHF **was not** intended to be used as a pot of money to be raided by state agencies as a direct appropriation. Rather the OHF was developed and designed for state and local governments along with conservation organization, local park districts, etc. to apply for grants to be ranked and reviewed by the 16-member OHF advisory board making recommendations to the ND Industrial Commission. This process has worked well through 17 grant rounds providing \$58.9 million in grants, to date.

The ND Dept. of Ag. needs to use the process in place to compete against other worthy projects for the \$200,000 for the OHF. Many state and local agencies and NGO's create partnerships pooling dollars and personnel to deliver conservation programs to farmers and ranchers across ND. This well designed OHF funding process will be short circuited by this appropriation prioritizing state agencies over all other applicants to the OHF.

I urge your committee to remove the \$200,000 to the ND Ag. Committee from the OHF. If the ND Ag. Department's soil health cover crop program is well developed with partners, both financial and staffing, it will rank out well and get funded through the required OHF funding process. Using OHF funds to directly fund and staff state agencies is a terrible precedent to set.

Please remove the raiding of \$200,000 from the OHF for the ND Ag. Dept. from this bill

David Dewald

President, North Dakota Wildlife Federation