

TESTIMONY OF

**Patrick Fridgen, Division Director, Department of Water Resources**

Chairman Patten, and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I am Patrick Fridgen, Planning and Education Division Director for the Department of Water Resources (DWR). I'm here today to provide testimony in support of House Bill (HB) 1554 related to adding DWR as an ex officio, nonvoting technical member of North Dakota's Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board.

DWR administers a Cost-Share Program that provides financial support for a variety of water-related infrastructure projects. The Outdoor Heritage Fund is administered through the Industrial Commission. Because there are projects that apply to both the Outdoor Heritage Fund and DWR's Cost-Share Program, coordination between our team and the Industrial Commission is ongoing. This is to ensure that we're aware of projects that might be applying to both sources so we can adjust grants accordingly – since state funds cannot be used as part of the local share.

The addition of DWR as an ex officio, nonvoting technical member of North Dakota's Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board will be another opportunity to improve communication and coordination between the granting entities, and to provide direct technical support whenever necessary. Therefore, we respectfully request your support of HB 1554.

Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, this concludes my testimony in support of HB 1554, and I will stand for any questions you might have.