

RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE GOVERNOR'S WETLAND WORKING GROUP  
February 1999

WHEREAS, the North Dakota State Legislature has recognized that wetlands provide important public values including flood control, ground water recharge, water quality improvement, outdoor recreation, and habitat for fish and wildlife resources; and,

WHEREAS, the North Dakota State Legislature passed the No-Net-Loss of wetlands law as part of a negotiated compromise that resulted in the passage of the Garrison Diversion Unit Reformulation Act of 1986 to maintain the functions and values provided the States wetland resources; and,

WHEREAS, the North Dakota State Legislature repealed the No-Net-Loss of Wetlands Law in 1995; and,

WHEREAS, at the time of repeal Governor Schafer recognized the need to replace the No-Net-Loss of wetlands law with something better and in February 1991, the Governor established a Wetland Working Group to develop a state wetland policy; and,

WHEREAS, the Governor's Office has devoted considerable time and effort to facilitating a series of meetings to discuss wetland and land use issues; and,

WHEREAS, the overall objectives of these meetings have focused on the 'goal of developing a balanced wetland policy that provides' flexibility to family farms and maintains North Dakota's wetland resource, heritage; and

WHEREAS, the current draft wetland policy contains some language which is of concern to the North Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society; and

WHEREAS, some action items may also lead to landowner conflicts and further confusion concerning inconsistencies between State and Federal regulations and policies; and

WHEREAS, the North Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society supports the preamble to the current, draft wetland policy, dated October 29, 1998; and,

WHEREAS, there is a continuing need to develop a science based wetland policy as part North Dakota's water management goals and objectives that provides consistency, flexibility, and fairness for family farms and maintains North Dakota's wetland resources.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society continues to support the need to develop a balanced, science based wetland policy; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chapter recommends that Governor Schafer and his staff reevaluate the objectives and the action items of the draft wetland policy and assess the membership and the progress of the Wetlands Working Group; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this process be focused in a productive manner which builds a coalition to develop a vision concerning North Dakota's natural resources and water management policies that will serve the State of North Dakota well' into the 21st century.