



March 29, 2011

STATEMENT BY STEVE MORSE

Executive Director

Minnesota Environmental Partnership

RE: PASSAGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE BILLS

Finance bills go against Minnesotans' wishes "to protect our water"

"We are disappointed today that both the House and Senate passed Omnibus Environmental Finance bills that include disproportional cuts and extraneous policy provisions that threaten Minnesota's protections to our lakes, rivers and streams. Legislators' actions turn a deaf ear on the 1.6 million Minnesotans who voted in 2008 to raise their own taxes in order to protect Minnesota's water. Instead, these bills include numerous policy provisions that are bad for our water, such as:

- Changing standards for sulfide pollution in water, which threatens wild rice, our state grain;
- Lowering water quality standards for phosphorus discharges into Lake Pepin;
- Repealing protections for the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area; and
- Weakening water permit standards for industrial-scale agriculture producers.

"We hope the conference committee will seriously consider Governor Mark Dayton's directive to remove extraneous policy provisions from these finance bills, and to uphold Minnesotans' commitment to our lakes, rivers and streams. Protecting our water is not a Democrat or Republican issue – it's a Minnesota value."

To arrange an interview with Steve Morse, please contact Cathy Kennedy at cathykennedy@MEPartnership.org or 612.309.3951.