



Saint Paul Audubon Society

January 11, 2022

Dear Members of the St. Paul City Council:

The Saint Paul Audubon Society supports cleaning up waste left from the public dump which operated from the 1920s to the early 1970s on public land north of Pig's Eye Lake. We also support the restoration of the land to natural habitat suitable for our native birds and wildlife, and to protect water quality.

We thank Councilmembers Jane Prince and Nelsie Yang for introducing Resolution 22-69. The resolution supports the State Legislature, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and other agencies to procure state and/or federal funds for landfill cleanup and site restoration.

St Paul Audubon has long held keen interest in Pig's Eye for its natural, historic, cultural and recreational character. Pig's Eye is on the Mississippi River Flyway, which carries 3/4 of all the migrating birds in North America as they travel back and forth from their breeding sites to their wintering grounds. Pig's Eye is home to the Pig's Eye Heron and Egret Rookery and Sanctuary. This is one of the largest mixed colonial bird nesting sites in the Upper Midwest. Pig's Eye Regional Park is also home to at least five active Bald Eagle nests. In addition, the area hosts grassland, forest, wetland, and aquatic birds throughout the year. The Pig's Eye area, known as Čhokán Tanka, is sacred to the Dakota people, who lived here for thousands of years. And still live here.

Cleaning up the waste at Pig's Eye Regional Park and restoring the public land and waters are an important step forward. The clean-up and restoration will mark a new day for how this important natural area with significant historical and cultural roots is treated with the care and respect it is entitled to. These critical areas must be managed for the good of the environment and for the health of our community.

The Pig's Eye Park area, with its multiplicity of local, regional and state controlled parcels, represents a unique opportunity for Minnesota. It is probably the only opportunity in the core urban area of the Twin Cities to restore to a quality environment such a large land area. And this large 1200-acre tract (600 acres of Pig's Eye Lake and 600 acres parkland around the Lake) is on the Mississippi River, North America's greatest bird migration corridor. Restoring this area could create one of the greatest bird habitats along the 2,000 miles of the Mississippi River. This is a unique and extraordinary opportunity for Minnesota.

The Saint Paul Audubon Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. We have 2475 members in this community. We are a volunteer organization. Our mission is to protect birds

and their homes. Clean air, clean water, and healthy land protect us all. Saint Paul Audubon's programs and activities further that mission through conservation, education, and advocacy.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Donn Waage

Donn Waage, President
Saint Paul Audubon Society