

February 26, 2019

Senate Advice & Consent Committee

Chair Senator Pete Lucido

Vice chair Senator Kim LaSata

Senator Aric Nesbitt

Senator Ed McBroom

Senator Curtis Hertel, Jr.

Senate Majority Leader Mike Shirkey

Re: Dan Eichinger, Department of Natural Resources Director Confirmation

The following is offered respectfully, by Michigan Trout Unlimited, in regards to the Senate's considerations of Dan Eichinger as Department of Natural Resources Director. Michigan Trout Unlimited is a Michigan Non-profit 501C3 organization, with 20 local chapters and active 8,000 members. Its mission is the conservation of Michigan's coldwater fish and their watersheds. As the Senate considers confirming Mr. Eichinger in this role, MITU would like to offer our thoughts on this subject, and to express our support for him serving in this role.

We believe Dan Eichinger possesses an ideal suite of professional experience, skills, and personal commitment to Michigan's natural resources that make him the ideal candidate to successfully serve as DNR Director. Uniquely, Dan has been employed both by the DNR and within the sportsmen conservationist's communities. He has held two job positions within the DNR previous to Director, allowing him familiarity with the inner workings and culture of the agency. However, he also has served more recently, as a leader of the sportsmen's conservation community, in his role as Executive Director of the Michigan United Conservation Clubs. In this capacity, MITU has had many years of working with Dan directly on matters of utmost importance to the hunters, anglers, trappers and outdoor recreation enthusiasts of this state. He now carries with him, the perspective of these groups, who must work with the DNR perpetually, for the good of our natural resources, and economy. He is truly unique in possessing both an "internal" and "external" perspective of the DNR. This rare qualification will be a tremendous asset to both the DNR and the citizen groups that must work with the DNR to achieve their common goals.

Second, Dan possesses a deep set of experiences and knowledge about working with the legislative branch. He worked as staff for a Lt. Governor, as a DNR legislative Liaison, as policy staff for the DNR Wildlife Division, and as the Executive Director of MUCC. All of these positions required a deep appreciation for the inner workings of the legislative branch, and the need to communicate and partner with legislators to address the needs of Michigan citizens. We have faith that Dan is well equipped to work with you and your colleagues in the House, to address issues of importance with the DNR; and few others would have as much experience preparing them for success in this regard.

Dan also has a degree in public administration, and work experience at Central Michigan University overseeing administration of a large public entity. This knowledge and experience will serve him well in ensuring the administrative oversight of the DNR. Over the last few months, MITU has already seen several ways in which Dan is improving the public processes of the DNR, and expect these strides to continue under his leadership.

Lastly, but most importantly, MITU has had the opportunity for many years now, to see and understand Dan's Conservation Ethic. A conservation ethic is akin to a GPS navigation tool in a car. While his professional background and wide set of skills forms a sound vehicle for driving, without a navigation device, the car can drive and drive yet get nowhere desired. A car is only useful for getting people to arrive where they need to be. Dan is a hunter, angler and outdoor recreator, like millions of Michiganders. He is in tune with the DNR's stakeholders' desires, fears, challenges, and opportunities, and better than anyone, is aware of the impediments facing them. We have no doubt that he will employ his knowledge, skills, professional experiences and means to the right ends.

It is very rare to be presented with a candidate for DNR Director that can "check" all the boxes; inside DNR experience, outside DNR experience, legislative affairs awareness and experience, public administration experience, and conservation ethic. It's very rare, and frankly, more than should normally be expected. Yet, here he is, answering the call for leadership of the DNR. You will no doubt receive support for Dan Eichinger as DNR Director from the broad sportsmen's community. But, we respectfully submit MITU's support for Director Eichinger. We can think of no other candidate today that is as qualified for this role as Dan Eichinger, and hope that you will confirm the same. If you have any questions for us, or seek further discussion of this, please do not hesitate to contact us. We thank you for considering our thoughts on this matter as you deliberate.

Respectfully,



Dr. Bryan Burroughs, on behalf of Michigan Trout Unlimited

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