

# LOCALNEWS

## Anderson elected chair, Dill appointed to heritage council

BY LAUREL BEAGER  
Editor

Northern Minnesota has more representation on the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council than ever before with last week's appointments and elections. International Falls Mayor Bob Anderson has been elected in the third year of his four-year term to serve as council chairman and Rep. David Dill was appointed by the House to serve as a member.

In addition, Sen. Tom Saxhaug, Grand Rapids, who formerly represented Koochiching County, is a member of the council as is Jane Kingston of Eveleth.

The Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council was established by the Legislature with the responsibility of providing annual funding recommendations to the Legislature from the Outdoor Heritage Fund. The Outdoor Heritage Fund, one of four funds created by the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment, receives one-third of the money raised by a sales tax increase.

Key to former Sen. Bob Lessard, for whom the council is named, is the responsibility voters handed the council when it approved the amendment.

"The words protect, enhance, restore, for fish, game and wildlife — that was why people voted the amendment through," Lessard said from his Twin Cities home. "It's extremely important, from one end of the state to the other, that we are tuned into what the intent was of the voters."

Lessard said he couldn't think of better people than



Bob Anderson



Bob Lessard

Dill and Anderson to fit the mission of the council.

Anderson's knowledge of the state and his experience as a leader will benefit the council as chairman, Lessard said.

"He's able to look at state-wide issues and made decisions that are best for the state," Lessard said.

Dill's legislative experience and knowledge of outdoor and sporting issues will also benefit the council and state, Lessard said.

Anderson said he's honored to be elected by the council to serve as chairman.

"With the members of the council, it's a great opportunity to represent northern Minnesota," Anderson said.

The many acres of public land and residents' good stewardship in northern Minnesota means the need for projects in northern Minnesota isn't as great as elsewhere, he said.

He pointed, however, to the successful Rat Root River restoration project funded in part by money recommended by the council.

"There other areas of the state that need that kind of attention, and I hope to help to bring that throughout the state of Minnesota," Anderson said.

Following the constitutional amendment in every

aspect is important because citizens voted for it and make their money available with every purchase under the sales tax, Anderson said.

"We want to make sure those dollars are well spent, used in the most efficient manner to make better habitats for folks to fish and hunt in Minnesota," he said.

Anderson said the council has done outstanding work in the years he's served and is making a difference in the habitat in Minnesota.

"It's one of the more unique things we have in our state and in the long haul will really make Minnesota a great place to hunt and fish," Anderson said.

Anderson called Lessard a legend in the outdoor sports annals, recognized for his work throughout the state and nation.

Dill was appointed by Speaker of the House Kurt Daudt. Having a number of people representing northern Minnesota on the council is a "huge deal," he said.

He credited Lessard's long-time effort to create a fund that would provide money for the natural resources into perpetuity.

Meanwhile, Lessard said he's pleased with the outcome of creating the council and fund. However, he cautioned the state must maintain the intention of the voters.

"That's the danger, or the challenge, as time passes to keep putting people on that council that remember the intent," Lessard said. "When I am pushing up daisies, there'll be the tendency to dilute it and put the money where it's not intended. We need to remember it's to protect, enhance, restore, for fish, game and wildlife."

## Dill: Many questions about buffer proposal

BY LAUREL BEAGER  
Editor

Gov. Mark Dayton has proposed requiring 50-foot buffer strips around Minnesota's lakes, rivers and streams.

Rep. David Dill said while the proposal sounds interesting, "the devil will be in the details. We have a diverse landscape in Minnesota and the bill will have a lot of committee work and a lot of amendments."

Many questions are surfacing about how the proposal would work in certain areas, such as agriculture areas.

"Farmers are coming in to say they want to know some ranges, such as on a one-mile-long ditch on a section could be up to 10-12 acres of buffer," said Dill. "That's production, some of it's counted on. What kind of cover crops would be allowed, if any?"

And Dill said the proposal could come with a hefty price tag.

"In general, it sounds like a great proposal, but I don't know how to pay for it with all the other things we're doing," he said.

Dayton's proposal is designed to prevent pollution from entering the state's waters to benefit public health and the environment by requiring a 50-foot vegetated buffer that reduces erosion and runoff. The law would provide uniform requirements across the state and does not alter existing shoreland rules or drainage law, according to the governor's office.

The proposal is estimated to put 125,000 acres of land into permanent vegetation. All perennial waters would be subject to the requirement and perennial vegetation would meet the requirement. Typical activities in agricultural and forest land would be permitted as

long as they do not result in bare soil.

Dill said the proposal is touting benefits to wildlife and water quality. "It comes back to money," he said, wondering if money from the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council or from the Clean Water Legacy Amendment will be sought to pay for the proposal.

"With those two funding sources, will this be supplanting what we should be doing more of, in programs already in place, like Reinvest In Minnesota?"

The proposal from the governor, like any other, is serious "and will be a force to be reckoned with, I am just not sure of the outcome," said Dill. "There are many faces to it."

Dill said he's hearing support from northern Minnesotans who tend to dislike mining and timber harvesting and want more stringent environmental regulations.

"They are writing in form letters," he said, because they are coming from members of environmental groups.

Dill, himself a lake shore owner, has questions about how the proposal would affect his property.

"The answer was, not in writing, grass is a buffer," he said. "Beaches wouldn't require a buffer, but most beaches I know of have grass up to the beach."

In contrast, Dill said his initial thought was that every lake shore would need to have something that looked wild. "That may not be the case," he said.

Dill said there are areas in the state that need buffer zones, and he pointed to agricultural areas. Many places in the northern part of the state, such as along the Littlefork River, appear to already have buffers.

The proposal remains in the House Environment Committee.

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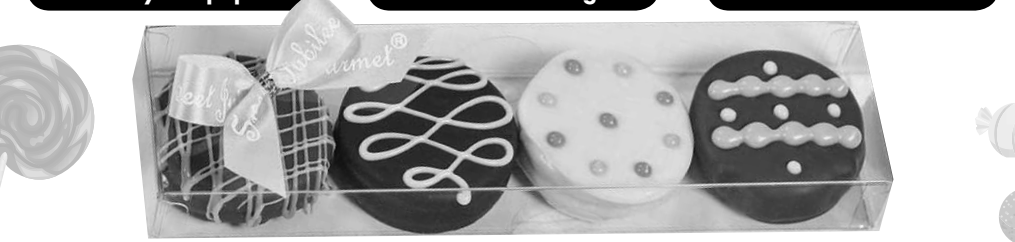
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