

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
NORTH FORK CROW RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT**

In Re:

Project Petition to Finance Purchase
And Operation of Mechanical Harvesting
Equipment in Pirz Lake

PROJECT PETITION

TO: BOARD OF MANAGERS OF NORTH FORK CROW RIVER WATERSHED
DISTRICT ("The District")

For their Petition to The District, the undersigned Petitioners state and allege the following:

1. Petitioners include the Pirz Lake Association (the "Association") and property owners around Pirz Lake in Stearns County, Minnesota.
2. This Petition seeks the establishment of a project within The District pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103D. The proposed project is intended to benefit Pirz Lake, properties adjacent to Pirz Lake, and other creeks and water bodies fed by Pirz Lake.
3. The Association is a Minnesota non-profit corporation established in 2005 pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Chapter 317A and is in good standing.
4. The Petitioners have an interest in the basic water management function and other duties assumed and performed by The District and their impact on water resources in The District, including Pirz Lake. There is a need to manage water quality within The District and within Pirz Lake in particular, including management by harvesting of invasive aquatic species.
5. The Association has entered into a contract for the purchase of an Eco-Harvester mechanical weed harvester and related equipment. The Association has committed volunteer human resources and other economic resources with the aim of controlling through mechanical harvesting the spread of the existing invasive, Curly Leaf Pondweed. Proactively through this Petition, the Association is addressing the use of these funds to manage and control Starry Stonewort, Eurasian Water Milfoil or other known vegetative threats to Pirz Lake waters. The project proposed and requested by this petition would include providing financial resources for the purchase and continued operation of the mechanical harvester equipment and support systems related to removal and disposal of these invasives from Pirz Lake. Funds also would provide for payment of insurance, permits, bonds, repayment of loans issued to the Association, rental fees, licensing of equipment, repairs, equipment operators' fees, engineers' fees, and benefits appraisal costs.

6. The Petitioners seek to work cooperatively with The District, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and other interested parties in order to establish, implement, and carry out an effective program to control and manage Curly Leaf Pondweed and other invasive aquatic species in Pirz Lake. This would include a continuation or expansion of the five-year practices instituted as a Pilot Program in 2014, authorized and funded by the Stearns County Aquatic Invasive Species Committee under the direction of the Stearns County Environmental Services Division.

7. Establishing the project proposed by this Petition is necessary to facilitate the mechanical harvesting in Pirz Lake as described in this Petition, which will benefit The District, the public in general, and the land and water resources within The District.

8. The proposed project would provide funds for the purchase, maintenance and operation of the mechanical harvesting equipment described herein as well as necessary related equipment such as flotation devices and roadworthy trailers to transport the equipment. Funds also would provide for payment of insurance, permits, bonds, repayment of loans issued to the Association, rental fees, licensing of equipment, repairs, equipment operators' fees, engineers' fees, and benefits appraisal costs

9. The part of The District that would be affected by the proposed project is Pirz Lake and the surrounding area.

10. The proposed project is necessary.

11. The proposed project will be conducive to public health, convenience and welfare.

12. The undersigned Petitioners will pay all costs and expenses that may be incurred if proceedings on the Petition are dismissed or a contract is not awarded for the proposed project.

13. The purposes and objective of the proposed project sought by this Petition are consistent with Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103D, The District's Watershed Management Plan, and the policies and objectives of The Association.

14. Petitioners request that The District establish the proposed project in accordance with the procedures of Minn. Stat. § 103D.705.

15. This Petition may be executed in one or more counterparts, all of which together shall be deemed one Petition.

16. The signature of The Association has been authorized by a duly adopted resolution of The Association. All other parties executing this Petition represent that they have full authority to do so. By signing below, each Petitioner states and represents that the Petitioner has read, understands, and supports this Petition to The District.

[signature page follows]