

Board of Trustees  
Nebraska Environmental Trust  
700 S 16th Street  
PO Box 94913  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4913

June 8, 2020

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board,

The Nebraska Environmental Trust has enjoyed great success over its 28-year history towards its mission to “conserve, enhance and restore the natural environments of Nebraska.”

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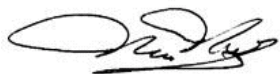
The Trust’s success emanates in large part from the wise stewardship and allocation of its resources by you, its trustees, who carry out these responsibilities on behalf of the people and the natural environments of Nebraska.

Per Nebraska Revised Statute 81-15, 175: “The board shall establish rating systems for ranking proposals which meet the board's environmental categories and other criteria.” For the past 28 years, the integrity of the grant allocation process has relied on this clearly defined ranking system, supported by expert technical reviewers who are professionals in the environmental sector of our state, and a grants committee that invests considerable time and thought into creating a “ranked list and recommended funding [sent] to the board for its approval or disapproval.”

As an organization that worked to create the Trust in 1992, we at The Nature Conservancy are concerned by your recent decision to circumvent the grant committee’s recommendations. The ranking and recommendations processes are time-proven, science-based, and clearly defined. By zeroing out several highly ranked proposals in favor of funding a much lower ranked proposal, these processes have been up-ended to an unprecedented degree. In our view, your decision to take this action jeopardizes the trust Nebraskans have placed in you to fairly and transparently carry out the mission of the Trust.

We urge you to reconsider this decision, and if not reversed, to please provide a public and clearly stated rationale for why this decision merits such a break from precedence in respecting the Trust’s usual allocation process.

Sincerely yours,



Mace Hack,  
State Director for Nebraska

Cc: Governor Pete Ricketts