To Whom It May Concern:

The Grand Forks County Soil Conservation District has been aware of the budget cuts affecting the NDSU Extension Service for some time now. It has recently come to our attention that further cuts are being made and positions are being left unfilled for the foreseeable future. Grand Forks County is lucky enough to have a new extension agent, Sam Haugen, recently hired to replace the positions previously held by Willie Huot and Michael Knudson. We are also fortunate that the horticulturist position previously held by Steve Sagaser is also going to be filled. Other counties, however, are not as fortunate as we are to have these positions filled so quickly, if at all.

I am writing you to give you some examples of how our district has benefitted from a close working relationship with the NDSU Extension Service. Here are a few, but not all, of the ways the extension service has directly benefitted our office and county:

- Workshops and field tours such as the tours at the Carrington Research Center and Langdon Research Center provide real-life demonstrations to help producers make more informed decisions on their farms.
- Cover crop research is always advancing and providing our office with ideas and data to share with producers throughout the county in order to improve soil health, water quality, and fisheries and recreational opportunities.
- Every year during our 8-day Eco-Ed camp, the extension agent and Forest Service personnel have graciously offered to teach multiple sessions. These camps reach 600+ 7th grade students each year, providing the leaders of tomorrow with knowledge of conservation.
- The ND Forest Service has offered multiple cost-share opportunities for windbreak renovations and plantings, as well as providing trees through the Towner Nursery, and they have always been great to work with. GF County residents have planted thousands of trees through the NDFS programs.
- Grand Forks County Extension Service has played a critical role in making the International Crop Expo successful year after year, educating hundreds of producers on ways to make their farming operation more productive and profitable.
- Our office routinely refers to the NDAWN site for temperature and precipitation data during the field season to plan our plantings efficiently and maximize planting success rates.
- Gardening Saturday is held at the Alerus Center every spring and provides tips and insight to gardeners throughout the region. It supports urban food production that is vitally important for future food security and ensuring nutritious diets.

We hope you will consider the wide-reaching importance the Extension Service provides to the citizens of North Dakota when considering future funding plans.

Thank you!
Grand Forks County Soil Conservation District

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