



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **WCHA STATEMENT REGARDING MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO'S EXPLORATION OF ALTERNATE CONFERENCE AFFILIATION**

EDINA, Minn. – July 13, 2016 – Below is a statement from Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA) President and Men's League Commissioner **Bill Robertson** regarding the decision of Minnesota State University, Mankato (MSU) to explore alternate conference affiliation, including applying to become a member of the National Collegiate Hockey Conference (NCHC):

"I am aware of the current exploration process being undertaken by Minnesota State University, Mankato in regards to conference affiliation. I am deeply disappointed in Minnesota State's decision to formally apply for membership with another conference; however, I respect and understand the need for MSU President Dr. Richard Davenport and Athletic Director Kevin Buisman to examine options pertaining to their men's hockey program. I am appreciative to Dr. Davenport for his openness and transparency, and will continue to maintain an open and collaborative dialogue throughout this process.

There is much to be proud of in the men's WCHA. Beginning with the 2013-14 season, four of the top-15 winningest teams in Division I hockey play in the WCHA – the highest representation of any single conference among the nation's upper 25 percent of programs. Our past two Defensive Players of the Year made their mark in the National Hockey League this past season, one making the NHL All-Rookie team and the other debuting one week after his collegiate finale. The academic and community-driven accomplishments of our student-athletes continue to amaze and inspire.

I firmly believe that a framework has been created over the last two years that will ensure the WCHA Men's League remains a premier conference on the ice for years to come, while continuing to provide an exemplary student-athlete experience. This foundation will only grow stronger with the debut of our on-campus postseason format in 2017 and the continued success of each of our 10 programs, including Minnesota State. The WCHA has a valued relationship with Minnesota State University, and I want MSU to be a part of the long-term future and shared excellence of our Men's League. The League Office will continue to work toward that end."

***The WCHA League Office and Commissioner Robertson will have no further comment at this time.***

***About Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA)***

The Western Collegiate Hockey Association, among the most historic, tradition-rich and successful conferences in all of collegiate athletics, will proudly mark its 65<sup>th</sup> season of men’s competition in 2016-17. The 10-team Division 1 conference consists of the University of Alabama in Huntsville (Chargers), the University of Alaska Anchorage (Seawolves), the University of Alaska (Nanooks), Bemidji State University (Beavers), Bowling Green State University (Falcons), Ferris State University (Bulldogs), Lake Superior State University (Lakers), Michigan Technological University (Huskies), Minnesota State University (Mavericks) and Northern Michigan University (Wildcats). For more information, visit [wcha.com](http://wcha.com).

**MEDIA CONTACT**

Matt Hodson  
Associate Commissioner for Public Relations  
E: [mhodson@wcha.com](mailto:mhodson@wcha.com)  
O: 952.818.8872  
M: 612.801.2808

**MORE INFORMATION**

Website: [wcha.com](http://wcha.com)  
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