

## Al Gedicks

Wild rice (manoomin) is sacred to the Anishinaabe and is Minnesota's state grain, an important food for wildlife and humans, and an ecological indicator of water quality. Sulfate becomes toxic to wild rice when it turns into sulfide in the mucky bottom of lakes and streams where wild rice grows. Sulfide can harm nearly every part of the wild rice life cycle. Sulfide is toxic to wild rice in very small amounts. Minnesota research shows that when sulfide in the rooting area of wild rice is only 0.165 milligrams per liter - less than 2 percent of our 10-milligrams-per-liter limit on sulfate in water - virtually no wild rice will survive. Minnesota Rule 7050.0224, Subp.2: 10 mg/L (milligrams per liter or ppm); Fond du Lac Band: 10 mg/L; Grant Portage Band: 10/mg/L. All were approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the federal Clean Water Act. The MPCA must ensure that it does not allow mines and other industries to discharge uncontrolled pollution for another half a century.