

# Benjamin Tsai

To whom it may concern,

As a long standing wild rice harvester in Minnesota, I urge the MPCA to enforce Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (ppm). Based off the Clean Water Act and decisions of the Minnesota courts, MPCA has no discretion to continue to delay or deny enforcement, and doing so is unlawful. The 10 ppm sulfate standard is the "effects threshold" for wild rice impairment. It is critical this threshold isn't broken into a of myriad of levels by site specific standards. Where the cleanliness of each lake is brokered according to political machinations and the money of industries. Site specific standards should also be rejected, as they will complicate and water-down already lax enforcement. MPCA must not allow polluters to degrade high quality, low-sulfate wild rice waters.

We are blessed that many of Minnesota's most abundant wild rice stands in the Boundary Waters, the Lake Superior watershed, and north central Minnesota (including the Big Sandy Lake area) have far less than 10 ppm of sulfate. MPCA permitting should not allow sulfate in these wild rice waters to increase even if the degraded level of sulfate remains just below the standard. This is how the MPCA can protect Minnesota as it is meant to be, unsullied.

In addition to threatening wild rice, sulfate pollution increases toxic mercury contamination of fish due to release of mercury from sediments and increased mercury methylation. As an avid fisherman in Minnesota, I also urge the MPCA to consider the effects of lax sulfate standard enforcement on mercury and methylmercury, for the health of everyone that enjoys the outdoors.

Regards,

Benjamin Tsai