

Betsy Blume

Please consider this feedback for the process of assessing sulfate effects on the health and well being of the water, wildlife, wild rice and people.

Protect low-sulfate waters. 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.

Health threat of sulfate and mercury. MPCA lax enforcement of the wild rice sulfate standard and increased mercury contamination of fish will damage the developing brains of fetuses, infants, children, and people who rely on fish for subsistence, and will impair the exercise of tribal Treaty-reserved rights.

Further, Enforcement without further delay. Unless and until a "site-specific standard" has been formally approved as required under state law and the Clean Water Act, the MPCA must apply the 10 ppm wild rice sulfate standard in setting and enforcing permit limits and in preparing TMDL studies and implementation plans to restore wild rice waters listed as impaired due to excessive sulfate. MPCA must neither delay or assume a less stringent will at some point be approved.

Sincerely,

Betsy Blume