

Dorie Reisenweber

For decades the MPCA has failed to protect sulfate- and mercury- impaired wild rice waters by not making and enforcing strict regulations. The MPCA's Draft 2024 proposal offers good steps but tougher steps are necessary to make fish safe to eat. Without stringent science-based MDTL measurements (10 mg/ L) there is no data to enforce any regulations which might be promulgated.

Already the MPCA has identified 20 more wild rice impaired waters thus making a total of 55 such waters. I urge you to include all 55. Additionally the MPCA and tribes have identified Dark Lake downstream of Minntac's tailings basin. Please include Dark Lake in MPCA's 2024 Draft. It is important for the MPCA to create regulations to control pollution west of the US Steel's Minntac tailings basin.

Besides listing the sulfate impaired wild rice waters, I urge the MPCA to restore those waters. It does no good to identify problems without fixing them. From my reading, the MPCA still needs to finish and implement such studies in order to determine the amount of sulfate reduction needed to comply with the wild rice sulfate standard (10mg/L).

I urge the MPCA to quickly determine the required TDML reductions, establish regulations in accordance with them and enforce the regulations of mining pollution in order to restore wild rice waters. Establish and enforce sulfate discharge limits in mining permits to bring down the sulfates and to reach Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 mg/L.

Also please consider other factors besides sulfates such as the increase in the release of mercury from wetlands, sediments and mercury methylation. I urge the MPCA to acknowledge the role of sulfates in the rise of mercury contamination as well.

Thank you in advance for working to restore sulfate and mercury impaired wild rice waters in Minnesota with strict wild rice standards of 10 mg/L and enforcing them.

Sincerely,

Doretta Reisenweber