

Anne Reich

Re: 2024 Impaired Waters List

Dear MPCA:

Kudos for using science to measure/document sources of pollution that are poisoning our state's waters. Unfortunately, the list of impaired waters keeps growing...

The KEY next and NECESSARY steps are 1) to prevent further degradation and 2) to restore – not just list – these waters. It is your job and moral duty to ensure that Minnesota's lakes and streams are free of sulfate, mercury, and other toxic pollutants that poison people and ecosystems, and to prioritize Minnesota's people and clean water-based economy above destructive, extractive industries.

I support your efforts to identify wild rice waters and add new ones that are impaired by sulfate. I urge you to add Dark Lake to the list.

The MPCA should establish strict sulfate limits that it actively monitors and enforces. Any mining permit applications should be required to prove first that they will not pollute.

I also ask that MPCA acknowledge the role of sulfate pollution in exacerbating mercury deposition; include this in specific plans to restore mercury impaired waters; and set firm deadlines for studying watersheds and establishing regulatory controls that reduce mercury levels to ensure a healthy ecosystem.

Again, it is your role and responsibility to 1) prevent further degradation of our state's valuable fresh waters and 2) restore waters impaired by sulfate pollution and subsequent mercury deposition.

Such pollution adversely affects wild rice, fish, ecosystems and all people, especially tribal nations, all of whose welfare relies on clean water.

Will we become known as the "Land of 10,000 Polluted Lakes"? As your fellow Minnesotan, I envision and better choice of action...

Sincerely,

Anne Reich