

Libby Bent

I support MPCA's addition of 20 new waterbodies to the list of wild rice waters impaired due to sulfate. Please also include Dark Lake, a wild rice lake in the Rainy River watershed that is contaminated by mining pollution. I would request that MPCA move quickly to restore wild rice waters impaired due to sulfate by determining how much sulfate needs to be reduced for each waterbody to comply with Minnesota's sulfate standard, by writing mining permits with stringent sulfate limits, and by enforcing those permits.

Since sulfate increases methylmercury production that bioaccumulates, TMDL mercury studies and plans to restore mercury impaired waters must consider the effects of sulfate pollution and other factors that increase mercury release from wetlands and sediments and mercury methylation. These studies need firm deadlines to analyze watersheds and to establish regulatory controls that reduce mercury to safe levels.