

# Bryan Wyberg

I am writing to express my very strong support for MPCA's efforts to identify 2,395 wild rice-producing waters and add 20 new waterbodies to the list of wild rice waters impaired due to sulfate.

I believe that all decision-making concerning pollution determinations and efforts to reverse those pollution problems should be guided by peer-reviewed scientific analysis. Decisions must be made free from political interference and the complaints of special interests involved in profit-driven corporations.

I also ask that the MPCA consider these additional comments which I believe will improve the proposal.

1. I believe that the MPCA should also add Dark Lake, a wild rice lake in the Rainy River watershed to the list of wild rice waters impaired due to sulfate.
2. The proposed current Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) plan to study and reduce pollutants in impaired waters is too weak to protect human health, ecosystems, and the exercise of treaty-reserved rights from sulfate impairment of wild rice and toxic mercury contamination of fish.
3. The MPCA should move quickly to:
  - A. Restore wild rice waters impaired due to sulfate. MPCA should: a) determine how much sulfate needs to be reduced for each waterbody impaired by mining pollution to comply with Minnesota's sulfate standard, b) write mining permits with stringent sulfate limits, and c) enforce those permits. This new effort by MPCA would cut the number of Minnesota wild rice impaired waters approximately by half.
  - B. Restore mercury-impaired waters and fish. MPCA should: a) recognize how sulfate pollution exacerbates the effects of mercury deposited from the air in its studies and plans to restore mercury-impaired waters, and b) set firm deadlines to analyze watersheds and establish regulatory controls that reduce mercury to safe levels.

Thank you for addressing the issue of impaired rice-producing waters and developing this initial proposal to reverse the unfortunate situation we find ourselves in today. I believe that with the incorporation of the strengthening points included herein, the outcome of this action will be successful. Please do not let mining and other industrial special interest pressure turn you from your path or weaken the proposal and reducing its effectiveness.