

Mitchell Gilbert

As a US Steel employee, I am concerned about the impact of enforcing the outdated 10 mg/L sulfate standard. While this rule directly affects industries like mining and wastewater treatment, its consequences extend across the entire supply chain—including contractors, suppliers, service providers, and small businesses that rely on these industries.

The standard, based on decades-old science, does not reflect the complex reality of wild rice ecosystems. Research shows that wild rice thrives in diverse environments and cannot be protected by a single, rigid number. Minnesota has over 2,400 wild rice-producing lakes, each with unique conditions that influence resilience.

If businesses are forced to comply with an unworkable standard, the result will be increased costs, reduced competitiveness, and ultimately fewer jobs and opportunities for the supply chain businesses that form the backbone of local economies. A modern, flexible standard based on site-specific science is the best way forward—protecting wild rice while ensuring economic stability for communities across the state.

I encourage the MPCA to adopt a balanced approach that supports both environmental stewardship and economic health.

Sincerely,
Mitchell Gilbert
USS Employee