

Premium Plant Services (Mark Parenteau)

Hello,

I am the owner of Premium Plant Services, a Minnesota-based business that serves industries critical to our state's economy. I am writing to express concern about the enforcement of the outdated 10 mg/L sulfate standard. This rigid requirement creates significant challenges for employers across sectors—including mining, manufacturing, agriculture, and wastewater treatment—while offering little proven benefit to wild rice protection.

As a business owner, I know firsthand the importance of regulatory certainty. Minnesota businesses are committed to protecting wild rice and water quality, but the current standard is functionally unattainable. It forces companies to pursue costly variances, creating uncertainty that discourages long-term investment, job growth, and innovation. Employers like mine need a stable, science-based framework that allows us to continue supporting families, communities, and the state's economy.

Scientific research has shown that wild rice can thrive in waters with sulfate levels far exceeding 10 mg/L, and that other factors—such as water depth, hydrology, sediment, and competing vegetation—play a more significant role in its resilience. A new, site-specific, science-driven standard would provide a much more accurate balance between environmental protection and economic vitality.

I strongly urge the MPCA to modernize the sulfate policy to reflect current science and site-specific realities. Doing so will not only protect Minnesota's natural resources but also safeguard thousands of jobs, strengthen communities, and ensure that businesses like mine can remain competitive and continue to invest in our state's future.

Mark Parenteau
Premium Plant Services