

J Schauffler

I am a Minnesotan who asks you to enforce the 10 mg/L sulfate standard at Keetac Mine because I love wild rice, and because wild rice is an important part of Minnesota food security.

I cook a meal every week in Saint Paul where we give away about 100 servings of a hot meal made from local ingredients. When we can cook with wild rice it is a gift-- because of its nutrition benefits and because it connects us to place. When I cook for my unhoused and financially insecure neighbors, I want to feed them something that is filling and healthful, because I don't know if they know where their next full meal is coming from, and because I know they likely have a harder time accessing healthcare if they get sick. It is also important to preserve a variety of local foods, since harvests change from year to year. In my work, refined grains or potatoes do not provide the same benefits as wild rice, and they do not provide the soul connection to where we all live.

My story is just one of so many across Minnesota. Our legislature passed the 10 mg/L sulfate standard specifically to protect wild rice precisely because the grain is so important to so many of our lives. That's why I ask you, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, to control the pollution that threatens this plant. An out-of- state corporation's complaints that it will make less profit-- not no profit-- are simply not as important as the health, welfare, and culture of Minnesotans.