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MPCA's draft Keetac permits does not require compliance with Minnesota's sulfate standards until April 30, 2030 but what is required is an accelerated program of compliance to meet this standard AT A MINIMUM. This is because sulfate's threshold for increasing mercury methylation and fish contamination is MUCH LOWER (significant increase in fish mercury contamination at 3.5 ppm sulfate) than it is for wild rice (10 ppm).

Larger lakes in Voyageurs Park are polluted with sulfate from Minntac and Arcelor Mittal tailings basins. Consequently, Crane Lake walleyes and Sand Point Lake walleyes have higher mercury concentrations than 64 of 65 commercial seafood species monitored by the FDA. If they were commercial seafood, the FDA would advise consumers to AVOID walleyes from Crane and Sand Point lakes, as the mercury concentrations are more than double the FDA's line between "Good" and "Avoid."

Mercury concentration in Voyageur Park walleyes correlates to sulfate concentrations in lake water. Increasing sulfate from 1.9 ppm in clean Lake Kabetogama to 6.7 ppm in polluted Crane Lake causes mercury contamination in walleyes to increase from 0.29 ppm to 1.18 ppm. This contamination of fish with mercury is unacceptable and preventable. Unrestrained dumping of sulfate laden mine waste water must not be allowed to continue.

Keetac sulfate treatment MUST be included in capital upgrades required from the new owner of U.S. Steel, Nippon Steel.