



RE: The Wild Rice Conference Committee Report is no Compromise – Please Veto

May 21, 2018

Dear Governor Dayton:

We, the undersigned organizations and the citizens we represent, **respectfully ask you to veto HF 3422 – the conference committee report on wild rice**. The bill does not protect wild rice now or set-up a system that reasonably takes steps to protect wild rice in the future. In fact, enactment of this statute would take us backwards by explicitly allowing *new* polluters, including sulfide ore mine industries, to discharge sulfates without using technologies to mitigate them.

- 1) The bill prohibits protection of wild rice growing in most waters in Minnesota until they can be officially listed as a Wild Rice Water. Only 24 waters are currently named as Wild Rice Waters in rule, though the MPCA, tribes and DNR between them have identified at least 1300-1600 wild rice waters that need protection from sulfate pollution. Blocking the listing and protection of wild rice waters violates the Clean Water Act.
- 2) The bill requires an exhaustive list of scientific information to be gathered and analyzed for each water body before it can be listed as a Wild Rice Water (and thus earn protection under the law.) But the bill provides \$0 for this work, effectively blocking any progress in identifying and limiting sulfate pollution in additional wild rice waters.
- 3) The bill prohibits protection of our existing Wild Rice Waters until “cost-effective treatment technology is available.” But the bill only creates barriers to using existing and new technologies to make progress in cleaning up sulfate pollution in wild rice waters. The bill requires evaluation of new technologies for sulfate control, but provides no funding for NRRI research in promising new sulfate controls or to assist dischargers in funding treatment to reduce sulfate discharge.
- 4) The bill explicitly allows new industries such as PolyMet, Twin Metals or other sulfide ore mines to add sulfate pollution to our waters without implementing any technologies that require investment to control sulfides. This is a big step backward and a violation of the Clean Water Act. Under current law, new dischargers upstream of wild rice waters would have to control their sulfates.

For these reasons this bill is no compromise and should be opposed.

Please veto HF 3422. Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Morse". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steve Morse

Minnesota Environmental Partnership

and the 26 organizations on the reverse of this page

Alliance for Sustainability

Audubon Minnesota

Clean Water Action – Minnesota

CURE (Clean Up our River Environment)

Environment Minnesota

Eureka Recycling

Freshwater Society

Friends of Minnesota Scientific & Natural Areas

Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness

Friends of the Mississippi River

Honor the Earth

Izaak Walton League – Minnesota Division

Land Stewardship Project

League of Women Voters Duluth

Lower Phalen Creek Project

MN Center for Environmental Advocacy

Minnesota Council of Parks and Trails

Minnesota Native Plant Society

Minnesota Ornithologists Union

Pollinator Friendly Alliance

Save Our Sky Blue Waters

Sierra Club – North Star Chapter

St. Croix River Association

WaterLegacy

Wilderness in the City

Women’s Congress for Future Generations