

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

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This bill would prohibit the application of a water quality standard for sulfate that applies to certain wild rice waters until the Pollution Control Agency (PCA) designates waters subject to the standards through a rulemaking process required as part of a law passed in 2011. The bill would prohibit both the application of the standard, either through permits or other requirements, and the use of the standard to list a water as impaired under the federal Clean Water Act.

In 1973, the PCA established a water quality standard for sulfate, 10 mg/L, that applies to “water used for production of wild rice during periods when the rice may be susceptible to damage by high sulfate levels.” The standard has rarely been applied and in 2011, a law was passed providing funding and requiring the PCA to conduct a research study on the impacts of sulfate on wild rice and to amend agency rules to address water quality standards for wild rice waters, designate waters subject to the standards, and designate the times of year the standards would apply.