



REGIONAL HAZE FACTSHEET

MINNESOTA

CLEARING THE AIR

Air pollution remains one of the most serious problems facing national parks. It is threatening the health of park visitors, wildlife and neighboring communities, driving the climate crisis and compromising our views with hazy skies. In fact, nearly 90 percent of our more than 400 national parks are plagued by haze pollution caused mostly by coal plants, vehicles and other industrial sources, as well as oil and gas development and operations.

Fortunately, certain national parks and wilderness areas, labeled “Class I” areas, have the strongest clean air protections in the country, mandated by the Clean Air Act (CAA). The Regional Haze Rule is the CAA’s time-tested, effective program that requires federal and state agencies as well as stakeholders to work together to restore clear skies at Class I areas around the country. In Minnesota those places include Voyageurs National Park and Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

The state of Minnesota has submitted its regional haze plan to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Unfortunately, the proposed haze plan fails to reduce pollution, falling short of the state’s obligation to improve air quality for our parks and wilderness areas. While the plan considers a robust array of pollution sources, the plan fails to consider taconite sources. Taconite sources emit more than 70% of the total haze emissions from the state, and these sources are often located in low-income communities. The state also overestimated pollution control costs for sugar beet processing and paper manufacturing facilities. EPA must now decide whether to approve, partially approve, or disapprove the state’s plan.



20

Industrial facilities in Minnesota potentially affecting visibility in 12 regional Class I Areas.



63

Industrial facilities from any state potentially affecting visibility in Minnesota’s 2 Class I Areas.

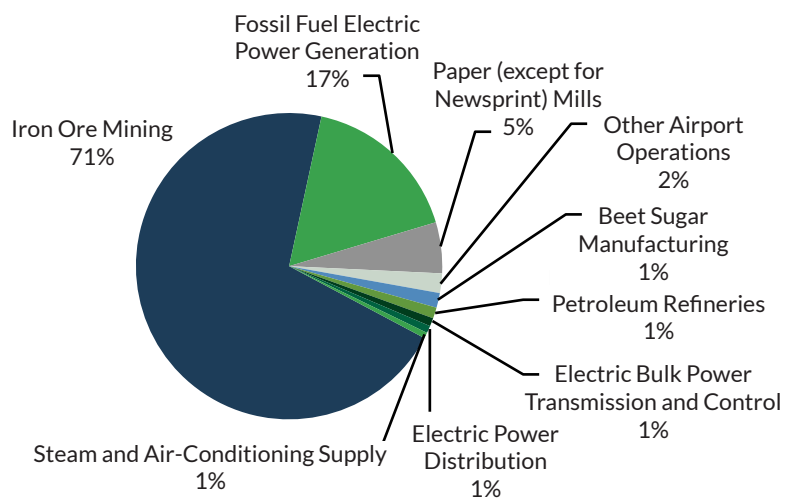
Paddler enjoys the solitude of Voyageurs National Park. Credit: (c) George Burba | Dreamstime.com

NPCA analysis of impact of industrial facilities based on publicly available emissions data from the EPA’s 2017 National Emissions Inventory (NEI) and the 2019 Air Markets Program Data (AMPD). Note that data regarding emission numbers and sources of pollution may have changed since the creation of this fact sheet. Please contact dorozco@npca.org for updated data information.

MINNESOTA’S INDUSTRIAL SECTORS OF HAZE POLLUTION

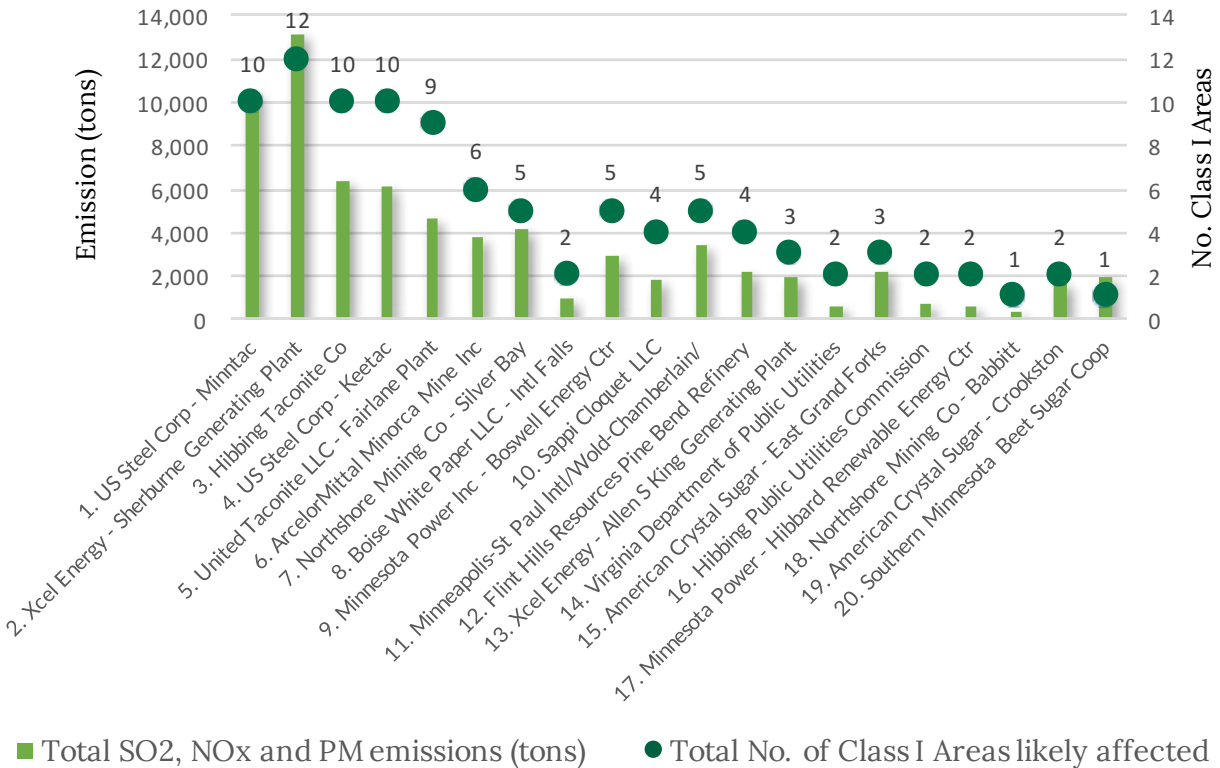
NPCA analyzed publicly available data to identify the worst sources and industrial sectors of haze pollution potentially affecting Class I Areas. We evaluated these emitters to determine which sources should be selected by the state for a four-factor reasonable progress analysis.

The chart on the right shows the industrial sectors emitting the most visibility impairing pollution in Minnesota.



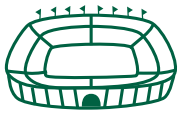
Sources of Visibility Impairing Pollution in Minnesota

MINNESOTA'S 20 WORST SOURCES OF REGIONAL HAZE POLLUTION



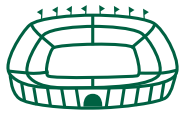
The state of Minnesota identified a set of point sources for a four-factor reasonable progress analysis and requested information on emission reduction options from these source owners. NPCA supports the evaluation of these sources and we urge the state of Minnesota to ensure pollution controls are required to cut emissions from these polluting facilities.

HOW MANY FOOTBALL STADIUMS (8 STORIES HIGH) COULD EACH OF THE TOP FIVE INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES IN MINNESOTA FILL WITH THEIR EMISSIONS EACH YEAR?



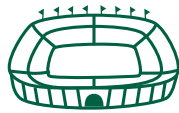
42

US Steel Corp - Minntac
Sherburne County
10,476 tons



52

Xcel Energy - Sherburne Generating Plant
St. Louis County
13,109 tons



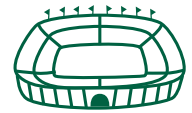
25

Hibbing Taconite Co
St. Louis County
6,372 tons



24

US Steel Corp - Keetac
St. Louis County
6,075 tons



18

United Taconite LLC - Fairlane Plant
St. Louis County
4,613 tons

TAKE ACTION: We have an opportunity to achieve a regional haze plan for Minnesota that protects people, parks, and our future. Please join our effort to ensure that all decision-makers and stakeholders, at the federal, state, and municipal level work to make this happen.

For more information, please contact Christine Goepfert at cgoepfert@npca.org.