



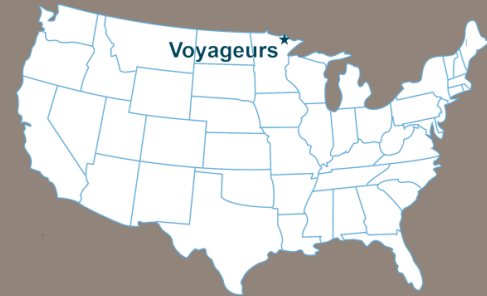
Voyageurs

Minnesota projects that natural visibility will be achieved at this national park in...

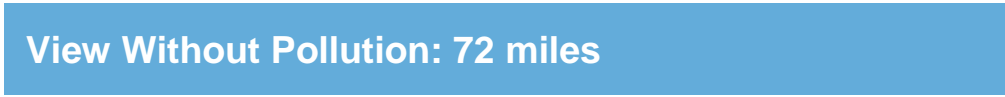
2177

Haze is Damaging.

Haze pollution limits views of our most valued national parks and wilderness areas, affecting not just how far we can see, but also the color, sharpness, and quality of the view. It also makes the air unhealthy for people, wildlife and natural resources.



View With Pollution: 35 miles



View Without Pollution: 72 miles

Voyageurs Visibility

Minnesota estimates that it will take until 2177 to reach natural visibility at Voyageurs at projected pollution cleanup rates.¹ When skies at the park are most polluted, visitors are unable to see 37 miles that would be visible under natural conditions. To restore the skies, the law requires industries to clean up if their pollution is harming the parks.

Want Cleaner Air?

A few immediate opportunities stand out for reducing human-made haze pollution at Voyageurs. First, Minnesota's older coal-fired power plants must be required to install modern pollution controls. The Environmental Protection Agency has thus far exempted these large polluters from reducing their pollution.

This Haze Isn't Natural.

Some haze is natural, but much of what's seen today is not. Natural fires, wind-blow dust, and vegetation can result in "natural" haze. Water vapor also obscures visibility naturally, but its impacts are exacerbated by reactions with human-caused pollution, particularly sulfates.

Second, Minnesota's taconite facilities, which process iron ore for steelmaking near Voyageurs, must be appropriately controlled. The Environmental Protection Agency recently required basic pollution controls on these under-regulated facilities, but its decision has been challenged.

Clean air laws only require reductions from controllable sources of pollution, like power plants and other industrial sources. Cost effective, efficient reductions are routinely accomplished with the use of modern technologies.

Reducing taconite and power plant emissions is imperative to restoring clear skies to the park.

Controllable Sources of Haze at Voyageurs

The primary human-made causes of haze are sulfates and nitrates, formed in the atmosphere from emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x). Pollutants impacting Voyageurs originate from a variety of places, with the highest state contribution from Minnesota.

SO₂ impacting Voyageurs is primarily released from large industrial sources like coal-fired power plants and taconite facilities. NO_x is emitted from a mix of sources, including stationary sources like industrial boilers and power plants, as well as mobile sources like cars and trucks.

Getting to Clear Skies?

Voyageurs is one of the few protected places where visibility does not appear to have improved in the last decade.²



Poor visibility at Voyageurs. IMPROVE Monitoring Network.

What is the Status of the Haze Cleanup Plan for Voyageurs?

The Environmental Protection Agency approved most of Minnesota's plan, but found that parts of the state's plan fell short. The Agency approved Minnesota's decision to exempt power plants from pollution controls. NPCA has challenged this decision in court.

Fortunately, the Agency improved Minnesota's plan by requiring emissions reductions from the aging taconite industry using basic pollution controls. These requirements, which NPCA supports, have been challenged in court.

\$12 million

Visitor Spending, 2010³

215,000

Visitors per year⁴

1975

First proposed as a national park in 1891, Voyageurs was not established until 1975.

118,300

Direct Minnesota jobs generated by outdoor recreation in the state.⁵

84,000

Acres of water in the park – nearly 40% of the park's surface.⁴

Sources: 1. Visibility and haze source information derived from Minnesota's December 2009 and other regional haze submissions to EPA (see <http://www.ndhealth.gov/AQ/RegionalHaze/>), along with EPA's proposed and final actions on Minnesota's plan (77 Fed. Reg. 3681, 77 Fed. Reg. 34801). 2. IMPROVE Monitoring Network. 3. Headwaters Economics. 4. NPS. 5. Outdoor Industry Association, 2013.