

From: [Annie Bachschneider](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: RE: Urgent Request to Reconsider Enforcement of the 10 mg/L Sulfate Standard, Support for Variance and Site-Specific Standard for Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 12:32:02 PM

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Dear Governor Walz, Commissioner Kessler, and Ms. Handeland,

On behalf of the Range Association of Municipalities and Schools (RAMS), I write to express deep concern regarding the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) enforcement of the 10 mg/L sulfate standard for wild rice waters, particularly as it relates to the draft NPDES permits for U.S. Steel Keetac. We urge you to support the variance and site-specific standard for Keetac.

RAMS represents 70 units of local government and over 155,000 residents across the Taconite Assistance Area. Since 1939, our organization has served as a unified voice for the Iron Range—**One Range, One Voice**—advocating for policies that protect the economic vitality and educational stability of our region.

The enforcement of this outdated sulfate standard threatens not only the mining industry, but also the financial health of municipalities, school districts, and small businesses across northeastern Minnesota. This is not a mining issue alone. The standard applies to all wastewater discharge permits, meaning cities and public institutions could face unattainable compliance requirements, skyrocketing costs, and delays in critical infrastructure projects.

There is currently no commercially proven, cost-effective technology available to meet the 10 mg/L standard. Enforcing it now would force communities to divert resources from classrooms, public safety, and essential services—undermining the very foundation of our local governments and schools.

The MPCA was directed by the Legislature in 2011 to update this standard based on modern science and site-specific conditions. That directive remains unfulfilled. Meanwhile, the economic and environmental consequences of enforcing an outdated rule continue to grow.

RAMS respectfully urges your administration to:

- Support a **science-based update** to the sulfate standard before it is enforced in any permit.
- Encourage the MPCA to allow **site-specific standards and variances** where appropriate.
- Ensure that **compliance points reflect actual environmental impact**, not arbitrary technicalities.
- Support the variance and site-specific standard for Keetac.

The Iron Range is proud of its legacy of resilience and contribution to Minnesota's economy. We ask for your leadership in ensuring that environmental policy is balanced, achievable, and reflective of the realities facing our communities.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue

Annie Bachschneider
City Councilor
City of Virginia, MN

From: [Andre Baumgartner](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 9:12:39 AM

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As a proud member of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 49, I'm concerned about the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's draft permits for U.S. Steel Keetac and the inclusion of outdated sulfate standards. Mining is part of Minnesotans' way of life and provides thousands of good union jobs — including jobs for operating engineers like me, who support mine turnarounds and related work. These are good-paying jobs that support families and build communities. We all want clean water, but we should base our standards on current science, and the existing 10 mg/L standard relies on an outdated understanding from decades ago. The MPCA was directed to update this standard in 2011, but that hasn't happened. What's more, there's no proven and affordable way to meet this standard. Trying to force compliance with outdated standards will increase production cost and reduce competitiveness for Keetac at a time when we've already seen too many mining layoffs. And Minnesota's rural communities will bear the brunt of these regulations. The draft permits also require sulfate measurement at every discharge, even though they all end up in the same body of water. But that makes no sense. It's more logical to test for compliance downstream, where the overall impact can be measured. I'm asking the MPCA to leave sulfate limits out of these permits until it has an up-to-date, science-based standard. But if it does include these limits, compliance should be measured at a single point downstream, and the company should be given more time to meet the requirements. Thank you for your consideration.

From: [Cathy Erickson](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: RE: Urgent Request to Reconsider Enforcement of the 10 mg/L Sulfate Standard, Support for Variance and Site-Specific Standard for Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 2:59:38 PM

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Cathy Erickson

RAMS Board Member

From: [David Bueckers](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 7:47:35 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

David Bueckers

25779 53rd street
Royalton MN 56373

320-980-4542

Sent from my iPhone

From: [David Ehret](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 10:16:10 AM

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David Ehret. 5235 Kingswood Ln. Hermantown Mn 55811. 218-348-3750.
daveehret@yahoo.com

From: [Dave Gill](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 8:28:33 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Doug Obert](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 10:46:21 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

From: [Frederic Boger](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 5:32:37 PM

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To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 5:33:13 PM

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Thank you for your consideration. Fredericboger@gmail.com 218 830 9578

From: [Frederic Boger](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 5:35:12 PM

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Thank you for your consideration. Frederic boger 418 9th ave twoharbors mn

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To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 5:32:25 PM

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From: [Frankj Peralta](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 9:28:50 AM

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From: [Greg Campbell](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 12:24:50 AM

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From: [Justin Remer](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 12:59:20 AM

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From: [Justin Remer](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 1:01:31 AM

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Justin Remer
10273 80th St
Princeton, MN 55371
763-238-9292

From: [john sime](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 4:53:40 AM

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Sincerely,
John Sime Local 49
(715)495-3577
[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

From: [jjt5598](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 10:47:55 AM

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As a proud member of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 49, I'm concerned about the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's draft permits for U.S. Steel Keetac and the inclusion of outdated sulfate standards.

Mining is part of Minnesotans' way of life and provides thousands of good union jobs — including jobs for operating engineers like me, who support mine turnarounds and related work. These are good-paying jobs that support families and build communities.

We all want clean water, but we should base our standards on current science, and the existing 10 mg/L standard relies on an outdated understanding from decades ago. The MPCA was directed to update this standard in 2011, but that hasn't happened.

What's more, there's no proven and affordable way to meet this standard.

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I'm asking the MPCA to leave sulfate limits out of these permits until it has an up-to-date, science-based standard. But if it does include these limits, compliance should be measured at a single point downstream, and the company should be given more time to meet the requirements.

Thank you for your consideration.

John tobeck. Gr mn

Sent from my Galaxy

From: [Jay Wachlin](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 9:52:19 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.
Victor wachlin
151 Main St, Waltham, MN 55982

[Jrwachlin@gmail.com](mailto:jrwachlin@gmail.com)

From: [Kara Foner](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 10:05:23 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Kara Foner
612-708-7710
dkfoner@hotmail.com

From: [Kevin](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 9:39:53 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Kevin Narr
15329 Radium Way NW
Ramsey, MN 55303

From: [Kim Waffensmith](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 4:37:50 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Greg Waffensmith
15335 Woodland Beach Rd,
Deerwood, MN 56444

From: [Lawrence Geislinger](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 12:27:36 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Lawrence Geislinger Jr.
Area Business Representative
I.U.O.E. Local 49
2109 251st Street
St. Cloud, MN 56304

Office: (320) 252-2162

Cell: (320) 761-2388

From: [Lee Hemphill](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 9:27:32 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my iPhone
Russell I Hemphill jr. Bovey mn. 2183982115

From: [me cooper](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 8:58:35 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

From: [me cooper](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 8:58:14 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

From: mhecksel@frontier.com
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 6:30:45 AM

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Mark Hecksel As a proud member of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 49, I'm concerned about the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's draft permits for U.S. Steel Keetac and the inclusion of outdated sulfate standards. Mining is part of Minnesotans' way of life and provides thousands of good union jobs — including jobs for operating engineers like me, who support mine turnarounds and related work. These are good-paying jobs that support families and build communities. We all want clean water, but we should base our standards on current science, and the existing 10 mg/L standard relies on an outdated understanding from decades ago. The MPCA was directed to update this standard in 2011, but that hasn't happened. What's more, there's no proven and affordable way to meet this standard. Trying to force compliance with outdated standards will increase production cost and reduce competitiveness for Keetac at a time when we've already seen too many mining layoffs. And Minnesota's rural communities will bear the brunt of these regulations. The draft permits also require sulfate measurement at every discharge, even though they all end up in the same body of water. But that makes no sense. It's more logical to test for compliance downstream, where the overall impact can be measured. I'm asking the MPCA to leave sulfate limits out of these permits until it has an up-to-date, science-based standard. But if it does include these limits, compliance should be measured at a single point downstream, and the company should be given more time to meet the requirements. Thank you for your consideration.

From: [Mark Honken](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 6:10:20 AM

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As a proud member of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 49, I'm concerned about the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's draft permits for U.S. Steel Keetac and the inclusion of outdated sulfate standards. Mining is part of Minnesotans' way of life and provides thousands of good union jobs — including jobs for operating engineers like me, who support mine turnarounds and related work. These are good-paying jobs that support families and build communities. We all want clean water, but we should base our standards on current science, and the existing 10 mg/L standard relies on an outdated understanding from decades ago. The MPCA was directed to update this standard in 2011, but that hasn't happened. What's more, there's no proven and affordable way to meet this standard. Trying to force compliance with outdated standards will increase production cost and reduce competitiveness for Keetac at a time when we've already seen too many mining layoffs. And Minnesota's rural communities will bear the brunt of these regulations. The draft permits also require sulfate measurement at every discharge, even though they all end up in the same body of water. But that makes no sense. It's more logical to test for compliance downstream, where the overall impact can be measured. I'm asking the MPCA to leave sulfate limits out of these permits until it has an up-to-date, science-based standard. But if it does include these limits, compliance should be measured at a single point downstream, and the company should be given more time to meet the requirements. Thank you for your consideration.

Mark Honken

From: [Marc Maeder](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 4:14:50 PM

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Marc Maeder. Phone (218)-343-5045

24689 Tioga Beach Road, Cohasset MN 55721

From: [Mark Oeltjenbruns](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 8:59:57 AM

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From: [Matthew Sogge](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 9:20:15 AM

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Matt Sogge 320 221 6012 14567 county road 9 Eden valley

From: [Nate Sogge](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 7:50:51 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Thanks

Nate Sogge

Soggenate@gmail.com

612-286-5990

From: [Troy Carlson](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 7:52:09 PM

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Hello ,this is Maggi Carlson. I am a proud member of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 49, I'm concerned about the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's draft permits for U.S. Steel Keetac and the inclusion of outdated sulfate standards.

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Thank you for your consideration.

Maggi Carlson

Carlsonstmmr@gmail.com

218-839-4189

From: [tim kick](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 10:33:43 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

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From: [tim kick](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 10:33:04 PM

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From: [Tom Schwartz](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 6:25:34 PM

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Sent from my iPhone

From: [Tom Skylondz](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 1:09:23 PM

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From: [Double EE](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 10:17:19 AM

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From: [jjt5598](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 10:47:21 AM

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