



September 22, 2025

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
c/o Stephanie Handeland
520 Lafayette Road North
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for Industrial Wastewater Variance – NDPES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for the U.S. Steel Keewatin Taconite tailings basin and mining area

On behalf of Lakehead Constructors and our 550 full-time professionals and union tradespeople, I am writing in support of U.S. Steel and for the MPCA to issue a variance from Minnesota's sulfate water quality standard for water released into areas that produce wild rice. In addition to the variance, we request that the MPCA review the current standards and re-establish them based on modern science, site-specific variables, reasonable compliance timeframes and economic introspective of supporting the businesses, communities and economies within Minnesota; mining, manufacturing, agriculture, municipalities, power.

We are deeply concerned about our region's rural economy as the MPCA looks to enforce compliance standards that are unreasonable and not required in other states. This puts many of our clients at risk for long-term survival, jeopardizes Minnesota's existing industries' ability to maintain their competitive edge in an international market, compete with other states for new investments and our state's ability to attract new businesses. In addition to economic concerns for the businesses subject to the MPCA's sulfate compliance standard, many more businesses that rely on these entities for work are at risk including the thousands of contractors, vendors and service providers. Further, some of the technology required for compliance with the sulfate standard either does not exist or is extremely expensive for the unproven results; added costs which would be pushed onto consumers and taxpayers.

As the largest union general contractor on the Iron Range, our company is committed to being good stewards of the environment and sustaining the economies in our northern Minnesota communities by supporting families with good paying jobs and benefits, paying local taxes, supporting local causes like United Way, local food shelves and foundations, youth sports and scholarships (we live, work and play here).

In addition to my professional role at Lakehead Constructors, I am a Board of Director with the Iron Mining Association and a lifelong resident of Minnesota, living on the Iron Range in Hibbing, with my wife and two boys. Again, we urge you to reconsider and approve this site-specific standard and variance. For further follow-up, I may be reached at juncini@lakeheadconstructors.com, phone 218-748-1114 or mail 510 W. 3rd Avenue N, Aurora, MN 55705.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Uncini
Vice President – Construction