

alice madden

MPCA commissioners and staff -

Please uphold state law and regulations by rejecting any variances now and on into the future requested by this out of state corporation. United States Steel Corp's request on its Wastewater Permit is an astonishing one.

Our legislature passed a clearly defined "reasonable" 10 mg/L sulfate standard - and US Steel's request stands to violate that standard by 240%. It's surprising that that the company would even be describing that (or that MPCA would interpret it) as mere a variance. It seems instead like a blunt request for fully exemption from any state agreements on what is a safe or reasonable amount of sulfates. Why should this out of state corporation be allowed to threaten our waterways that all other residents and businesses are held to account for?

Further, the U.S. did make promises to Indigenous stewards in exchange for ownership of the land that became Minnesota.

In 1837, the United States governments and its subdivisions (states, counties, cities) "guaranteed" Anishinaabe people the right of "gathering the wild rice, upon the lands, the rivers and the lakes included in the territory ceded," forever, in exchange for title to that territory (1837 Treaty with the Chippewa). An 1855 Treaty transferred title of more Anishinaabe land to the United States♦ including the land holding the Keetac mine♦ but again retained the right to gather rice from the land and waters (1855 Treaty with the Chippewa; Minnesota v. Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians, 526 U.S. 172 (1999)). More than a generation ago, in 1973, Minnesota made good to protect that promise when it passed the 10 mg/L sulfate standard.

Uphold the legally enforceable commitments and obligations of treaty law, and uphold basic safety for all Minnesotans by rejecting US Steel's variance request. Those standards exist for an important reason: public health and safety.

thank you,
Alice Madden