

Riley Reif

I am writing to oppose the variance in MN water quality standards for US Steel's wastewater. Minnesota must stop letting major polluters, including foreign owned mining companies like so called US Steel, have exemptions allowing them to poison our public resources such as water and wild rice. Like so many heavy industries, a large corporation wants to extract resources from our state for short term private profit while the public will bear the financial and environmental burden of cleanup for many years into the future.

Enforcing the sulfate standard will create good paying, Minnesota jobs, as US Steel will likely need to support emerging local industries working in sulfate remediation and reduction. If a mine, or any other company, cannot afford to extract metal and clean up their waste, they are not financially viable to begin with.

Additionally, I do not think the deadline of 2030 is reasonable. US Steel has not been in compliance thus far and I am not aware of any efforts or plans to be in compliance in the next 4 years. Unless US Steel can demonstrate and begin implementing a viable plan soon, I have doubts that they can meet this deadline. I would recommend moving this deadline up to 2028 in order to minimize ongoing pollution being discharged, or an early good-faith deadline for x% reduction to demonstrate US Steel's commitment to the 2028 deadline.

Water is life and wild rice sustains life. We cannot eat taconite.