

Jim Pauling

Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U.S. Steel Keetac

To whom it may concern my name is JIM PAULING.

I have proudly lived on the Iron Range for over 50 years. I've raised my children here, built a life rooted in the values of hard work, community and respect for the land. Like many Minnesotans, I deeply value a strong, healthy environment and understand the importance of protecting our natural resources at the same time I recognize the critical role that mining plays in sustaining good jobs and a vibrant communities across the region.

I am writing to express my support for the variance requested submitted by US Steel for the Keetac facility. I believe this variance is essential to allow continued operations while we work toward long-term solution that balance environmental protection with economic sustainability. The mines are not just places of employment they are the backbone of our communities. Generations of families, including mine have depended on these jobs to build the future here in Northern Minnesota.

I also believe that other mining operations facing similar challenges should be granted the same consideration. We need a collaborative approach that brings together regulators, Industry leaders, scientists, and community members to find workable solutions. We must ensure that environmental standards are based on sound science and modern understanding, and that they are applied in ways that do not threaten the livelihood of thousands of Minnesota.

There must be a path forward that allows us to keep the minds running well also leaving this place better than we found it. I urge the MPCA and other decision makers to listen to the voices of those who live and work here we are not asking to ignore environmental concerns we are asking for a fair, balanced and practical solution that reflects the realities of our region, and the people call at home.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jim Pauling