

Multiple Senders

Email comments from multiple senders received 9/20/25.

From: [Aaron Stelter](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 8:57:58 PM

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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I'm concerned about the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's draft permits for U.S. Steel Keetac and the inclusion of outdated sulfate standards.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want clean water, but we should base our standards on current science, and the existing 10 mg/L standard relies on an outdated understanding from decades ago.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Trying to force compliance with outdated standards will increase production cost and reduce competitiveness for Keetac at a time when we've already seen too many mining layoffs.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: [Barb Kalmi](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Sulfate Standard
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 6:18:36 AM

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RE: Urgent Request to Reconsider Enforcement of the 10 mg/L Sulfate Standard, Support for Variance and Site-Specific Standard for Keetac

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.

Barbara Kalmi

RAMS President



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From: [Brian Sand](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 10:09:59 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [Craig Bollmann](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 9:08:23 AM

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Sincerely,
Craig Bollmann
506 4th Ave SE, Mapleton, MN 56065
507-380-5411

From: [Corey Boys](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 7:50:28 AM

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Thank you
Corey Boys
[\(612\) 723-5650](tel:6127235650)

From: [caley hughes](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 1:07:03 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.
Caley Hughes

From: [Corey Johnson](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 4:41:27 AM

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From: [Chris King](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 8:38:32 AM

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Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sarah Melby](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 8:00:02 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Chris Melby

612-282-1397

chrism@valleypaving.com

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From: [vogenli](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 5:01:32 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Chris Price

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [Dirk Davis](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Urgent Request to Reconsider Enforcement of the 10 mg/L Sulfate Standard
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 12:05:04 PM

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RE: Urgent Request to Reconsider Enforcement of the 10 mg/L Sulfate Standard, Support for Variance and Site-Specific Standard for Keetac

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.

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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.
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Thank you for your attention to this critical issue

From: [David Hiner](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 5:56:18 PM

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From: [eric baraga](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 6:19:31 AM

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From: [Ethan Staton](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 7:05:00 PM

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From: [Gary Hockett](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 6:47:35 AM

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Sent from my iPhone

From: [Garrett Mirau](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 7:15:43 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

From: [Josh Horton](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 7:44:46 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.

Best Regards,
Josh Horton
P.O. Box 5178
Grand Rapids, MN. 55744

From: [Jake Kes](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 8:40:22 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Jacob Kes
2348 Thomas Ave N
Minneapolis, Mn. 55411
507-380-0410
Sent from my iPhone

From: [JEFF MATERN](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 5:53:37 AM

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Thank you for your consideration. Jeff Matern 4`124 Utic AVE S St. Louis Park
Minnesota 55418-3211

From: [jeff miller](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 2:22:51 PM

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From: [JE Skube](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 7:46:24 PM

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I am writing to provide comments regarding public notice of draft NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for the U. S. Steel Keetac tailings basin and mining area, respectively. I have interest in these draft permits because I, like most Minnesotans, care deeply about protecting the environment.

I am concerned about the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) sulfate water quality standard of 10 mg/L for wild rice waters and its consequences to the Iron Range and communities across the state. MPCA was directed to review and update the wild rice sulfate standard in 2011 but has not done so to date. The future of Minnesota mines, local governments and other industries are critically affected by the enforcement of this outdated standard.

I strongly urge MPCA to update the wild rice sulfate standard considering current science and site-specific variables. The current 10 mg/L sulfate standard oversimplifies the environmental needs of wild rice. Many other factors determine wild rice resilience, such as water depth and fluctuation, predation, and competing vegetation. Wild rice has even proven to be successful in waters with sulfate levels up to 1,600 mg/L and beyond – 160 times higher than our current standard. The current 10 mg/L standard is not proven to be effective and compliance with it is unattainable for many businesses and communities. From wastewater facilities and small businesses to mines employing thousands of Minnesotans, the cost of meeting a 10 mg/L sulfate standard puts Minnesota at risk with no guaranteed outcome. Do not waste time, money and energy on a sulfate standard that doesn't make sense. I strongly urge you to refrain from including permit limits for sulfate until the time and resources are invested to develop a sulfate standard that follows modern science, addresses site-specific variables and contains cost as required by the 2011 law.

Beyond environmental science, this issue carries significant economic implications for our region and the State of Minnesota. Mining is a cornerstone of Northeast Minnesota's economy, contributing over \$1.8 billion annually and supporting more than 4,000 family-sustaining jobs. These positions offer wages significantly above the regional average, with mining workers earning approximately \$1,708 per week, nearly \$950 more than the average across all industries. The sector also accounted for over one-third of net new jobs in the region during recent growth periods.

The current Keetac compliance schedule is too short and unattainable. There are currently no commercially proven and economical sulfate treatment strategies in place anywhere in the world. Time is needed to evaluate and develop treatment alternatives that are effective and achievable. Since these are some of the first permits to contain the 10 mg/L sulfate limit, other permittees will use the testing and engineering developed for compliance as a model in the future. Current treatment technologies to reduce sulfate levels result in increased solid waste that will be required to be landfilled, increased electrical usage, increased greenhouse gas emissions, and other

negative environmental outcomes. Time and careful consideration are needed to develop feasible sulfate treatment that all Minnesotans can benefit from. The MPCA should allow a longer compliance schedule, or grant the variance, to provide more time to effectively find a feasible solution. The current compliance schedule does not include time for regulatory agency requirements such as environmental review, permitting and other authorizations that may be required.

The two draft permits require wild rice sulfate compliance at each of Keetac's outfalls, yet they all discharge to one water body where the MPCA has said the wild rice standard applies. The compliance point should protect that water body and be representative of the combined discharges from the Keetac facility. The permittee requested to combine sulfate compliance points to factually represent offsite discharges, however the MPCA denied that request. It is concerning that the MPCA will not consider the request, even though it is more factually accurate than what is contained in the draft permits. MPCA must modify the permits to include a single downstream compliance point as proposed by the permittee.

U. S. Steel has submitted two site-specific standard (SSS) requests for sulfate at Hay Lake near Keetac. The 2014 request was never acted upon by MPCA and the 2022 request was denied. These applications followed MPCA guidance and show that a higher sulfate standard than 10 mg/L is warranted. It is concerning that the MPCA does not take into account modern science and site-specific conditions. I urge the MPCA to reconsider the SSS applications as Keetac has been discharging to Hay Lake for almost 60 years with healthy wild rice in existence.

In summary, I urge the MPCA:

- To refrain from including sulfate limits in Keetac's permits. If the permit limits remain as proposed, the MPCA must modify the permits to contain a single sulfate compliance point and allow more time for compliance.*
- To abide by the 2011 law and update the 10 mg/L sulfate standard that the state of Minnesota has recognized as being incorrect.*

Thank you.

John E. Skube
1501 N. 3rd Ave. W.
Virginia, MN 55792

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jeremy Strain](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 7:37:39 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.
Jeremy Strain

From: [joel swanson](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 9:34:49 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Joel h. Swanson, 22547 226th st. Fergus falls,mn. 56537 (218-736-2266)

Sent from my iPad

From: [Jonathan Turner](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 12:41:09 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Thanks,

Jonathan Turner

From: [Jerrie and Nancy Wickstrom](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 9:42:00 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Jerrie Wickstrom
2416 County Road 6
Barnum, MN 55707
(218) 390-5314

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kyle Anderson](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 7:51:01 AM

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Thank you for your consideration. Kyle Anderson

From: kdquisberg@msn.com
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 8:05:34 PM

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Thank you for your consideration. Kevin Quisberg 13146 Cowboy Lane Osakis Mn. 56360 # 320-212-3606

From: [KIM WALTERS](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 5:48:51 AM

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From: [Kathy Wolkerstorfer](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 11:57:43 AM

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From: [Lee Hiller](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 8:54:34 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Leland Hiller
241 Miner St N, Good Thunder, MN 56037
507 340 4233

From: [vogenli](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 5:02:16 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Lisa Price
vogenli@yahoo.com

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [Larry J. Schutz](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 9:57:04 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.

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Larry J. Schutz](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 9:57:26 AM

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Sent from my iPhone

From: [Matt Dunaisky](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 1:43:18 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Matthew Dunaisky
7464 Industrial Rd.
Saginaw, MN 55779
(218) 390-9061

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Michael Ehlenz](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 8:44:05 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Mike Ehlenz
3585 Greten Lane Hastings, MN
651-409-3928

From: [matt mathison](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 8:45:08 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.
Matt Mathison

Sent from my iPhone

From: [mikepeters_30](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 8:32:06 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Mike Peters
612-290-3652
Michael.peters@martinmarietta.com

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S22+ 5G, an AT&T 5G smartphone

From: [Nate Mitchell](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 8:37:47 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Nathan Mitchell

Heavy Equipment Operator

Winberg Companies

njmitch82@gmail.com

651-323-8382

From: [Pete W](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 6:58:52 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Pete Wagener

8555 Jason Ave Ne

Monticello MN 55362

612-501-8992

From: [Phil Wilson](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 10:25:42 AM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Phil Wilson
6875 Channel Rd NE, Fridley, MN 55432
612.236.7392

From: [Steve Biondich](#)
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: Saturday, September 20, 2025 1:25:08 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

Steve Biondich

Mayor

City of Biwabik

(C) 218-410-6717

sbiondich@cityofbiwabik.com

From: [Shadly Brown](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 7:57:09 AM

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Sent from Gmail Mobile

From: [Steve Kucera](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 6:44:54 AM

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Sent from my iPhone

From: [Steve Mahowald](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 9:29:28 PM

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Steve Mahowald

From: [Shawn Schuh](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 4:21:22 PM

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Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sam Swedberg](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 12:48:14 PM

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From: lagerquist@frontiernet.net
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 11:39:17 AM

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From: [bfodortrucker](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 8:45:40 AM

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From: [rootough](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 7:55:28 AM

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Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S24, an AT&T 5G smartphone

From: [rootough](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 7:55:08 AM

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From: [rootough](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 7:55:08 AM

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Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S24, an AT&T 5G smartphone

From: [William Milton](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 7:01:49 PM

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From: wjstolp@uslink.net
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Sulfate standard
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 12:59:59 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

Warren Stolp
Nashwauk Township Supervisor

From: [Zach Needham](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 7:42:46 PM

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Sent from my iPhone

From: mikelyons6946@gmail.com
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 11:06:55 AM

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Mike Lyons
172 walnut la
Apple valley mn 55124
763-913-1335
Sent from my iPhone

From: [ryan saathoff](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Saturday, September 20, 2025 10:53:52 AM

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