

From: [brian christiansen](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#); [brian christiansen](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:54:58 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I'm concerned about the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's draft permits for U.S. Steel Keetac and the inclusion of outdated sulfate standards.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want clean water, but we should base our standards on current science, and the existing 10 mg/L standard relies on an outdated understanding from decades ago.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 Trying to force compliance with outdated standards will increase production cost and reduce competitiveness for Keetac at a time when we've already seen too many mining layoffs.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.

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From: [brian kenmir](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:28:56 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Britt See](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Urgent Request to Reconsider Enforcement of the 10 mg/L Sulfate Standard, Support for Variance and Site-Specific Standard for Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 5:06:05 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:

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->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

From: [Bruce Sly](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:16:07 PM

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Thank you for your consideration. Bruce Sly 37679 County 7 Bagley Mn 56621 218 358 0701

From: riley.chris@hotmail.com
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:53:46 PM

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Chris Stigen
35616 Alan Street, Cohasset, MN 55721
218-301-4122

From: [Chris](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 10:57:38 PM

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Chris Bignall
Grand Rapids MN

From: [Chad Lichtsinn](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 10:34:48 PM

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Chad Lichtsinn
15477 Drexel Way
Apple Valley, Mn. 55124
(952) 649-2282

From: [colin loosbrock](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:06:51 PM

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From: [Charles Morrison](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 10:16:28 PM

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Charlie Morrison
Sent from my iPad

From: [Chad Zachman](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:25:24 PM

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Chad Zachman
5144 Kahl Ave NE, Albertville, MN 55301
612-490-8953

From: [Chad Zachman](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:24:30 PM

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From: [David Bigalk](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 10:19:28 PM

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From: [Daniel Dahl](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:57:54 PM

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Daniel Dahl

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From: [diane ingalls](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#); [Monty Ingalls](#); dimonfam5@yahoo.com
Subject: dimonfam5@yahoo.com
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 8:41:48 PM

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From: [Dan Kingsley](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 10:24:51 PM

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Dan Kingsley

From: [David Kroska](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 %2?? U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:11:25 PM

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[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [Danny Maurstad](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:18:16 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

From: [David Morberg](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:17:09 PM

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From: [Dan Snidarich](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:55:32 PM
Attachments: [Image.jpeg](#)

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Thank you for your consideration.

Dan Snidarich
Area Business Agent
IUOE Local 49
dsnidarich@local49.org
Mobile: (218)-290-2694



From: [Gene Kadelbach](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 8:41:18 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Eugene Kadelbach
elkhc80@hotmail.com
316 S Marshall Ave
Litchfield MN 55355

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [Frank Collins](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:17:10 PM

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Frank Collins
7751 65th Ave, Princeton, MN 55371
3209807912

From: [Ferlin Miller](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:12:14 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

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From: [Avikainen, Garret R](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 11:13:04 AM

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Greetings,

I am writing to provide comments on the draft NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for the U. S. Steel Keetac tailings basin and mining area. Like many Minnesotans, I value a strong, healthy environment and understand the importance of supporting good jobs and vibrant communities.

I am concerned about the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) sulfate water quality standard of 10 mg/L for wild rice waters. This outdated rule, which MPCA was directed to review and update in 2011, has yet to be revised to reflect modern science or site-specific conditions. Enforcing this 10 mg/L standard has serious consequences for Minnesota mines, local governments, and businesses across the state.

Wild rice health is influenced by multiple factors—water depth, fluctuation, competing vegetation, and predation—not just sulfate levels. In fact, wild rice has been shown to thrive in waters with much higher sulfate concentrations.

Compliance with the 10 mg/L standard is not attainable with current technology and would place enormous costs on wastewater facilities, small businesses, and mines that provide thousands of good-paying jobs. A modern, science-based standard is needed.

Mining contributes over \$1.8 billion to Minnesota's economy each year and supports more than 4,000 family-sustaining jobs in Northeast Minnesota—jobs that pay nearly \$950 above the regional average. The proposed compliance schedule for Keetac is not realistic. No proven, cost-effective sulfate treatment options exist today, and more time is needed to research and develop solutions that protect both natural resources and economic stability.

Additionally, Keetac's discharges all flow to a single water body. The permits should use one compliance point that reflects these combined discharges, rather than requiring separate limits at each outfall. MPCA should also reconsider the site-specific standard applications submitted for Hay Lake, where healthy wild rice has grown for decades despite Keetac's discharge.

In summary, I urge the MPCA to:

- Refrain from including sulfate limits in Keetac's permits, or if limits remain, adjust the permits to include a single downstream compliance point and a realistic compliance schedule.

- Update the 10 mg/L sulfate standard as required by law, ensuring it reflects modern science, site-specific conditions, and practical implementation.

Thank you for considering these comments.

I rely on Mining to support me and my family. Without it, I would not be able to live in the area.

Regards,
Garret Avikainen
Reliability Specialist
Crusher
218-749-7551
218-421-7156 cell

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From: [Griff Casey](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:05:55 PM

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From: [Gary & Pamela Hill](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 8:38:43 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Gary Hill
3079 190th St
Winnebago MN
5075252547
Sent from my iPad

From: [Lucky Boss](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:07:09 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.
Gregory kolpien
1825 Peterson Ave, Eau Claire, WI 54703
715-271-0338

From: [jim burman](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 10:30:21 PM

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Thank you for your consideration. james s. burman

From: [jim burman](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 10:28:57 PM

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From: [jubster24](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:21:03 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Justin Izzard
Local 49 out of Duluth, MN branch

Sent from my Galaxy

From: [John Kuitunen](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 9:40:00 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

John Kuitunen
7092 Holly Lane
Gilbert MN 55741
2187801078
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Justin Laurs](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:46:55 PM

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Justin Laurs
33633 Chippewa Dr, Grand Rapids, MN 55744
218-256-9479

From: [Justin Laurs](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:46:29 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

From: [Jake Potter](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 10:45:20 AM
Attachments: [image367452.png](#)
[image629283.png](#)

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I am writing to provide comments on the draft NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for the U. S. Steel Keetac tailings basin and mining area. Like many Minnesotans, I value a strong, healthy environment and understand the importance of supporting good jobs and vibrant communities.

I am concerned about the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) sulfate water quality standard of 10 mg/L for wild rice waters. This outdated rule, which MPCA was directed to review and update in 2011, has yet to be revised to reflect modern science or site-specific conditions. Enforcing this 10 mg/L standard has serious consequences for Minnesota mines, local governments, and businesses across the state.

Wild rice health is influenced by multiple factors—water depth, fluctuation, competing vegetation, and predation—not just sulfate levels. In fact, wild rice has been shown to thrive in waters with much higher sulfate concentrations. Compliance with the 10 mg/L standard is not attainable with current technology and would place enormous costs on wastewater facilities, small businesses, and mines that provide thousands of good-paying jobs. A modern, science-based standard is needed.

Mining contributes over \$1.8 billion to Minnesota's economy each year and supports more than 4,000 family-sustaining jobs in Northeast Minnesota—jobs that pay nearly \$950 above the regional average. The proposed compliance schedule for Keetac is not realistic. No proven, cost-effective sulfate treatment options exist today, and more time is needed to research and develop solutions that protect both natural resources and economic stability.

Additionally, Keetac's discharges all flow to a single water body. The permits should use one compliance point that reflects these combined discharges, rather than requiring separate limits at each outfall. MPCA should also reconsider the site-specific standard applications submitted for Hay Lake, where healthy wild rice has grown for decades despite Keetac's discharge.

In summary, I urge the MPCA to:

- Refrain from including sulfate limits in Keetac's permits, or if limits remain, adjust the permits to include a single downstream compliance point and a realistic compliance schedule.
- Update the 10 mg/L sulfate standard as required by law, ensuring it reflects modern science, site-specific conditions, and practical implementation.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Jake Potter | Materials Processing Sales Rep | **General Equipment & Supplies, Inc**

4600 Valley Industrial Blvd S | Shakopee, MN 55379 | ☎ 952-224-1524 | 📱 612-599-3900

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From: [Jesse Root](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:32:18 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.

Jesse root
Blaine, Mn
9523817963

From: [John Tangeman](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 8:54:50 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my iPad

From: [JAMIE TROUMBLY](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:07:27 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Jamie Troumbly
45288 Walleye Lane
Deer River MN 56636

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kenny Dahlke](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:35:39 PM

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From: [yukon cri](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 10:23:27 PM

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Kimberly Crick

870-308-3398

Yukoncri@yahoo.com

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From: [KEITHERICKSON Erickson](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Sulphate standards
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 11:41:57 AM

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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.

Sincerely Keith Erickson

Grizz0803@gmail.com

From: [Kathleen McCarthy](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:06:04 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.
Kathy McCarthy
612 221 9619

Sent from my T-Mobile 5G Device
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From: [Kathleen McCarthy](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:04:38 PM

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From: [Levi Becker](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 11:47:48 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Larry Boeke](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:11:34 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Larry Boeke

Member Local 49

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From: [Leonard Lee](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:45:58 PM

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From: [Leonard Lee](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:44:53 PM

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From: [Linda Plan](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:01:55 PM

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From: [Linda Plan](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:58:37 PM

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From: [Logan Stalboerger](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:02:56 PM

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To whom it may concern,

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.

Regards,
Logan Stalboerger
11576 5th St NE, Hanover, MN 55341
612-327-6636

From: [mark.gardner](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:15:34 PM

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Mark J Gardner
10920 45th Ave N
Plymouth, MN, 55442
Local 49/ Met Council
[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

From: [Missy Vandal](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 8:47:47 PM

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From: [Mike Anderson-EESMN](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 12:35:30 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.

Michael L Anderson

15784 South Shore Lane

Swan Lake

Pengilly, MN 55775

218-969-1450

From: [Shelley Lindenfelser](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:43:35 PM

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Mike Lindenfelser

From: [Mike Schreifels](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:23:25 PM

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From: [Nate Banaszewski](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:24:31 PM

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From: [Neil Dacey](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:29:43 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my iPad

From: [Neil Dacey](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:29:22 PM

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Sent from my iPad

From: [nancy wachlin](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:29:30 PM

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Nancy Wachlin
151 Main St. N
Waltham, MN 55982
nancyawachlin@yahoo.com

From: [Patrick Doran](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:34:55 PM

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Thank you,

Patrick Doran
General Counsel
IUOE Local 49

From: [Perry Lenz](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:07:02 PM

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From: riley.chris@hotmail.com
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:52:53 PM

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From: [Rosey Grab](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:36:29 PM

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Rosey Grab
2501 Fillmore St NE
Minneapolis

From: [Rick Lowrey](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:09:33 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [R Pearson](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 9:41:17 PM

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Ragen Pearson

From: [Sandy Johnson](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:54:29 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

From: [Shannon Neumayer](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:25:59 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Shannon Neumayer
1428 SE 5TH Street
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

218-398-2496

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Shannon Neumayer](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:24:42 PM

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Sent from my iPhone

From: [Steve Piper](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 11:40:08 PM

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Steve Piper
Local 49
Cell # 612-380-7044

From: [steve sarvie](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 8:41:00 PM

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From: [Tom Culhane](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:35:46 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.
Tom Culhane, (507)330-1414,
thc.culhane22@gmail.com

From: [Kalisch, Timothy J](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Comments on Keetac NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 9:22:46 AM

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Stephanie (Or other MPCA Officials)-

As you can see from my email, I am an employee at US Steel (currently Keetac). I am also a lifelong resident of Nashwauk, Minnesota. Maybe more importantly, a long time hunter/fisherman of Hay Lake and its surrounding areas. I just wanted to make some comments on the draft permits mentioned in the subject line. I believe that US Steel wants to treat the water to ensure that Wild Rice is healthy. But I also believe that the limit and some of the conditions that come with it need to be looked at with a much broader scope. So in general I do not support the permits as they are currently drafted with some of my comments listed below.

1. I have firsthand seen Hay Lake and its wild rice crop over the past couple of decades. I have also had the opportunity to observe the Keetac Tailings discharge and pit dewatering over the past several years. Not sure if anyone from the MPCA has actually gone out to Hay Lake to observe it but I sure hope they have. I find it disheartening that the MPCA would still want to put a limit of 10 mg/L when SEVERAL of the years where Keetac has had HIGHER discharge amounts that the wild rice crop has actually looked BETTER than in years with low discharge volumes. This year alone, water from the tails area discharged more than the past 4 years and there was pretty good wild rice growth... until the swans started eating it! A simple observation like that would even be enough for a 5th grade kid in science to understand that treating a bunch of water isn't the real solution to healthy rice (nor is sulfate even a major factor in healthy rice when you look at water flow, water level and other natural vegetation competition).
2. I also am very disappointed in the MPCA on their opinion of the Economic Impact of these permits. They look at the financials of US Steel as a whole for the last couple of years when there were profits. Keetac is a very small facility in the US Steel footprint. There are at least 6 other facilities that are considered larger by employee and production numbers. Keetac only provides a very small amount of profit to the company as a whole and gets less than 10% of the capital each year. Spending millions of dollars on treatment that doesn't really help wild rice is a very risky financial decision for this facility. If the operating costs increase, it will be hard to Keetac to stay globally

competitive (and by that I mean with several facilities in the US and Canada...let alone cheap iron from Brazil or Australia). Not sure if the MPCA knows any history on Keetac, but that facility has idled operations because of market demand 3 times in the past 20 years for a total of 4 years with no production. (Ironically, wild rice growth at Hay Lake wasn't very good the last two times.) I urge the MPCA to look at a little longer timeframe...even go back to when the permit was first issued in 2011 or dig into why it was issued.

3. I also heard the MPCA admit that Keetac is the only facility with this standard in their permit. I also heard the MPCA say that water permits are to be renewed every 5 years. So since 2011, almost 800 facilities discharging into "wild rice waters" should have had their permits renewed a couple times, yet none of them have this in their permit. IS THIS REALLY ABOUT WILD RICE? Obviously not, so the MPCA should probably remove this from the permit until they understand the entire impact to the state.
4. I understand the history behind the standard. The MPCA's idea of a site specific formula makes more sense than a number that doesn't really protect the rice. Act on that and pressure legislature and the Governor to actually do something based on current science. I find it funny that Governor Walz can sign an executive order saying vaccines will be guided by science (but excused for religious reasons) but we can't use real science that a diverse group thru the MPCA agreed upon.
5. I've recently been put on a team looking at the water treatment opportunities. There seems to be some decent options to reduce some sulfates but scaling these processes up to hit the limits for these volumes gets pretty ridiculous in cost and time. Please reconsider the proposed timeline as the permits move forward. Just getting a pilot plant on property takes a couple of months.

In closing, I believe the MPCA needs to look more closely at their drafted permits and make changes that are based on updated science; that are understanding of the true economic impacts to the region and to the entire state; that include timelines that will provide time to ensure the best scenario can be accomplished; and truly focus on wild rice. Take a hard look at what is actually happening at the facility and surrounding waters...we have been running since the 70's and I have hunted those waters for over 30 years. There have been many years of healthy rice and some years with no rice. Sulfates are not the reason for either scenario.

Thank you.

Tim Kalisch
Area Manager, Keetac Plants
218-778-8631
218-969-9786 (cell)

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From: [Todd Martens](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 8:40:40 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

From: [Todd Martin](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:52:08 AM

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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.

Todd Martin

8988 East wakemup village road

Cook Minnesota

218 290-0888

From: [Terry Packer](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:01:07 PM

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Thank you for your consideration. 715-475-8126

From: [Terry Packer](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:00:26 PM

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From: [MMC](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:09:53 PM

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From: [shall71963](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:11:05 PM

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Sent from my Galaxy

From: [Chad](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:17:47 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [pheinrich.1983](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 6:17:58 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.

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: gvyskocil@hotmail.com
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:14:37 PM

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Sent from my iPhone

From: [Mike Stangland](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:57:23 PM

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From: [George](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:59:47 PM

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my iPhone gwitt@kmtel.com. George Witt Dodge Center Minnesota 55927

From: [Jake T](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 9:53:01 PM

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From: [virgil johnson](#)
To: [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft NPDES Permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 – U.S. Steel Keetac
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 9:48:15 PM

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