

**From:** [Andrew G](#)  
**To:** [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac  
**Date:** Monday, August 18, 2025 2:55:46 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future of Minnesota mines, local governments and other industries are critically affected by the enforcement of this outdated standard.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.

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.

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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.

Andrew Gregg II

16667 Morrow Ave (PO Box 22) Pengilly, MN 55775

Cell 218-969-7830

**From:** [Johnson, Christopher A](#)  
**To:** [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac  
**Date:** Monday, August 18, 2025 12:57:27 PM

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Stephanie

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- 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.*

Chris A. Johnson  
Process Manager II  
Keetac Lab

Ph: 218-778-8776

Cell: 218-360-2999

cajohnson@uss.com

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**From:** [Ledoux, Dawn E](#)  
**To:** [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac  
**Date:** Monday, August 18, 2025 12:55:09 PM

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Thank you,

Dawn LeDoux  
30626 West Shore Drive  
Pengilly, MN 55775  
218-969-8495

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**From:** [Maki, Jaron L](#)  
**To:** [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac  
**Date:** Monday, August 18, 2025 2:43:18 PM

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*Thank you.*

**Jaron L. Maki**

Address: 8780 Forest Dr, Mountian Iron, MN 55768

Phone: 218-749-7471

Email: [JLMaki@uss.com](mailto:JLMaki@uss.com)

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**From:** [jake friend](#)  
**To:** [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)  
**Subject:** NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac  
**Date:** Monday, August 18, 2025 2:55:35 PM

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Jacob Friend  
President Local 2660 (Keetac)

3668 Rainey Rd.  
Hibbing, MN 55746

jakefriend9@yahoo.com  
(218) 966-6271

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**From:** [Jarvi, James P](#)  
**To:** [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac  
**Date:** Monday, August 18, 2025 2:14:32 PM

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*James Jarvi*

James P. Jarvi  
Director of Customer Quality, Pellet Movement & Technology  
United States Steel  
Minnesota Ore Operations  
8771 Park Ridge Drive  
Mt Iron, MN 55768

Office (218) 749-7237

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**To:** [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac  
**Date:** Monday, August 18, 2025 12:55:48 PM

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*Thank you.*

*Jodi Pohto*

*9001 Highway 53*

*Angora, MN 55703*

*218-780-1704*

*Sent from my iPhone*

**From:** [Justin Savaloja](#)  
**To:** [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac  
**Date:** Monday, August 18, 2025 2:55:54 PM

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Justin Savaloja  
19794 County Road 70  
Bovey, MN 55709  
jutsavi@yahoo.com  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Kathy Spolarich](#)  
**To:** [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)  
**Subject:** : Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN  
**Date:** Monday, August 18, 2025 2:55:44 PM

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*Thank you.*

*Kathy Spolarich*

*PO Box 291*

*Keewatin MN 55753*

*Sent from my iPhone*

**From:** [millwrightmike84@gmail.com](mailto:millwrightmike84@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac  
**Date:** Monday, August 18, 2025 2:55:52 PM

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Micheal Wilson  
109 5th ave s Biwabik MN  
2182485687

**From:** [Tilander, Russell M](#)  
**To:** [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Bakk, Michael T](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac  
**Date:** Monday, August 18, 2025 3:16:34 PM

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*Russ Tilander - 933 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave PO Box 302 Littlefork, MN 56653 Cell: 518-338-9582*

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**From:** [Terry Craven](#)  
**To:** [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on NPDES permits MN0055948 and MN0031879 for U. S. Steel Keetac  
**Date:** Monday, August 18, 2025 2:55:56 PM

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Terry Craven  
Gilbert, MN 55741

**From:** [Tawnya Gustafson](#)  
**To:** [Handeland, Stephanie \(MPCA\)](#)  
**Subject:** Sulfate  
**Date:** Monday, August 18, 2025 2:55:49 PM

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Thank you,  
Tawnya Gustafson  
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