

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: pulverfass1946@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Angela Anderson
<pulverfass1946@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:51 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance. I would like to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthen enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

- 1) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I understand that draft permit limits of 14 mg/L monthly average and 24 mg/L daily maximum are based on this standard.
- 2) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel should be denied a variance from compliance with the sulfate standard. A variance is a specific exception to the rules, and U.S. Steel's resistance to the expense of water quality treatment does not provide grounds to avoid the standard.
- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. It seems that this should have been required a long time ago.

However, I'm concerned that the draft permits have some gaps. The permits should be strengthened in the following ways:

- 1) MPCA should not give U.S. Steel another five years before they actually have to meet Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard. Sulfate limits were set in Keetac permits in 2011, and studies on treatment were done and approved by MPCA almost a decade ago. MPCA should give U.S. Steel no more than two years to achieve full compliance with wild rice sulfate limits. Nippon Steel, the new owner of U.S. Steel, should include sulfate treatment in the \$11 billion in upgrades they've promised for U.S. Steel.
- 2) MPCA should revise the Keetac permits to require groundwater monitoring, especially the groundwater beneath and adjacent to the Tailings Basin. This monitoring is needed to protect groundwater and to help determine if pollutants released through groundwater are causing or adding to violations of surface water standards.

3) MPCA should require U.S. Steel to test wastewater discharge from day one to make sure it is not toxic to aquatic life, rather than waiting for three years before toxicity testing. MPCA should also require new biological assessments the first year of the permit to determine if downstream fish and macroinvertebrates are impaired.

4) In addition to monitoring for sulfate, MPCA should require monitoring for mercury in surface waters and should update testing for mercury in fish tissue downstream of Keetac.

I appreciate the steps MPCA is taking to control sulfate pollution from the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. But I would also ask that MPCA revise the draft permits to avoid delay and to better protect groundwater, wild rice, fish, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Angela Anderson

1121 4th St N Stillwater, MN 55082-4358 pulverfass1946@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: anjakara@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Anja Curiskis
<anjakara@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:33 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

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I appreciate the steps MPCA is taking to control sulfate pollution from the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. But I would also ask that MPCA revise the draft permits to avoid delay and to better protect groundwater, wild rice, fish, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Ms. Anja Curiskis

3500 Humboldt Ave S Minneapolis, MN 55408-3316 anjakara@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: buaibuai@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Aria Dominguez
<buaiubai@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 6:42 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Aria Dominguez

875 Raymond Ave Saint Paul, MN 55114-1508 buaibuai@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: buaibuai@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Aria Dominguez
<buai buai@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 6:42 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Aria Dominguez

875 Raymond Ave Saint Paul, MN 55114-1508 buaibuai@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: aihejny@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Anne Hejny
<aihejny@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:26 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Anne Hejny

121 Rustic Ldg W Minneapolis, MN 55419-5538 aihejny@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: eastonsix@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Brian Carlson
<eastonsix@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:48 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Brian Carlson

20 2nd St NE Minneapolis, MN 55413-2264 eastonsix@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: beaudmj@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Mary Beaudoin
<beaudmj@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:23 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Ms. Mary Beaudoin

473 Howell St S Saint Paul, MN 55105-1711 beaudmj@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: johnalt@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Chel Anderson
<johnalt@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:38 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance. I strongly support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthening enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

- 1) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I understand that draft permit limits of 14 mg/L monthly average and 24 mg/L daily maximum are based on this standard.
- 2) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel should be denied a variance from compliance with the sulfate standard. U.S. Steel's resistance to the expense of water quality treatment does not provide grounds to avoid the standard under the long existing rules.
- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. This should have been required a long time ago.

However, I'm concerned that the draft permits have some gaps. Please strengthen the permits in the following ways:

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The steps MPCA is taking to control sulfate pollution from the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin are important and appreciated. But I ask that MPCA revise the draft permits to avoid delay and to better protect groundwater, wild rice, fish, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Chel Anderson

738 Camp 20 Rd Grand Marais, MN 55604-2185 johnalt@boreal.org

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: cantonescu@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Catalin Antonescu
<cantonescu@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 5:54 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

Please strengthen enforcement of water quality standards & protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

- 1) U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I would prefer more stringent limits.
- 2) U.S. Steel should be denied a variance from compliance with the sulfate standard. If U.S. Steel can't afford proper water quality treatment, they shouldn't do this project at all.
- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. It seems that this should have been required a long time ago.

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Sincerely,
Catalin Antonescu
618 Atlantic Ave Duluth, MN 55806-1346
cantonescu@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: forestman_1@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Christian Nelson <forestman_1@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:02 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance. I would like to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthen enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

The argument we have to choose between jobs OR the environment is an old and outdated concept that no longer serves humanity's best interests. It does, however, serve those that seek to exploit the environment for profit.

The mining companies, as always, claim to meet environmental requirements is prohibitively expensive - while reaping massive profits for their shareholders. They have the money. They simply want to keep all of the money and foist the costs of being responsible back to everyone and anyone else. Private profits and public costs.

I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

- 1) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I understand that draft permit limits of 14 mg/L monthly average and 24 mg/L daily maximum are based on this standard.
- 2) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel should be denied a variance from compliance with the sulfate standard. A variance is a specific exception to the rules, and U.S. Steel's resistance to the expense of water quality treatment does not provide grounds to avoid the standard.
- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. It seems that this should have been required a long time ago.

However, I'm concerned that the draft permits have some gaps. The permits should be strengthened in the following ways:

- 1) MPCA should not give U.S. Steel another five years before they actually have to meet Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard. Sulfate limits were set in Keetac permits in 2011, and studies on treatment were done and approved by MPCA

almost a decade ago. MPCA should give U.S. Steel no more than two years to achieve full compliance with wild rice sulfate limits. Nippon Steel, the new owner of U.S. Steel, should include sulfate treatment in the \$11 billion in upgrades they've promised for U.S. Steel.

2) MPCA should revise the Keetac permits to require groundwater monitoring, especially the groundwater beneath and adjacent to the Tailings Basin. This monitoring is needed to protect groundwater and to help determine if pollutants released through groundwater are causing or adding to violations of surface water standards.

3) MPCA should require U.S. Steel to test wastewater discharge from day one to make sure it is not toxic to aquatic life, rather than waiting for three years before toxicity testing. MPCA should also require new biological assessments the first year of the permit to determine if downstream fish and macroinvertebrates are impaired.

4) In addition to monitoring for sulfate, MPCA should require monitoring for mercury in surface waters and should update testing for mercury in fish tissue downstream of Keetac.

I appreciate the steps MPCA is taking to control sulfate pollution from the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. But I would also ask that MPCA revise the draft permits to avoid delay and to better protect groundwater, wild rice, fish, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,
Christian Nelson
725 Allen St Cloquet, MN 55720-1401
forestman_1@yahoo.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: larry-carole-rust@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Carole Rust <larry-carole-rust@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:23 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance. I would like to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthen enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

- 1) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I understand that draft permit limits of 14 mg/L monthly average and 24 mg/L daily maximum are based on this standard.
- 2) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel should be denied a variance from compliance with the sulfate standard. A variance is a specific exception to the rules, and U.S. Steel's resistance to the expense of water quality treatment does not provide grounds to avoid the standard.
- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. It seems that this should have been required a long time ago.

However, I'm concerned that the draft permits have some gaps. The permits should be strengthened in the following ways:

- 1) MPCA should not give U.S. Steel another five years before they actually have to meet Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard. Sulfate limits were set in Keetac permits in 2011, and studies on treatment were done and approved by MPCA almost a decade ago. MPCA should give U.S. Steel no more than two years to achieve full compliance with wild rice sulfate limits. Nippon Steel, the new owner of U.S. Steel, should include sulfate treatment in the \$11 billion in upgrades they've promised for U.S. Steel.
- 2) MPCA should revise the Keetac permits to require groundwater monitoring, especially the groundwater beneath and adjacent to the Tailings Basin. This monitoring is needed to protect groundwater and to help determine if pollutants released through groundwater are causing or adding to violations of surface water standards.

3) MPCA should require U.S. Steel to test wastewater discharge from day one to make sure it is not toxic to aquatic life, rather than waiting for three years before toxicity testing. MPCA should also require new biological assessments the first year of the permit to determine if downstream fish and macroinvertebrates are impaired.

4) In addition to monitoring for sulfate, MPCA should require monitoring for mercury in surface waters and should update testing for mercury in fish tissue downstream of Keetac.

I appreciate the steps MPCA is taking to control sulfate pollution from the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. But I would also ask that MPCA revise the draft permits to avoid delay and to better protect groundwater, wild rice, fish, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Mrs. Carole Rust

1826 Alameda St Roseville, MN 55113-6532 larry-carole-rust@msn.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: colleenwerdien@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Colleen Werdien
<colleenwerdien@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:38 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance. I would like to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthen enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

- 1) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I understand that draft permit limits of 14 mg/L monthly average and 24 mg/L daily maximum are based on this standard.
- 2) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel should be denied a variance from compliance with the sulfate standard. A variance is a specific exception to the rules, and U.S. Steel's resistance to the expense of water quality treatment does not provide grounds to avoid the standard.
- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. It seems that this should have been required a long time ago.

However, I'm concerned that the draft permits have some gaps. The permits should be strengthened in the following ways:

- 1) MPCA should not give U.S. Steel another five years before they actually have to meet Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard. Sulfate limits were set in Keetac permits in 2011, and studies on treatment were done and approved by MPCA almost a decade ago. MPCA should give U.S. Steel no more than two years to achieve full compliance with wild rice sulfate limits. Nippon Steel, the new owner of U.S. Steel, should include sulfate treatment in the \$11 billion in upgrades they've promised for U.S. Steel.
- 2) MPCA should revise the Keetac permits to require groundwater monitoring, especially the groundwater beneath and adjacent to the Tailings Basin. This monitoring is needed to protect groundwater and to help determine if pollutants released through groundwater are causing or adding to violations of surface water standards.

3) MPCA should require U.S. Steel to test wastewater discharge from day one to make sure it is not toxic to aquatic life, rather than waiting for three years before toxicity testing. MPCA should also require new biological assessments the first year of the permit to determine if downstream fish and macroinvertebrates are impaired.

4) In addition to monitoring for sulfate, MPCA should require monitoring for mercury in surface waters and should update testing for mercury in fish tissue downstream of Keetac.

I appreciate the steps MPCA is taking to control sulfate pollution from the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. But I would also ask that MPCA revise the draft permits to avoid delay and to better protect groundwater, wild rice, fish, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Ms. Colleen Werdien

302 Fremont St Anoka, MN 55303-2115

colleenwerdien@q.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: dan55107@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Daniel Brown <dan55107@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:43 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance. I would like to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthen enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

- 1) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I understand that draft permit limits of 14 mg/L monthly average and 24 mg/L daily maximum are based on this standard.
- 2) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel should be denied a variance from compliance with the sulfate standard. A variance is a specific exception to the rules, and U.S. Steel's resistance to the expense of water quality treatment does not provide grounds to avoid the standard.
- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. It seems that this should have been required a long time ago.

However, I'm concerned that the draft permits have some gaps. The permits should be strengthened in the following ways:

- 1) MPCA should not give U.S. Steel another five years before they actually have to meet Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard. Sulfate limits were set in Keetac permits in 2011, and studies on treatment were done and approved by MPCA almost a decade ago. MPCA should give U.S. Steel no more than two years to achieve full compliance with wild rice sulfate limits. Nippon Steel, the new owner of U.S. Steel, should include sulfate treatment in the \$11 billion in upgrades they've promised for U.S. Steel.
- 2) MPCA should revise the Keetac permits to require groundwater monitoring, especially the groundwater beneath and adjacent to the Tailings Basin. This monitoring is needed to protect groundwater and to help determine if pollutants released through groundwater are causing or adding to violations of surface water standards.

3) MPCA should require U.S. Steel to test wastewater discharge from day one to make sure it is not toxic to aquatic life, rather than waiting for three years before toxicity testing. MPCA should also require new biological assessments the first year of the permit to determine if downstream fish and macroinvertebrates are impaired.

4) In addition to monitoring for sulfate, MPCA should require monitoring for mercury in surface waters and should update testing for mercury in fish tissue downstream of Keetac.

I appreciate the steps MPCA is taking to control sulfate pollution from the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. But I would also ask that MPCA revise the draft permits to avoid delay and to better protect groundwater, wild rice, fish, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Mr. Daniel Brown

8851 W 31st St Saint Louis Park, MN 55426-2909 dan55107@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: mncampy48@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Dennis Cuchna <mncampy48@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:22 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance. I would like to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthen enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

- 1) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I understand that draft permit limits of 14 mg/L monthly average and 24 mg/L daily maximum are based on this standard.
- 2) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel should be denied a variance from compliance with the sulfate standard. A variance is a specific exception to the rules, and U.S. Steel's resistance to the expense of water quality treatment does not provide grounds to avoid the standard.
- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. It seems that this should have been required a long time ago.

However, I'm concerned that the draft permits have some gaps. The permits should be strengthened in the following ways:

- 1) MPCA should not give U.S. Steel another five years before they actually have to meet Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard. Sulfate limits were set in Keetac permits in 2011, and studies on treatment were done and approved by MPCA almost a decade ago. MPCA should give U.S. Steel no more than two years to achieve full compliance with wild rice sulfate limits. Nippon Steel, the new owner of U.S. Steel, should include sulfate treatment in the \$11 billion in upgrades they've promised for U.S. Steel.
- 2) MPCA should revise the Keetac permits to require groundwater monitoring, especially the groundwater beneath and adjacent to the Tailings Basin. This monitoring is needed to protect groundwater and to help determine if pollutants released through groundwater are causing or adding to violations of surface water standards.

3) MPCA should require U.S. Steel to test wastewater discharge from day one to make sure it is not toxic to aquatic life, rather than waiting for three years before toxicity testing. MPCA should also require new biological assessments the first year of the permit to determine if downstream fish and macroinvertebrates are impaired.

4) In addition to monitoring for sulfate, MPCA should require monitoring for mercury in surface waters and should update testing for mercury in fish tissue downstream of Keetac.

I appreciate the steps MPCA is taking to control sulfate pollution from the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. But I would also ask that MPCA revise the draft permits to avoid delay and to better protect groundwater, wild rice, fish, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Mr. Dennis Cuchna

2108 Irvine Pl Alexandria, MN 56308-8595 mncampy48@yahoo.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: dgreene624@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of David Greene <dgreene624@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 6:37 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

My comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance are based on existing information already know by MPCA. I would like to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthen enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

- 1) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I understand that draft permit limits of 14 mg/L monthly average and 24 mg/L daily maximum are based on this standard.
- 2) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel should be denied a variance from compliance with the sulfate standard. A variance is a specific exception to the rules, and U.S. Steel's resistance to the expense of water quality treatment does not provide grounds to avoid the standard.
- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. It seems that this should have been required a long time ago.

However, I'm concerned that the draft permits have some gaps that endanger public health. The permits should be strengthened in the following ways:

- 1) MPCA should not give U.S. Steel another five years before they actually have to meet Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard. Sulfate limits were set in Keetac permits in 2011, and studies on treatment were done and approved by MPCA almost a decade ago. MPCA should give U.S. Steel no more than two years to achieve full compliance with wild rice sulfate limits. Nippon Steel, the new owner of U.S. Steel, should include sulfate treatment in the \$11 billion in upgrades they've promised for U.S. Steel.
- 2) MPCA should revise the Keetac permits to require groundwater monitoring, especially the groundwater beneath and adjacent to the Tailings Basin. This monitoring is needed to protect groundwater and to help determine if pollutants released through groundwater are causing or adding to violations of surface water standards.

3) MPCA should require U.S. Steel to test wastewater discharge from day one to make sure it is not toxic to aquatic life, rather than waiting for three years before toxicity testing. MPCA should also require new biological assessments the first year of the permit to determine if downstream fish and macroinvertebrates are impaired.

4) In addition to monitoring for sulfate, MPCA should require monitoring for mercury in surface waters and should update testing for mercury in fish tissue downstream of Keetac.

I appreciate the steps MPCA is taking to control sulfate pollution from the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. But I would also ask that MPCA revise the draft permits to avoid delay and to better protect groundwater, wild rice, fish, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Mr. David Greene

806 Francis Ave Columbus, OH 43209-5412 dgreene624@yahoo.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: dylan@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Dylan Koltz-Hale
<dylan@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:32 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance. I would like to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthen enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

- 1) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I understand that draft permit limits of 14 mg/L monthly average and 24 mg/L daily maximum are based on this standard.
- 2) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel should be denied a variance from compliance with the sulfate standard. A variance is a specific exception to the rules, and U.S. Steel's resistance to the expense of water quality treatment does not provide grounds to avoid the standard.
- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. It seems that this should have been required a long time ago.

However, I'm concerned that the draft permits have some gaps. The permits should be strengthened in the following ways:

- 1) MPCA should not give U.S. Steel another five years before they actually have to meet Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard. Sulfate limits were set in Keetac permits in 2011, and studies on treatment were done and approved by MPCA almost a decade ago. MPCA should give U.S. Steel no more than two years to achieve full compliance with wild rice sulfate limits. Nippon Steel, the new owner of U.S. Steel, should include sulfate treatment in the \$11 billion in upgrades they've promised for U.S. Steel.
- 2) MPCA should revise the Keetac permits to require groundwater monitoring, especially the groundwater beneath and adjacent to the Tailings Basin. This monitoring is needed to protect groundwater and to help determine if pollutants released through groundwater are causing or adding to violations of surface water standards.

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4) In addition to monitoring for sulfate, MPCA should require monitoring for mercury in surface waters and should update testing for mercury in fish tissue downstream of Keetac.

I appreciate the steps MPCA is taking to control sulfate pollution from the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. But I would also ask that MPCA revise the draft permits to avoid delay and to better protect groundwater, wild rice, fish, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,
Dylan Koltz-Hale
1310 E 10th St Duluth, MN 55805-1510
dylan@mesabadigital.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: dagmar.romano@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of dagmar romano
<dagmar.romano@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:31 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance. I would like to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthen enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

- 1) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I understand that draft permit limits of 14 mg/L monthly average and 24 mg/L daily maximum are based on this standard.
- 2) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel should be denied a variance from compliance with the sulfate standard. A variance is a specific exception to the rules, and U.S. Steel's resistance to the expense of water quality treatment does not provide grounds to avoid the standard.
- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. It seems that this should have been required a long time ago.

However, I'm concerned that the draft permits have some gaps. The permits should be strengthened in the following ways:

- 1) MPCA should not give U.S. Steel another five years before they actually have to meet Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard. Sulfate limits were set in Keetac permits in 2011, and studies on treatment were done and approved by MPCA almost a decade ago. MPCA should give U.S. Steel no more than two years to achieve full compliance with wild rice sulfate limits. Nippon Steel, the new owner of U.S. Steel, should include sulfate treatment in the \$11 billion in upgrades they've promised for U.S. Steel.
- 2) MPCA should revise the Keetac permits to require groundwater monitoring, especially the groundwater beneath and adjacent to the Tailings Basin. This monitoring is needed to protect groundwater and to help determine if pollutants released through groundwater are causing or adding to violations of surface water standards.

3) MPCA should require U.S. Steel to test wastewater discharge from day one to make sure it is not toxic to aquatic life, rather than waiting for three years before toxicity testing. MPCA should also require new biological assessments the first year of the permit to determine if downstream fish and macroinvertebrates are impaired.

4) In addition to monitoring for sulfate, MPCA should require monitoring for mercury in surface waters and should update testing for mercury in fish tissue downstream of Keetac.

I appreciate the steps MPCA is taking to control sulfate pollution from the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. But I would also ask that MPCA revise the draft permits to avoid delay and to better protect groundwater, wild rice, fish, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

ms dagmar romano

1840 Goodrich Ave Saint Paul, MN 55105-1509 dagmar.romano@hotmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: eplmeyer@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Emily Meyer
<eplmeyer@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 6:06 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance.

On behalf of life on this planet - human and other-than-human - I urge you to protect water from sulfate and other pollutants.

I wholeheartedly support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) in strengthening enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

Specifically, I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

- 1) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I understand that draft permit limits of 14 mg/L monthly average and 24 mg/L daily maximum are based on this standard.
- 2) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel should be denied a variance from compliance with the sulfate standard. A variance is a specific exception to the rules, and U.S. Steel's resistance to the expense of water quality treatment does not provide grounds to avoid the standard.
- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. It seems that this should have been required a long time ago.

However, I'm concerned that the draft permits have some gaps. The permits should be strengthened in the following ways:

- 1) MPCA should not give U.S. Steel another five years before they actually have to meet Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard. Sulfate limits were set in Keetac permits in 2011, and studies on treatment were done and approved by MPCA almost a decade ago. MPCA should give U.S. Steel no more than two years to achieve full compliance with wild rice sulfate limits. Nippon Steel, the new owner of U.S. Steel, should include sulfate treatment in the \$11 billion in upgrades they've promised for U.S. Steel.

2) MPCA should revise the Keetac permits to require groundwater monitoring, especially the groundwater beneath and adjacent to the Tailings Basin. This monitoring is needed to protect groundwater and to help determine if pollutants released through groundwater are causing or adding to violations of surface water standards.

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Rev. Emily Meyer

4109 Chowen Ave S Minneapolis, MN 55410-1015 eplmeyer@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: gbratvold@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Gretchen Bratvold
<gbratvold@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 6:37 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Gretchen Bratvold

3444 Edmund Blvd Minneapolis, MN 55406-2942 gbratvold@usinternet.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: ian.erickson311@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Ian Erickson <ian.erickson311@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:33 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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This issue should not be limited to discussions of economic feasibility. Though important, justifying protection of food, water, and land resources as well as the sovereignty of tribal nations and the general health of all Minnesotans through simplistic dollars and cents language will only trivialize this problem. Acquiescing to US Steel, and similar corporate interests by translating our vital ecosystems into billions and trillions of dollars, will insure their continued attempts to put a price tag on the extinction of wild rice. They will continue to seek the precise bribe that will set the public's mind at ease. We will not allow US Steel to move forward in this way.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Ian Erickson

2020 2nd Ave N Minneapolis, MN 55405-1710 ian.erickson311@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: johnleret@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of John ERET
<johnleret@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:49 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Mr. John ERET

27695 Leah Ln Chisago City, MN 55013-9728 johnleret@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: jhawkins5321@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Jim Hawkins <jhawkins5321@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 12:15 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

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I think this about says it all.

I join in agreeing with all of them.

It is an abomination that the MPCA has failed for so many years, and still you are still failing, to hold U. S. Steel accountable.

Jim Hawkins

I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

mr Jim Hawkins

1425 W 28th St Minneapolis, MN 55408-1984 jhawkins5321@outlook.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: jack.hennes@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Jack Hennes
<jack.hennes@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:39 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Dr. Jack Hennes

12937 Lafayette St Unit D Thornton, CO 80241-3962 jack.hennes@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: johnnie@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Johnnie Hyde
<johnnie@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:35 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

My husband steered our canoe into a lovely thick patch of rice as I sat in front of him, reaching my knocking sticks to one side and the other, bringing in enough kernels of rice to make a mouthful with every stroke. We were feeling so grateful because the last two years didn't have good ricing in our waters and we were down to our last 8 pounds of this nutritious food that is a basic to many of our meals. It is hard to imagine that others, especially the native people who depend on this for food and livelihood, might be visiting their favorite ricing waters and find that they will not have a good crop - not due to the vagaries of weather, but due to the lack of enforcement of laws enacted to protect this important resource. Our water is not immediately under threat, but without enforcement of water quality standards it someday will be.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance. I would like to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthen enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,
Johnnie Hyde
1210 E Main St Ely, MN 55731-1704
johnnie@ravenwords.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: lemmus52@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Janet Keough <lemmus52@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:53 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

I attended the Sept 3 listening session in Virginia and came away with an understanding of the permit and variance process. MPCA scientists worked hard to incorporate the latest science into the framework for site specific standards and MPCA has a process for reviewing requests for variance. US Steel did not meet the requirements outlined in the framework for a site specific standard for Hay Lake and did not meet the requirements for a variance on the standard.

It was pointed out in Virginia that Nippon has said it will not close the plant for at least 10 years. US Steel/Nippon makes a huge profit and can afford to build water treatment facilities for sulfate. Clearly US Steel/Nippon have not communicated honestly with the Range community.

Not only is sulfate a cause of low seed production and the demise of wild rice, sulfate facilitates the release of mercury in water. MPCA, please uphold the scientific processes that you have.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance. I would like to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthen enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Janet Keough

2787 Northwoods Ln Duluth, MN 55803-9703 lemmus52@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: jsmagree@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Jan Magree
<jsmagree@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:26 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments, Jan Magree

Sincerely,

Jan Magree

66 E Saint Marie St Duluth, MN 55803-2646 jsmagree@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: jmargerum1@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of John Margerum <jmargerum1@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:52 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Mr. John Margerum

3232 W Penn St Philadelphia, PA 19129-1018 jmargerum1@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: jpearso1@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Jennifer Pearson <jpearso1@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:14 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,
Jennifer Pearson
4532 London Rd Duluth, MN 55804-2340
jpearso1@d.umn.edu

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: jringnalda@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Jonelle Ringnalda
<jringnalda@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 10:35 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Ms. Jonelle Ringnalda

761 Hague Ave Saint Paul, MN 55104-6608 jringnalda@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: Jasonsmith7email@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Jason Smith
<Jasonsmith7email@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 5:41 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Jason Smith

2622 Jackson St NE Minneapolis, MN 55418-2814 Jasonsmith7email@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: bugglipps@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Karen Bell-Brugger
<buggipps@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 5:03 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Ms. Karen Bell-Brugger

5207 Humboldt Ave S Minneapolis, MN 55419-1121 bugglipps@yahoo.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: kcjokela@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Kathleen Cox Jokela
<kcjokela@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:07 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Sincerely,
Kathleen Cox Jokela
2128 10th Ave E Hibbing, MN 55746-1833
kcjokela@camulus.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: kkpeters@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Karen Peters
<kkpeters@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 6:40 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Mrs. Karen Peters

3420 Cleveland St NE Minneapolis, MN 55418-1533 kkpeters@usfamily.net

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: reinhard@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Kathy Reinhardt
<reinhard@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 6:06 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Sincerely,

Ms. Kathy Reinhardt

2604 Abbott Ave N Minneapolis, MN 55422-3715 reinhard@augsborg.edu

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: wegkra@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Kris Wegerson
<wegkra@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 7:32 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Kris Wegerson

34590 Bay View Rd Unit 803 Bayfield, WI 54814-4967 wegkra@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: drlindabauer@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Linda Bauer
<drlindabauer@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:42 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Dr. Linda Bauer

36181 690th Ln Hill City, MN 55748-4618 drlindabauer@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: lkign@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Laurie Kigner
<lkign@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:23 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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I appreciate the steps MPCA is taking to control sulfate pollution from the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. But I would also ask that MPCA revise the draft permits to avoid delay and to better protect groundwater, wild rice, fish, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury.

It is imperative that we all support and provide strong regulation and good precedent to protect downstream wild rice, fish, and environmental health and justice throughout Minnesota.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Laurie Kigner

5300 East St White Bear Lake, MN 55110-2312 lkigner@yahoo.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: kittyguitar@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Linda Morris
<kittyguitar@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:46 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

I have concerns with the Keetac mine and the sulfate and mercury pollution that comes with it.

Although mining is a necessity, they need to regulate what is released into public lands and waters. Too often mines violate their permits and contaminate beyond the immediate area. They need to pay an outrageous fine when they do to make polluting very unprofitable. They shouldn't be given any variances either.

A healthy environment is needed to sustain our wild rice, fish, habitat and even us, humans.

Linda Morris

Sincerely,

Linda Morris

3229 Colorado Ave S St Louis Park, MN 55416-2052 kittyguitar@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: lorrieo@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Lorrie Ogren
<lorrieo@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:44 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Miss Lorrie Ogren

2353 Big Lake Ave Saint Croix Falls, WI 54024-7941 lorrieo@duck.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: olingers25@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Lori Olinger <olingers25@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:52 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Lori Olinger

25 Deer Hills Dr North Oaks, MN 55127-2211 olingers25@msn.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: Imp5812@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Lynda Pauling <Imp5812@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:57 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Ms. Lynda Pauling

5812 Olene Ave N Oak Park Heights, MN 55082-6316 Imp5812@comcast.net

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: digitalmyths@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of MINA BLYLY-STRAUSS
<digitalmyths@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:23 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Dr. MINA BLYLY-STRAUSS

3425 Blaisdell Ave Minneapolis, MN 55408-4316 digitalmyths@aol.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: riversiderep1@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Michelle Duhant <riversiderep1@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:29 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,
Michelle Duhant
PO Box 486 Finland, MN 55603-0486
riversiderep1@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: licht003@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Melissa Licht <licht003@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:23 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

Thank you for your work in support of our clean and safe resources!

Please keep up your work in requiring the Keetac Mine to shift its practices in line with our standards of protection for Wild Rice. Our resource protections grow thinner with each variance, so I want to see your agency do all it can to maintain standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance. I would like to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthen enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Melissa Licht

2116 Minneapolis Ave Minneapolis, MN 55406-1431 licht003@umn.edu

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: mlund8307@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Mary Lund <mlund8307@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 6:15 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance. I would like to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthen enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

- 1) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I understand that draft permit limits of 14 mg/L monthly average and 24 mg/L daily maximum are based on this standard.
- 2) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel should be denied a variance from compliance with the sulfate standard. A variance is a specific exception to the rules, and U.S. Steel's resistance to the expense of water quality treatment does not provide grounds to avoid the standard. Standards need to be enforced.
- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. Why have these not been required years ago?

However, the draft permits have gaps. The permits should be strengthened in the following ways:

- 1) MPCA should not give U.S. Steel another five years to meet Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard. Sulfate limits were set in Keetac permits in 2011, and studies on treatment were done and approved by MPCA almost a decade ago. MPCA should give U.S. Steel no more than two years to achieve full compliance with wild rice sulfate limits. Nippon Steel, the new owner of U.S. Steel, should include sulfate treatment in the \$11 billion in upgrades they've promised for U.S. Steel.
- 2) MPCA should revise the Keetac permits to require groundwater monitoring, especially the groundwater at the Tailings Basin. This monitoring is needed to protect groundwater and to determine if pollutants released through groundwater are causing or adding to violations of surface water standards.

3) MPCA should require U.S. Steel to test wastewater discharge from day one to make sure it is not toxic to aquatic life, rather than waiting for three years before toxicity testing. MPCA should also require new biological assessments the first year of the permit to determine if downstream fish and macroinvertebrates are impaired.

4) In addition to monitoring for sulfate, MPCA should require monitoring for mercury in surface waters and should update testing for mercury in fish tissue downstream of Keetac.

I appreciate the steps MPCA is taking to control sulfate pollution from the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. MPCA should revise the draft permits to avoid delay and to better protect groundwater, wild rice, fish, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Mrs. Mary Lund

12200 Marion Ln W Apt 5105 Hopkins, MN 55305-1312 mlund8307@yahoo.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: mmiddleton0129@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Michael Middleton
<mmiddleton0129@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:08 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. It seems that this should have been required a long time ago.

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Mr. Michael Middleton

2713 Emerson Ave S Minneapolis, MN 55408-5042 mmiddleton0129@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: mpmonson.insx@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Margot Monson
<mpmonson.insx@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 10:04 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

GIVEN THE IMPORTANCE OF HEALTHY WATERS IN MN THAT SUPPORT THE GROWTH OF WILD RICE and its significance to the culture and economy of indigenous people, it is unconscionable that no mine has EVER been in compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard.

I would like to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthen enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

- 1) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I understand that draft permit limits of 14 mg/L monthly average and 24 mg/L daily maximum are based on this standard.
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- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. It seems that this should have been required a long time ago.

PLEASE SEE THAT PERMITS ARE STRENGTHENED IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS

- 1) MPCA should not give U.S. Steel another five years before they actually have to meet Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard. Sulfate limits were set in Keetac permits in 2011, and studies on treatment were done and approved by MPCA almost a decade ago. MPCA should give U.S. Steel no more than two years to achieve full compliance with wild rice sulfate limits. Nippon Steel, the new owner of U.S. Steel, should include sulfate treatment in the \$11 billion in upgrades they've promised for U.S. Steel.
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4) In addition to monitoring for sulfate, MPCA should require monitoring for mercury in surface waters and should update testing for mercury in fish tissue downstream of Keetac.

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Thank you for our consideration

Sincerely,

Mrs. Margot Monson

22 Ludlow Ave Saint Paul, MN 55108-1915 mpmonson.insx@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: mavandevusse@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of MaryAnn VandeVusse
<mavandevusse@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 6:39 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments, there is nothing wrong about checking to prevent harm - that's why we check on our sleeping children, who drink the water.

Sincerely,

Ms. MaryAnn VandeVusse

13960 Kentucky Ave Savage, MN 55378-5648 mavandevusse@aol.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: nlh1952@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Nancy Hammond <nlh1952@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:34 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Dr. Nancy Hammond

90 Seymour Ave SE Minneapolis, MN 55414-3558 nlh1952@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: pl8ja4vi3@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Phedra Larson <pl8ja4vi3@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 5:41 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Ms. Phedra Larson

826 Wall St North Mankato, MN 56003-3039 pl8ja4vi3@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: raycg4@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Ray Cage <raycg4@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:37 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Mr Ray Cage

2842 N Laurel Ave Tucson, AZ 85712-1611 raycg4@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: Reneekkezer3@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Renee Keezer <Reneekkezer3@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 6:21 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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4) In addition to monitoring for sulfate, MPCA should require monitoring for mercury in surface waters and should update testing for mercury in fish tissue downstream of Keetac.

5) MPCA should consider the Treaty Reserved Rights rule under the clean water act and the impact to treaty protected resources such as fish and wild rice as well as deer and other resources that are dependent on higher water quality standards.

6) MPCA must adhere to Tribal water standards including neighboring jurisdiction.

I appreciate the steps MPCA is taking to control sulfate pollution from the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. But I would also ask that MPCA revise the draft permits to avoid delay and to better protect groundwater, wild rice, fish, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Renee Keezer

Sincerely,

Renee Keezer

1121 2nd Ave Waubun, MN 56589-4135

Reneekeezer3@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: randy.nies80@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Randy Nies <randy.nies80@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:16 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Mr. Randy Nies

4525 Nicollet Ave Apt 4 Minneapolis, MN 55419-5009 randy.nies80@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: boboloo.crab@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Robert Okazaki
<boboloo.crab@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:29 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Dr. Robert Okazaki

4920 Sunset Ln South Ogden, UT 84403-4226 boboloo.crab@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: dancing_story@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of rebecca tippens
<dancing_story@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:19 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Ms. rebecca tippens

15 Laurel St Chester, CT 06412-1006

dancing_story@yahoo.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: bachmansphotography@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Sharon Bachman
<bachmansphotography@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:01 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Mrs. Sharon Bachman

13000 Sylvan Ave Lindstrom, MN 55045-9414 bachmansphotography@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: henryboldar@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Scott Doblar
<henryboldar@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 6:25 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

We want to keep our Wild Rice, and keep pollution out, here in Minnesota!

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin permits and U.S. Steel's application for a variance. I would like to support the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and strengthen enforcement of water quality standards that protect Minnesota wild rice, fish, and human health.

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Mr. Scott Doblar

712 E King St Winona, MN 55987-4527

henryboldar@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: smldancer37@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Sylvis Lambert <smldancer37@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 9:18 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Dear Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Staff,

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Please respect Minnesota's wild rice, as well as the fish and the very important groundwater, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury. Imagine the horror of eating mercury contaminated fish!!!

I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

- 1) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I understand that draft permit limits of 14 mg/L monthly average and 24 mg/L daily maximum are based on this standard.
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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Ms. Sylvis Lambert

PO Box 78 Interior, SD 57750-0078

smldancer37@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: trudy.dunham@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Tru Dunham
<trudy.dunham@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 3:23 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Tru Dunham

1624 Blair Ave Saint Paul, MN 55104-1830 trudy.dunham@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: yourbrothertimothy@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Timothy Frantzich
<yourbrothertimothy@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 4:03 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Timothy Frantzich

11575 Palisade Ave N Stillwater, MN 55082-3409 yourbrothertimothy@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: tashiamariehart@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Tashia Hart
<tashiamariehart@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 9:49 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Ms. Tashia Hart

2409 Chambersburg Ave Duluth, MN 55811-3203 tashiamariehart@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: tbn416@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Tim Nelson <tbn416@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 9:33 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

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I support these MPCA actions related to the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits:

- 1) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel permits should require compliance with Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard of 10 parts per million (mg/L) at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. I understand that draft permit limits of 14 mg/L monthly average and 24 mg/L daily maximum are based on this standard.
- 2) I agree with MPCA that U.S. Steel should be denied a variance from compliance with the sulfate standard. A variance is a specific exception to the rules, and U.S. Steel's resistance to the expense of water quality treatment does not provide grounds to avoid the standard.
- 3) I support MPCA's requirement that U.S. Steel monitor waste streams at both the Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin for sulfate and other pollutants. It seems that this should have been required a long time ago.

However, I'm concerned that the draft permits have some gaps. The permits should be strengthened in the following ways:

- 1) MPCA should not give U.S. Steel another five years before they actually have to meet Minnesota's wild rice sulfate standard. Sulfate limits were set in Keetac permits in 2011, and studies on treatment were done and approved by MPCA almost a decade ago. MPCA should give U.S. Steel no more than two years to achieve full compliance with wild rice sulfate limits. Nippon Steel, the new owner of U.S. Steel, should include sulfate treatment in the \$11 billion in upgrades they've promised for U.S. Steel.
- 2) MPCA should revise the Keetac permits to require groundwater monitoring, especially the groundwater beneath and adjacent to the Tailings Basin. This monitoring is needed to protect groundwater and to help determine if pollutants released through groundwater are causing or adding to violations of surface water standards.

3) MPCA should require U.S. Steel to test wastewater discharge from day one to make sure it is not toxic to aquatic life, rather than waiting for three years before toxicity testing. MPCA should also require new biological assessments the first year of the permit to determine if downstream fish and macroinvertebrates are impaired.

4) In addition to monitoring for sulfate, MPCA should require monitoring for mercury in surface waters and should update testing for mercury in fish tissue downstream of Keetac.

I appreciate the steps MPCA is taking to control sulfate pollution from the U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin. But I would also ask that MPCA revise the draft permits to avoid delay and to better protect groundwater, wild rice, fish, and the health of people who eat fish that are now contaminated with mercury.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,
Tim Nelson
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