

Multiple Senders

Email comments from multiple senders received 9/10/25 - Variance.

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: aspenherbert1@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Aspen Herbert <aspenherbert1@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 11:33 AM
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 name is Aspen Herbert, and I am an 11th grader in Duluth. I have lived in Minnesota all my life and have had the privilege of seeing all of the beautiful land and water. I know so many people who would be drastically affected if these places are not under stricter enforcement of the water quality standards that work to protect our water and everything in it.

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.

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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, and please protect our water.

Sincerely,

Aspen Herbert

2111 E Superior St Duluth, MN 55812-2124 aspenherbert1@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: rinnstartalon@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Atlas Quade
<rinnstartalon@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 11:36 AM
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 am a student at Harbor City International School. This issue has reached the classrooms, and we are angry. Is Minnesota not supposed to be a haven for aquatic life? The Boundary Waters are our pride and joy, and we've always been a state built around a love of nature and wildlife. You have a choice. Protect our home, waters, animals, and life, or continue to allow harmful activity in our state.

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,
Atlas Quade
721 E 6th St Duluth, MN 55805-2038
rinnstartalon@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: reichmn@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Anne Reich
<reichmn@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 2:10 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 Reich

751 Pine Cone Trl Marine On Saint Croix, MN 55047-9642 reichmn@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: bschnel50@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Bill Schnell <bschnel50@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 6:37 AM
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,

Bill Schnell

701 SW 11th Ave Grand Rapids, MN 55744-3563 bschnel50@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: ajt82006@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Cory Joyce-Thompson <ajt82006@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 10:39 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,

Cory Joyce-Thompson

2206 W 10th St Duluth, MN 55806-1235

ajt82006@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: cynlauner@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Cynthia Launer
<cynlauner@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 8:30 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,

Cynthia Launer

3415 Harriet Ave Minneapolis, MN 55408-4234 cynlauner@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: trapperdave1952@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of David Peterson
<trapperdave1952@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 11:44 AM
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,
David Peterson
41956 130th Pl Tamarack, MN 55787-5413
trapperdave1952@yahoo.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: davidcsteffens@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of David Steffens
<davidcsteffens@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 9:03 AM
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 try to CONTROL POLLUTION. Be on the right side of history. Don't side with the money.

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Sincerely,

David Steffens

20014 630th St Dodge Center, MN 55927-9082 davidcsteffens@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: erin.enger@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Erin Enger
<erin.enger@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 12:41 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,

Mrs. Erin Enger

5941 Wisconsin Cir N Minneapolis, MN 55428-2758 erin.enger@allina.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: ftanberg@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Francesca Tanberg
<ftanberg@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 11:37 AM
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,
Francesca Tanberg
148 6th St Duluth, MN 55810-2242
ftanberg@harborcityschool.org

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: greta.gaard@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Greta Gaard
<greta.gaard@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 9:33 AM
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. Greta Gaard

3034 41st Ave S Minneapolis, MN 55406-2231 greta.gaard@uwrf.edu

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: jhderauf@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Judith Derauf
<jhderauf@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 10:46 AM
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,

Judith Derauf

3422 E 1st St Duluth, MN 55804-1803

jhderauf@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: dufficyfamily@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Judy Dufficy
<dufficyfamily@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 11:32 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,

Mrs. Judy Dufficy

1919 Cleveland St NE Minneapolis, MN 55418-4813 dufficyfamily@rcn.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: jeffrohn@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Joyce Frohn
<jeffrohn@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 11:34 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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Sincerely,

Ms. Joyce Frohn

425 Congress Ave Oshkosh, WI 54901-2967 jeffrohn@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: ipsjod@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of John Ipsen
<ipsjod@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 8:52 AM
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,

John Ipsen

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

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: jamajama@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Jana Kitzinger
<jamajama@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 1:53 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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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Jana Kitzinger

N5252 Elm Rd Bonduel, WI 54107-8764

jamajama@live.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: makwaikwe66@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Jodell Meyer <makwaikwe66@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 8:14 AM
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,

Jodell Meyer

24804 440th Pl Aitkin, MN 56431-4819

makwaikwe66@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: jnester4800@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Julie Nester <jnester4800@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 8:58 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,
Julie Nester
112 E White St Ely, MN 55731-1250
jnester4800@msn.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: jpsieck@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Joanne Sieck
<jpsieck@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 8:06 AM
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,

Mrs. Joanne Sieck

5877 River Ridge Ct NE Rochester, MN 55906-8539 jpsieck@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: krlevoir@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Kevin LeVoir
<krlevoir@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 9:20 AM
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,

Kevin LeVoir

PO Box 1108 Grand Marais, MN 55604-1108 krlevoir@aol.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: lhysjulien@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of lena hysjulien
<lhysjulien@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 11:34 AM
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, I am a highschool student from Harbor City School in Duluth,

Sincerely,

lena hysjulien

4809 W 5th St Duluth, MN 55807-2008

lhysjulien@harborcityschool.org

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: lynyount@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Lyn Yount
<lynount@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 10:42 AM
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,

Lyn Yount

11001 Oregon Ave S Bloomington, MN 55438-2463 lynyount@yahoo.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: moneill@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Miirah O'Neill
<moneill@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 11:35 AM
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. Miirah O'Neill

927 N 13Th Avenue Est Duluth, MN 55805

moneill@harborcityschool.org

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: melissaplstr4@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Melissa Polster <melissaplstr4@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 1:42 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,

Melissa Polster

406 Highway 23 S Sandstone, MN 55072-5046 melissaplstr4@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: finlandmarc@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Marc Smith
<finlandmarc@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 9:42 AM
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,

Marc Smith

6975 Cramer Rd # 446 Finland, MN 55603

finlandmarc@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: mkverrill@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Mary Verrill
<mkverrill@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 11:02 AM
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. Mary Verrill

1430 Eleanor Ave Saint Paul, MN 55116-2231 mkverrill@comcast.net

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: prtuveson@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Paul Tuveson
<prtuveson@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 11:08 AM
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,

Paul Tuveson

1046 Wyncrest Ct

Woodbury MN 55129

Sincerely,

Paul Tuveson

1046 Wyncrest Ct Woodbury, MN 55129-9297 prtuveson@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: regina@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Regina Flanagan
<regina@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 8:38 AM
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,

Regina Flanagan

1506 Osceola Ave Saint Paul, MN 55105-2321 regina@artlandscapedesign.us

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: rjlawrencephotography@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Rebecca Lawrence
<rjlawrencephotography@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 10:36 AM
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,

Mx. Rebecca Lawrence

3140 10th Ave S Apt 3 Minneapolis, MN 55407-4111 rjlawrencephotography@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: RobinE.Muller@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Robin Muller
<RobinE.Muller@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 6:45 AM
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. Robin Muller

32141 416th Ave Aitkin, MN 56431-4739

RobinE.Muller@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: saraademi99@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Sara Ademi <saraademi99@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 9:10 AM
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,

Sara Ademi

1026 E 4th St Apt A Duluth, MN 55805-3912 saraademi99@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: swbrown@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Soren Brown
<swbrown@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 11:39 AM
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,

Hello, I am a Harbor City International School student from Duluth MN

I wish for you all to have MPCA actions passed successfully, as I wish for our beautiful state of MN to stay safe for all forms of life.

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,

Soren Brown

332 W Michigan St Duluth, MN 55802-1618 swbrown@harborcityschool.org

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: unispark8@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Scarlett Cornforth <unispark8@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 11:32 AM
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,
Dr. Scarlett Cornforth
629 E 5th St Duluth, MN 55805-2028
unispark8@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: cariboose@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Timothy Alvar
<cariboose@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 2:41 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,

Mr Timothy Alvar

2849 Lakewood Junction Rd Duluth, MN 55804-9608 cariboose@icloud.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: behroutdoors@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Todd Behr
<behroutdoors@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 10:19 AM
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,

Mr. Todd Behr

5225 Bryantwood Dr Maple Plain, MN 55359-8600 behroudoors@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: teddyyy.2021@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Teddy Little <teddyyy.2021@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 11:34 AM
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,

Teddy Little

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