

Union Member Lee Majerle (Lee Majerle)

Hello,

As a union member and resident of a community affected by Keetac's operations, I am deeply concerned about the MPCA's approach to sulfate compliance in the draft permits. Requiring compliance at each outfall, when all discharges enter a single water body, does not reflect the true environmental impact. A single downstream compliance point would provide a more accurate and protective measure.

I am also troubled by the MPCA's failure to act on the 2014 site-specific standard (SSS) request and the denial of the 2022 application—both of which followed MPCA's own guidance and included strong scientific evidence. Wild rice has continued to thrive in Hay Lake for decades, demonstrating that the 10 mg/L sulfate standard is outdated and not reflective of real-world conditions.

As a union member, I know how much working families, schools, and local businesses depend on the mining industry. Jobs with good wages and benefits are what allow families to build a future here on the Iron Range. Regulations must be based on sound science, not unattainable standards that put livelihoods and communities at risk.

I respectfully urge the MPCA to:

Refrain from including sulfate limits in Keetac's permits. If limits remain, revise the permits to include a single compliance point and allow sufficient time for compliance.

Update the sulfate standard in accordance with the 2011 law and modern science.

It is possible to protect our environment while also protecting the people and jobs that sustain Minnesota's mining communities. I urge the MPCA to take a balanced approach that reflects both.

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