

Multiple Senders

Email comments from multiple senders received 9/11/25 - Variance.

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: auntiefaye1985@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Ann Galloway <auntiefaye1985@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2025 9:08 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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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.

Once the damage is done it will be too late. Future generations are depending on us.

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.
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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,

Ms. Ann Galloway

4020 9th Ave W Apt 116 Hibbing, MN 55746-3027 auntiefaye1985@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: ourkaya1@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Amy Gardner <ourkaya1@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2025 10:35 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. Amy Gardner
PO Box 446 Finland, MN 55603-0446
ourkaya1@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: blakeseriqui@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Blake seriqui
<blakeseriqui@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2025 10:17 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,

Sometimes I just get so sad and downhearted - like... The more I learn about the tangle of our current way of life with big companies who have a responsibility to shareholders to make a profit... And the impact this has on our most sacred resources - our home, our children... The more hopeless it seems. I understand both sides all the time...

So what do we do??

What do we do?

We are losing our way of life making our focus on maintaining it, I do believe that. So what we are doing now isn't working. I'm ready to give up my current way of life if it means I can keep fishing, which my family has done for generations. I'm ready to give up conveniences and a "secure future" if it means I'm more likely to watch my child's children run, splashing into a real lake.

I also believe in my community - even if we don't all see eye to eye. I would rather sit down with my neighbors and realize we have some hard work to do to come up with creative ways to build together and to receive the gifts the lands of our region have to offer without hurting it. If a big global company (Keetac, for example) abandons our community because we won't let them ignore the effect they are having on our home because of the cost, I say let them go.

I would rather face a hard problem with neighbors I don't agree with than let a group of people worried about money tell us we have no choice but to poison our home.

Please take the four steps to ensuring protection.

Thank you for reading my comment.

Sincerely,
Blake seriqui
37 23rd Ave NE Minneapolis, MN 55418-3303 blakeseriqui@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: carlaalbers@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Carla Albers
<carlaalbers@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2025 6:52 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,

Carla Albers

777 Excelsior Blvd Excelsior, MN 55331-1959 carlaalbers@yahoo.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: dailey.elizabeth@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Elizabeth Dailey
<dailey.elizabeth@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2025 3:41 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. Elizabeth Dailey

512 W 22nd St Minneapolis, MN 55405-3201 dailey.elizabeth@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: dailey.elizabeth@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Elizabeth Dailey
<dailey.elizabeth@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2025 3:42 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,

Ms. Elizabeth Dailey

512 W 22nd St Minneapolis, MN 55405-3201 dailey.elizabeth@gmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: luedtkek@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Kim Luedtke
<luedtkek@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2025 10:14 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,
Kim Luedtke
1325 W 1st St Duluth, MN 55806-2225
luedtkek@hotmail.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: kerikola@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Keri Pickett
<kerikola@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2025 8:15 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,

Ms. Keri Pickett

2208 4th St NE Minneapolis, MN 55418-3431 kerikola@aol.com

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: klmncic@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Karen Reichensperger
<klmncic@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2025 6:59 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,
Dr. Karen Reichensperger
1199 Minnesota Blvd Ely, MN 55731-8021
klmncic@frontiernet.net

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: strangewotters@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Mary Watters
<strangewotters@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 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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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. Mary Watters

3030 Rd 2 N International Falls, MN 56649 strangewotters@proton.me

Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)

From: n.millermosaicsandmurals@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Nancy Miller
<n.millermosaicsandmurals@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2025 8:57 PM
To: Kneemueller, Ashley (MPCA)
Subject: RE: U.S. Steel Keetac Mine and Tailings Basin Permits (MN0031879 and MN0055948) and Application for Variance

[You don't often get email from n.millermosaicsandmurals@everyactioncustom.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

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Thank you for considering my comments,

Sincerely,

Ms. Nancy Miller

100 McKinley Ave Apt 609 Eveleth, MN 55734-1651 n.millermosaicsandmurals@gmail.com