



Range Association of Municipalities and Schools

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RAMS BOARD RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS the Range Association of Municipalities and Schools (RAMS) promotes the economic development and general welfare of municipalities and school districts within the Taconite Assistance Area (TAA) of Northeastern Minnesota;

WHEREAS wild rice (manoomin, *Zizania palustris*) is sacred to the native people of Minnesota;

WHEREAS wild rice health is affected by many factors besides water quality, including but not limited to: water levels, water level fluctuations, nutrient quality and availability, sediment characteristics, competing vegetation, and predation;

WHEREAS Minnesota’s water quality standard to protect wild rice was created in 1973 and the Minnesota legislature in 2011 directed the MPCA to update the standard, which it has not done;

WHEREAS the state is proposing to treat industrial dischargers and municipal dischargers differently;

WHEREAS 3500 union steelworker jobs and thousands of additional vendor and service jobs rely on iron mining to provide for their families and way of life;

WHEREAS mining on the Iron Range generates local production tax for the benefit of local cities, townships, counties, and school districts throughout the Taconite Assistance Area;

WHEREAS mining revenue supports the state of Minnesota, including: the University Trust, Tax Forfeited Trust, and has generated over 90% of the wealth in the Permanent School Trust, benefitting all Minnesota public school students across the entire state;

WHEREAS reasonable regulation of industry is expected and the people of northeastern Minnesota care deeply about the quality of the environment in the place that they live, work and raise their families;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Range Association of Municipalities and Schools (RAMS) supports a variance or site-specific sulfate standard for taconite operations, including Keetac;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if one central discharge point is available, MPCA should allow measuring at that location and approve a variance for Keetac.

Board Action: Vote to Approve: 18 Vote to Oppose: 0 Vote to Abstain: 1

Signed by Board President: 
Barb Kalni

8/14/25
Date

