

From: [Jensen, Katie \(MPCA\)](#)
To: [Janezich, Craig \(PUC\)](#)
Cc: [Spindler, Bryan \(MPCA\)](#); [MacLean, Scott \(MPCA\)](#); [Peterson, Nicole \(She/Her/Hers\) \(MPCA\)](#); [Dickerson, Lauren \(She/Her/Hers\) \(MPCA\)](#); [deAlwis, Deepa \(She/Her/Hers\) \(MPCA\)](#); [Staff, CAO \(PUC\)](#); [Kimman, Paul \(MPCA\)](#); [Green, Chris \(MPCA\)](#)
Subject: MPCA Comment letter: Summit Lake Project - Environmental Assessment
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2026 7:32:45 AM
Attachments: [Comment Letter Summit Lake EA.pdf](#)

Greetings,

Please view the attached document for the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's comment letter for the project referenced above. If you have any questions, please reach out to Chris Green.

Thank you,

Katie Jensen

Office and Administrative Specialist | EAO|RMA

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

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April 15, 2026

VIA EMAIL

Craig Janezich
Public Utilities Commission
121 Seventh Place East, Suite 350
Saint Paul, MN 55101

RE: Summit Lake Project - Environmental Assessment

Dear Craig Janezich:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Summit Lake project (Project) located in Nobles County, Minnesota. The Project consists of Summit Lake Solar, LLC and Summit Lake Storage, LLC (collectively, Summit Lake or Applicants), which propose to construct, own, and operate a 200-megawatt (MW) solar energy generating system, a 200-MW battery storage system, and associated facilities in Nobles County, Minnesota. Summit Lake must obtain two site permits from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission before it can construct the proposed Summit Lake Project. Regarding matters for which the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has regulatory responsibility and other interests, the MPCA staff has the following comments for your consideration.

Watershed:

The Land Control Area is located in the uplands along a few streams. The Land Control Area is to the west of Elk Creek (07100001-653) and Judicial Ditch (JD) 8, which is a tributary to Elk Creek. The document identifies these tributaries as unnamed in section 4.7.4.3. Both reaches are upstream and contribute to downstream WIDs that were determined to meet general use standards for both fish and macroinvertebrate communities following assessment in 2016. Having both fish and macroinvertebrate communities that pass is rare in southwestern Minnesota.

The document also mentions Jack Creek (fish Impairment) and Little Rock River (turbidity and E coli.) as the closest impaired waters, but they are 2.4 and 3.5 miles from the Land Control Area. Installation and operation of the Summit Lake Solar and Storage project should ensure mitigation of any additional pollutant contribution beyond what is already occurring from the Land Control Area.

Stormwater and runoff management practices, as mentioned in the document, should be installed to reduce the transport of sediment and nutrients to both the Elk Creek/JD-8 system and the Jack Creek and Little Rock River watersheds during the construction phase of the development. Stormwater catchments and other best management practices should be considered to reduce runoff from impervious surfaces once construction is complete. Excess sediment in streams can bury suitable habitat, limit sunlight penetration, and clog the gills of fish and macroinvertebrates. Sediment deposition can also raise stream temperatures, reduce dissolved oxygen concentrations, and carry attached phosphorus. Altering stream hydrology through increases, decreases, or changes in timing (e.g., the same volume delivered over a shorter period) can result from overland runoff from impervious surfaces, increased subsurface drainage, and lowering groundwater levels through water withdrawal.

The Summit Lake Solar and Storage Project addresses how the proposed project will mitigate impacts on downstream hydrology and aquatic biology, both during construction and after, including revegetation with perennial cover.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this Project. Please be aware that this letter does not constitute approval by the MPCA of any or all elements of the Project for the purpose of pending or future permit actions by the MPCA. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Project proposer to secure any required permits and to comply with any requisite permit conditions. If you have any questions concerning our review of this EA, please contact me by email at chris.green@state.mn.us or by telephone at 507-476-4258.

Sincerely,

Chris Green

This document has been electronically signed.

Chris Green
Project Manager
Environmental Review Unit
Resource Management and Assistance Division

CG:kj

cc: Bryan Spindler, MPCA
Scott Maclean, MPCA
Nicole Peterson, MPCA
Lauren Dickerson, MPCA
Deepa deAlwis, MPCA
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Paul Kimman, MPCA