

SUPPORT THE WILD RICE ACT (SF 1247 | HF 2134)

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Wild Rice is central to Minnesota's economy, culture, and biodiversity.

- **Wild rice is central to Anishinaabe and Dakota culture.** For centuries it has been a critical part of cultural practices, providing food and spiritual connection to the land. Anishinaabeg communities continue the ancestral practice of harvesting *manoomin* (Wild Rice) by hand, ensuring the continuation of traditions that bind them to their ancestors, land, and water. The Dakota people historically harvested *Psij* (Wild Rice), but the loss of this sacred plant due to human activity has led to the erosion of cultural practices tied to the harvest and its ecosystem.
- **Wild Rice plays a crucial role in Minnesota's food sovereignty,** providing a sustainable and locally grown food source. It is one of the most environmentally friendly foods on the planet. Wild Rice is sustainably harvested and requires no pesticides or fertilizers — only clean water and shallow areas to thrive. Wild Rice is a key part of supporting local food systems in Minnesota, providing communities with access to a nutritious, traditional food source.
- **Wild Rice supports biodiversity** and provides critical habitat for wildlife. More than 17 species listed in the MNDNR's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (2006) as "species of greatest conservation need" use Wild Rice ecosystems as vital habitat. Wild Rice wetlands contribute to maintaining balanced ecosystems, supporting numerous plant and animal species. *Source: Minnesota DNR, Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (2006)*
- **Wild Rice contributes significantly to Minnesota's economy** both through its harvest and associated industries. Wild Rice harvesters contribute nearly \$13 million annually to the state's economy, supporting 153 local jobs. The sale of wild rice generates \$19 million, creating 125 additional jobs.
- **Wild Rice habitats also benefit waterfowl hunters,** who contribute approximately \$43 million annually to Minnesota's economy.

Sources: Minnesota DNR Wild Rice Study (2008) Earth Economics, "The Food That Grows Out of the Water" (August 2018) A Critical Moment for Wild Rice



**NOW IS THE TIME TO STAND
TOGETHER TO PROTECT
MINNESOTA'S WILD RICE
AND FRESHWATER.
CLEAN WATER IS NOT A
PARTISAN ISSUE!**

Contact your legislators
using this QR Code



RiseAndRepair.org/protectwildrice

Add your organization to our
sign-on letter



THREATS FACING WILD RICE

The Wild Rice Act aims to address the following issues by providing stronger protections for wild rice and freshwater.

Boating Impact: Irresponsible boating and motorized watercraft operation disturbs Wild Rice beds, leading to damage and reduced regeneration. Tribes across the state are dedicated to Wild Rice restoration efforts, but these vital initiatives are at risk without adequate protections from the impacts of boating. This legislation aims to foster a respectful coexistence between recreational boating and the preservation of an ecosystem and community-sustaining food source. Cars cannot drive through a farmer's cornfield; the same respect should be applied to Wild Rice which is a traditional food source.

Pesticides: Pesticides and fertilizers in water systems contribute to the degradation of Wild Rice habitats, threatening its growth and sustainability. This legislation protects Wild Rice from chemicals that may harm the health of this critical food source.

Wild Rice Risk Justification: Wild Rice is a treaty-protected food, safeguarded under Article VI of the U.S. Constitution which affirms that "treaties are the supreme law of the land." This legislation would require a risk justification for any potential project that could harm natural stands of Wild Rice.

~ The Urgent Need for Protections and Action ~

According to the Governor's task force on Wild Rice, Wild Rice has decreased in abundance. To ensure the survival of Wild Rice for future generations, it is essential that we implement and support protective measures.

The 2023 Wild Rice Legislative Report 2023 concurs ~ this report concludes with areas of *full agreement* by all stakeholders:

"All parties, including the University of Minnesota, recognize the importance of maintaining water quality, protecting ecosystems, and combating invasive species to support the health of wild rice stands. Legislative actions might include supporting programs to address these environmental factors that affect Wild Rice. Proposals to support conservation projects that aim to preserve the genetic diversity of wild rice and protect natural stands could be considered. These projects would ensure the long-term viability of both cultivated and natural Wild Rice, and its cultural and economic importance."

Source: <https://www.lrl.mn.gov/docs/2024/mandated/240126.pdf>

Minnesota lawmakers must **take immediate action** to ensure Wild Rice's protection and long-term sustainability—not just for cultural and ecological reasons, but for its vital role in the local economy.

Learn more & Take Action at www.RiseAndRepair.org