

Boozhoo, my name is Raining White and am a lifelong Minnesota Resident and Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe tribal member. I'm writing in support of SF 1247. I believe we as Minnesotan's need to protect our water, and by proxy, our wild rice stands. Our aquatic ecosystems are going through changes with how we use our lakes, what we put into our lakes and an uncertain future with the climate crisis. Wild rice, or manoomin was we call it in the Ojibwe language, is culturally important and integral to all tribal nations within Minnesota. It is the reason we came to these lands and were able to survive and thrive. Not only do humans depend on wild rice, but rice stands provide valuable habitat to other wildlife, including game fish and water fowl. Manoomin provides an opportunity to boost the economic, spiritual and physical health of citizens of this state. Manoomin feeds people across this country, as our state grain it is exported across the world and recently Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe sold thousands of pounds of natural, hand harvested rice to the USDA to support food programs across the nation. These protections are necessary for wild rice to continue thriving in our pristine Minnesota waters. The other critters, fish, animals and things unseen to the naked eye depend on these ecosystems. It is our responsibility as humans and stewards of our 10,000 lakes to increase protection of manoomin and our waters. Our lakes deserve further, strong protections as more and more people use them and pollution in forms of pesticides go into the water with little regulation. Miigwech, thank you.

*Raining White* 4/2/25