



Minnesota  
Environmental  
Partnership

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April 2, 2025

Minnesota Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee  
Chair Fong Hawj

Dear Chair Hawj and members,

On behalf of the Minnesota Environmental Partnership and the organizations listed below, I would like to express our coalition's support for SF 1247, the Wild Rice Act.

Wild rice, called Manoomin by the Ojibwe/Chippewa Nations and Psíj by the Dakota Nations, is both Minnesota's state grain and a critical keystone species. It is important to the food web for Minnesota wildlife, including our famed waterfowl. And it is a popular and healthy Minnesota food product, rich in protein, fiber, and other nutrients.

Wild rice is of fundamental cultural significance to Minnesota's Tribal Nations and to their exercise of usufructuary rights to hunt, fish, and gather plants. Treaties that have reserved those rights to Tribal Nations are the law of the land, and Minnesota and the United States are responsible for upholding them and protecting wild rice.

Unfortunately, wild rice is vulnerable to increasing levels of sulfate pollution in Minnesota waters, invasive species, and climate change-related disruptions in our seasonal temperatures and precipitation. Manoomin/ Psíj is the proverbial canary in the coal mine for threats to the health of Minnesota's wildlife and our people. And its abundance has been declining for decades, driven by human activities.

The decline of natural lake and river wild rice is not inevitable. Minnesota can and must make a serious effort to protect this important plant. SF 1247 is a solid step in the right direction to do just that.

SF 1247 strengthens and clarifies state practices around pesticides to avoid harm to lake and river rice waters from pesticide application. It supports pesticide management training for the same purpose. It creates common sense protections for wild rice beds from the impact of boat wakes within close proximity to wild rice beds. It recognizes the identification of wild rice waters prepared by state agencies and requires the DNR to make publicly available a map of all wild rice waters located within the state. And it requires that permits issued by the state ensure that wild rice waters are protected.

Crucially, the bill provides for coordination with Minnesota's Tribal Nations, among other government entities, to ensure that pesticide management is protective of wild rice.

We support SF 1247 and ask you to work with your colleagues to ensure its passage. Wild rice is a unique Minnesota treasure highly valued by many communities in our state, and it is gravely threatened. By taking action now, Minnesota can ensure this important plant and the ecosystems on which it relies can thrive for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Morse", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Steve Morse  
Executive Director

*Submitted on behalf of the organizations listed below.*

Audubon Upper Mississippi River  
Austin Coalition for Environmental Sustainability  
Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota  
Clean River Partners  
Clean Water Action Minnesota  
Climate Land Leaders  
CURE MN  
Friends of Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas  
Friends of the Boundary Waters  
Friends of the Cloquet Valley State Forest  
Izaak Walton League Minnesota Division  
League of Women Voters Duluth  
League of Women Voters Minnesota  
League of Women Voters Upper Mississippi River Region\*  
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy  
Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter  
MN350  
Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness  
Saint Paul Bird Alliance  
Save Lake Superior Association  
Save Our Sky Blue Waters  
Sierra Club North Star Chapter  
St Croix Oak Savanna Chapter, Wild Ones Native Landscaping  
Urban Bird Collective\*  
Vote Climate  
WaterLegacy

*\*denotes non-MEP member*