



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

TRIBAL CHAIRMAN — KEVIN JENSVOLD  
TRIBAL VICE CHAIR — CARALYN TRUTNA  
TRIBAL SECRETARY — ADAM SAVARIEGO  
TRIBAL TREASURER — CAMILLE TANHOF  
MEMBER-AT-LARGE — JEREMY HAMILTON

POST OFFICE BOX 147  
5722 TRAVERS LANE  
GRANITE FALLS, MN 56241  
320.564.3853  
320.564.4482 - FAX

---

February, 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**To the Honorable Members of the Minnesota State Legislature,**

We, the People of the Yellow Medicine (Upper Sioux Community) are writing to express our unwavering support for the Wild Rice Protection Act legislation that is being introduced this year. As the original People of this land, we recognize the cultural and spiritual significance of Manoomin/Psínj (Psínj here after) and its essential role in the ecological balance of our state. This sacred plant has sustained our People for generations, and it is critical that we take immediate action to ensure its survival for future generations.

Psinj is a cornerstone of our traditions, our way of life, and our identity. Beyond its cultural importance, Psinj is a keystone species, essential for the biodiversity and health of Minnesota's ecosystems. The plant provides habitat for wildlife, stabilizes water systems, and contributes to the overall environmental well-being of our state. We assert that recognizing the rights of Psinj is not simply a matter of cultural preservation; it is a fundamental responsibility to protect the very essence of life in Minnesota. Wild rice thrives on clean water, just as we do, our lives are deeply connected to this sacred plant. Protecting Psinj is not only a commitment to our heritage, but to the future of all life that depends on the health of our land and waters.

Today, Psinj faces numerous existential threats, from climate change and invasive species to pollution and habitat degradation. According to the Governor's Task Force on Wild Rice, the abundance of Psinj has already significantly declined in recent decades. These threats, largely driven by human activities, demand that we take responsibility for the damage caused and work together to reverse the harm we have inflicted.

As the caretakers of the land and water, we have a sacred duty to protect and honor Psinj as a living being with inherent rights to exist and thrive. This legislation represents a

critical step in securing those rights and safeguarding the future of this sacred plant, our communities, and our environment.

Psín is not only the state grain of Minnesota, but a cornerstone of our economy, providing essential sustenance and significant economic benefits that support communities and the future prosperity of our state. We urge lawmakers to take bold action to pass Psín legislation in order to protect this vital resource. By doing so, you will honor our People's ancestral connection to the land, treaty rights, and ensure that this sacred plant can continue to exist and thrive, for generations to come.

We stand in full support of wild rice protection legislation and call for its swift passage. We trust that the Minnesota State Legislature will rise to the occasion and act in the best interest of our People, our environment, and the sacred Psin.


Thank you for your immediate attention to this critical matter.


Sincerely,


Board of Trustees

Upper Sioux Community

  
Kevin Jensvold, Chairman

  
Caralyn Trutna, Vice-Chair

  
Adam Savariego, Secretary

  
Camille Tanhoff, Treasurer

  
Jeremy Hamilton, Member-at-Large