

For Immediate Release

Approx. 500 pounds of manoomin, or wild rice, was planted in Kingsbury Bay

St. Louis River Alliance volunteers, in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, is working to restore wild rice in the St. Louis River Estuary



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On September 14th, 2022 the St. Louis River Alliance (SLRA) in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) planted approx. 500 pounds of manoomin (Ojibwe name for wild rice) in the St. Louis River Estuary. This was the 7th year SLRA has had the opportunity to participate in these restoration efforts.

During this time volunteers learned about manoomin ecology, cultural significance and restoration in the St. Louis River and reseeded the wetlands in Kingsbury Bay for reestablishment. In the past, seed has been replanted around Clough Island.

Monitoring by the 1854 Treaty Authority shows that Manoomin growth progress in the estuary is slow, but steadily increasing in density. With consistent planting and management, partners are hopeful that self-sustaining manoomin will be re-established. The restoration supports the removal of the St. Louis River Area of Concern (AOC) Fish and Wildlife Habitat impairment and establishes opportunities for harvest of Manoomin with a goal of 275 acres of rice by 2025.

Northern wild rice, manoomin (Ojibwe), or *Zizania palustris* (scientific name), is an important component to the St. Louis River estuary because of its value as both a cultural and ecological resource. It is tied to the migration story of the Ojibwe people, and it provides an important food source for people and wildlife and important habitat for many species.

Historical accounts suggest that Manoomin was once abundant in the St. Louis River estuary. From the 1930's to the 1960's the St. Louis River estuary contained between 600 and 1,000 acres of wild rice. Over the past 50 years, its abundance and distribution has been reduced to a few remnant stands. The cause for the decline in Manoomin abundance include dredging and filling in the estuary, wholesale logging, industry development and water quality impacts from land use and point source inputs. Despite water quality improvements in the St. Louis River estuary, Manoomin populations have not rebounded.

The Manoomin Restoration Partnership - St. Louis River Estuary; which includes Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, St. Louis River Alliance and additional tribal partners and non-profits; are seeking to restore at least 275 acres of wild rice by 2025. Visit WDNR's website for more information on the AOC or <https://youtu.be/qjgW7SVNrxg> to see a short video highlighting the recent work to restore Manoomin.

Successful wild rice restoration may require over 5 years of seeding due to annual fluctuation in rice growth, precipitation and water levels and impacts from predation such as browsing by Canada geese. SLRA Volunteers have seeded Manoomin in approximately 10 acres near Clough Island between 2015-2020. Between 2020-2022, seeding efforts have been in Kingsbury Bay in order to establish additional stands.







About the St. Louis River Alliance

The St. Louis River Alliance (SLRA) is a membership organization committed to supporting the resiliency of the St. Louis River. As river stewards, we are the voice of the River, working together to protect, restore and enhance the St. Louis River. We envision a clean and healthy River with a thriving ecology,

economy and community. To learn more about the Alliance go to www.stlouisriver.org

For more information about the Alliance:

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