

Great Lakes Manōmaeh (Wild Rice) Gathering 2026

Dates: May 27-28, 2026

Location: Menominee Casino Resort, Keshena, Wisconsin

DRAFT AGENDA (Subject to Change)

Tuesday, May 26, 2026

6:00 pm **Gathering of Friends (Optional)**
Social get together and opportunity to say hello and reconnect
Location TBD

Day 1 - Wednesday, May 27, 2026

7:30 am **Breakfast & Registration**

8:30 am **Welcome and Opening Ceremony**
Menominee Nation Vets Honor Guard
Opening Remarks: Chairman Awonohopay
Drum: Skud Nation, Menominee Nation High School

9:15 am **Intergenerational Perspectives on Wild Rice**
Community members discuss connections to Manōmaeh from different perspectives
Session Leads: Cherie Thunder (Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin),
Cheyanne Koran (Menominee Nation, WI DNR)

10:20 am **Sketching a Regional Coordination Plan for Collaborative Wild Rice Stewardship in the Great Lakes (Part 1)**
This session will orient participants to the purpose of the *Midwest Tribal Wild Rice Coordination and Planning Project*, its origin in the 2025 Wild Rice Gathering, and how workshop input will help shape a future regional coordination plan for wild rice (Manoomin/Manōmaeh) stewardship and resilience in the Great Lakes.
Session Leads: Eric Clark and Riley Jones (Consortium for Cooperative Ecological Resilience)

10:40 am **Break**

11:00 am **Concurrent Sessions - Governmental and Interagency Support**

USDA Session [tentative]

Listening session with USDA Farm Service Agency and/or Presentation from USDA NRCS about resources to support wild rice restoration efforts in the region

Session Lead: Joey Tallier (Intertribal Agriculture Council)

Geospatial Support from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

Lessons learned from recent remote sensing and geospatial data collection efforts across the region and highlights of geospatial support resources available through BIA

Session Leads: Brandon Krumwiede (NOAA), Lara O'Brien (NOAA), Chris Kaczmarek (BIA)

12:00 pm Lunch

1:00 pm Wild Rice Resilience Indicators

Opportunity to work through the Great Lakes Basin resilience indicators, learn how they can be used to develop strategies and solutions, and how the framework can be used by others in the future

Session Lead: Jeff Feng (STRONG Manoomin Collective, Northwestern University)

2:30 pm Break

2:45 pm Perspectives on Water Resilience and Manomaeh Restoration

Opportunity for youth to present their research on wild rice restoration and build on it with knowledge from conference participants.

Session lead: Sara Smith (College of Menominee Nation)

3:30 pm Food Sovereignty Programs (tentative)

Learn about Tribal Elder Food Box and Future Farmers of America programs

Session lead: Gary Besaw (Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin)

4:30 pm Wrap-up and Overview of Evening Activities

6:00 pm Feast

Join our hosts and enjoy a meal of locally-sourced food together

Location: TBD

Evening Activity (optional)

Film Screening - [*Manoomin \(Wild Rice\): Ojibwe Spirit Food*](#)

Day 2 - Thursday, May 28, 2026

- 7:30 am Breakfast**
- 8:30 am Welcome and Reconvening**
Reflections from the first day and an overview of the upcoming day's activities
- 8:45 am Tribal Monitoring of Wild Rice (Lightning Talks)**
Whirlwind of monitoring methodology! Opportunity to learn from each other and provide feedback on current tribally-led geospatial and remote sensing work.
Session Leads / Moderators: Alexis DeGabriele (Little River Band of Ottawa Indians), Jeff Richardson (Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi)
- 9:45 am Restoration Panel**
Description placeholder - Focus on two multi-partner restoration projects - St. Louis River Estuary and Spur Lake; What has been successful or presented challenges?
Session Lead: Kathleen Smith (Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission)
- 10:45 am Break**
- 11:00 am Restoration & Stewardship Topics - Discussion Cafe**
Opportunity to learn from each other about different tribally-led restoration and stewardship efforts, methods, and issues. Participants will rotate through a series of small groups facilitated by experts on assorted topics, such as:
- Regional Stewardship Initiatives / Coalitions
 - Addressing legal implications of unsanctioned herbicide use
 - Relationships with Other Living Non-Human Beings (beaver, etc.)
 - Indigenous Place Names
 - Seeding methods
 - Manōmaeh/Manoomin Health and Stressors (e.g., Brown Spot Disease, ghost rice, Manōmaeh/Manoomin-Microbe Interactions, water quality, etc.)
 - Education and Community Engagement
 - Funding Challenges and Opportunities
 - Data Sovereignty
- 12:00 pm Lunch**
- 1:00 pm Restoration & Stewardship Topics - Discussion Café (continued)**
- 2:00 pm Break**

2:15 pm Sketching a Regional Coordination Plan for Collaborative Wild Rice Stewardship in the Great Lakes (Part 2)

Interactive working session to discuss initial ideas that could be developed into a regional coordination plan for wild rice (Manoomin/Manōmaeh) stewardship and resilience in the Great Lakes. This multi-year, Tribal-led process would focus on the recognized need & opportunity for improved coordination at multiple levels.

Session Leads: Eric Clark and Riley Jones (Consortium for Cooperative Ecological Resilience); Katie O'Donnell and Brian Crawford (Compass Resource Management)

4:45 pm Wrap-up Remarks and Closing Ceremony