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1855 TREATY AUTHORITY

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Immediate Release

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CHIPPEWA ESTABLISH *RIGHTS OF MANOOMIN* ON WHITE EARTH RESERVATION AND THROUGHOUT 1855 CEDED TERRITORY

Rice Lakes, MN – Recently the White Earth Band of Ojibwe and the 1855 Treaty Authority adopted *Rights of Manoomin* for on and off reservation protection of wild rice and the clean, fresh water resources and habitats in which it thrives. The *Rights of Manoomin* were adopted because “it has become necessary to provide a legal basis to protect wild rice and fresh water resources as part of our primary treaty foods for future generations” according to resolutions.

“Look what’s happened to the sturgeon” said Terry Tibbetts, Chairman of White Earth Band of Ojibwe, “our most important foods have always been fish and wild rice. These are important treaty rights that are essential to protect and require consent and co-management with the State throughout our ceded territories.”

Tribal leaders and Chippewa members are hoping the recent, federal legal experience as U.S. Representatives for Governor Walz and Attorney General Ellison means they already understand tribal sovereignty and treaty rights. Lt. Governor Flannigan, also a White Earth member, served as a member of the Minnesota House of Representatives from 2015 to 2019 and is well acquainted with Enbridge’s Line 3 and PUC challenges from tribal communities.

“Even Governor Dayton recognized that *wild rice is culturally important and spiritually sacred to Minnesota’s Tribal Nations and the health of wild rice is dependent on water quality and other habitat conditions* noting the *restoration and protection of wild rice habitat requires collaboration* in his call for a wild rice task

TREATY WITH THE CHIPPEWA, 1855.

Feb. 22, 1855. | 10 Stat., 1165. | Ratified March 3, 1855. | Proclaimed Apr. 7, 1855.

force” said Frank Bibeau, Executive Director of the 1855 Treaty Authority. “Unfortunately, Governor Dayton stacked his task force with industry interests while cutting short tribal seats,” added Bibeau, “and fortunately, treaties are the supreme law of the land and we Chippewa have (U.S.) Constitutionally protected, usufructuary property rights to hunt, fish, trap and gather wild rice.”

The *Rights of Manoomin*, modeled after the *Rights of Nature*, codify the right of manoomin to the right to pure water and freshwater habitat; the right to a healthy climate system and a natural environment free from human-caused global warming impacts and emissions and more. The White Earth Band of Ojibwe and 1855 Treaty Authority worked with the [Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund \(CELDF\)](#), with its International Center for the Rights of Nature, in the development of the draft law. “This is a very important step forward in the Rights of Nature movement. This would be the first law to recognize legal rights of plant species,” explains Mari Margil, CELDF’s associate director.

“We understand that it is the individual tribal members’ usufructuary rights to gather food and earn a modest living that are essential to our lives and important for the success of future generations’ ability to maintain our culture and traditions” said Bibeau, adding “we understand *WATER IS LIFE* for all living creatures and protecting abundant, clean, fresh water is essential for our ecosystems and wild life habitats to sustain all of us and the Manoomin.”

This important ordinance will secure for manoomin much needed stronger protection from environmentally degrading projects. “Manoomin is sacred to the Anishinaabeg, and it is time the law reflects this,” explains Winona LaDuke, executive director, Honor the Earth. “I was very glad to be present when the White Earth Band of Ojibwe Tribal Council met to adopt Rights of Manoomin.”

Please find attached Resolutions for Rights of Manoomin for White Earth Band of Ojibwe and 1855 Treaty Authority. For more information about this release and the 1855 Treaty Authority please contact frankbibeau@gmail.com or call Frank Bibeau at 218-760-1258.