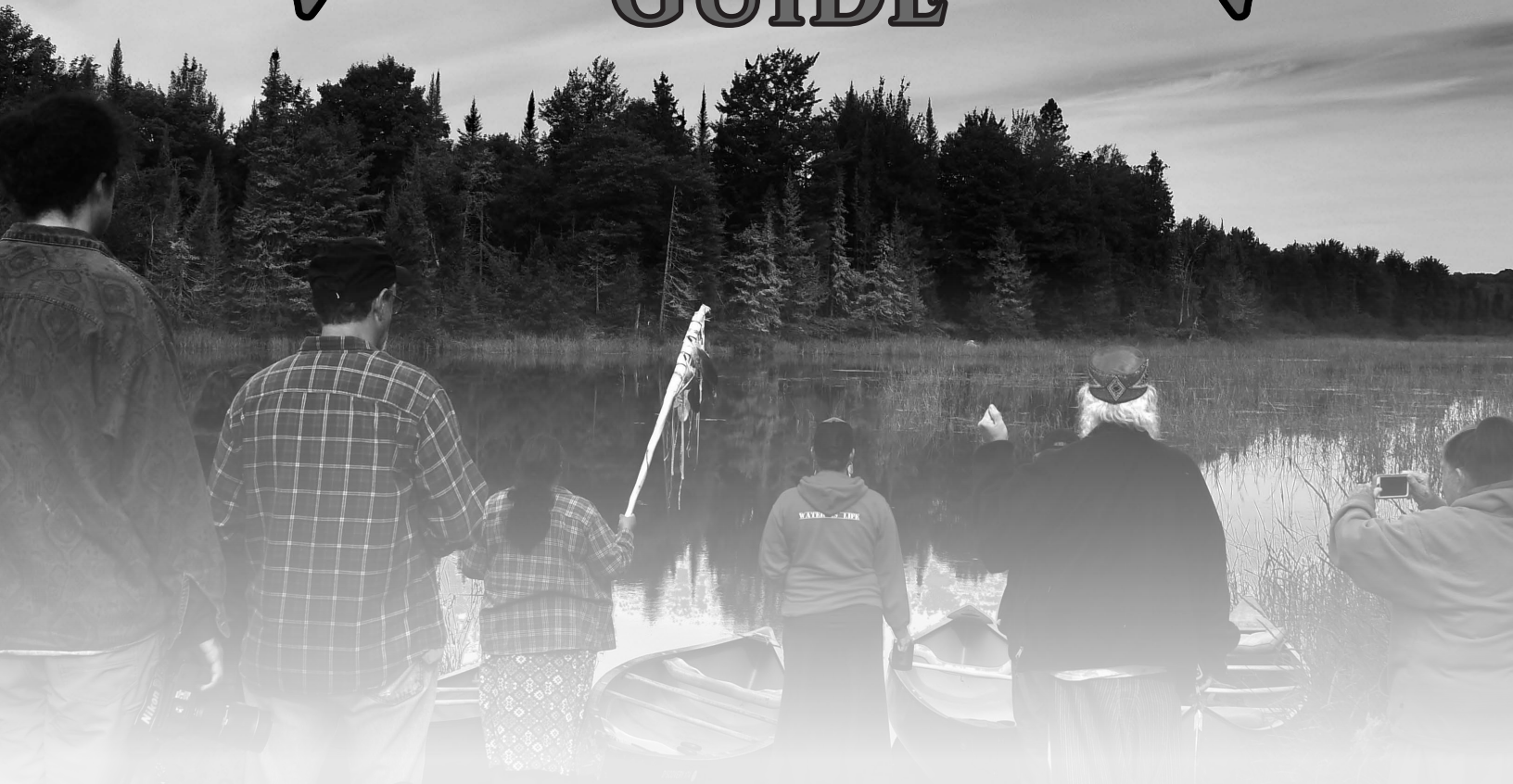
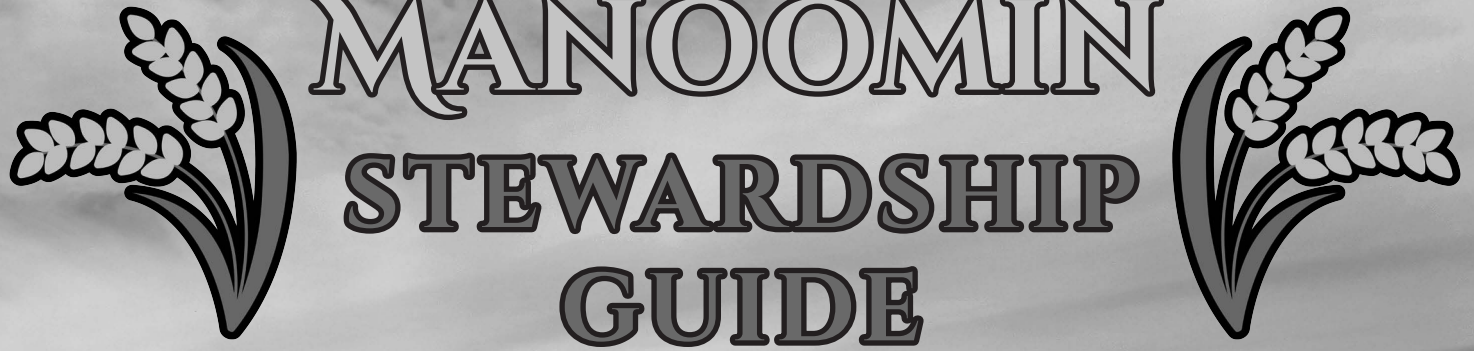


WE ALL LIVE TOGETHER
IN A GOOD WAY WITH

MANOOMIN
STEWARDSHIP
GUIDE



The Michigan Wild Rice Initiative (MWRI) brings together Tribal (Anishinaabe) government and state agency personnel, academics, knowledge holders, and other environmental and cultural experts to revitalize Manoomin culture and abundance. MWRI and the greater Manoomin community in Michigan have shared their experience and passion to shape this living document—***We all live together in a good way with Manoomin: Stewardship Guide.***

Manoomin camp water ceremony. (Credit: Todd Marsee, Michigan Sea Grant)



We all live together in a good way with Manoomin describes the close relationship our Anishinaabe relatives of the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Bodéwadmi nations have developed with Manoomin after many generations of living with and caring for them. Manoomin seed provided crucial calories to nurture social cohesion and cultural flourishing through many winters. Access to Manoomin enabled the Anishinaabe people to thrive and establish a lasting influence in the Great Lakes region.

This Stewardship Guide describes how Manoomin is a teacher of life. They offer their gifts of seed to nurture many relatives, both human and non-human, resident and migratory, to sustain the web of life. Manoomin beds provide shelter for winged-ones, fish and other non-human relatives. Because they are foundational for this biodiversity, Manoomin are a keystone species. For these reasons, our Anishinaabe relatives view Manoomin as a sacred relative. To acknowledge the appreciation and respect our Anishinaabe relatives have for Manoomin, this document recognizes the personhood of Manoomin and refers to them in the third person plural (e.g. they/them).

We all live together in a good way with Manoomin: Stewardship Guide provides an overview of how Anishinaabe relatives are spreading awareness of Manoomin and their gifts. This includes having community events and learning opportunities, such as rice camps, open to everyone, as well as hosting educational sessions for governmental staff, academics, and other professionals. For decades, Anishinaabe relatives have been advocating for the State of Michigan to protect Manoomin beds, and aid in their restoration and revitalization. Recently, Anishinaabe advocates guided the State of Michigan to recognize Manoomin as the state native grain. With this recognition, many Anishinaabe relatives are eager for the State of Michigan to legalize protections and regulations for Manoomin. More Anishinaabe communities are restoring and revitalizing Manoomin beds to reinforce food sovereignty for their people. They are also upholding their Treaty rights to harvest Manoomin located in their ancestral territories. The Anishinaabe community invites others to join in caring for and appreciating Manoomin and their gifts.

We believe that Manoomin offers a path for Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe communities and governments to learn how to work together in a good way. The lessons that collaborators learn through this effort will be insightful for guiding future collaborations in caring for other non-human relatives. In the face of climate change and accelerating environmental degradation, we need to use the strengths of both ways of knowing—Traditional Knowledge and Western science—to nurture a path that is both practically effective and ethically just. Through interviews, focus groups, and workshop discussions, the MWRI and Manoomin community agreed on a common understanding for overarching goals. By spreading awareness and acceptance of these principles, the MWRI and the Manoomin community promote a future in which we, as those sharing these two peninsulas, all live together in a good way with Manoomin.

Using a push pole to navigate a Manoomin bed.
(Credit: Lisa Herron, EGLE)





Our Shared Future with Manoomin/Mnoomin/Mnomen

Manoomin/Mnoomin/Mnomen is a sacred relative. We seek a shared future where they are restored and flourishing in all ecosystems across the state where there are environmental and social conditions to protect, support, and enhance thriving communities such that...

- Manoomin/Mnoomin/Mnomen fulfill their spiritual, cultural and ecological roles and responsibilities within regional ecosystems;
- All Indigenous People who want to, are able to harvest Manoomin/Mnoomin/Mnomen sustainably for safe consumption in a traditional / good way;
- Manoomin/Mnoomin/Mnomen are not defined or treated as an agricultural commodity for industrial cultivation.

This guide offers direction for our collaborative efforts, providing goals and objectives in three crucial areas: education & outreach; stewardship; and policy & protection. MWRI shares this guide to better support Anishinaabe relatives in their efforts and encourage non-Indigenous Michiganders to kindle deep, lasting relationships with Manoomin.



Education and Outreach Goals

1. Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members in Michigan, especially youth, as well as out-of-state visitors embrace the cultural, spiritual and ecological value of Manoomin.
2. State and federal land managers value Manoomin and seek opportunities to protect, restore and enhance them on state and federal lands.
3. Professional wetland and other restoration/conservation professionals receive technical training and information that enables them to contribute to the protection, restoration and enhancement of Manoomin on public and private lands.
4. Riparian landowners (lakes and rivers), their technical support (consultants, Cooperative Extension), and surrounding Michigan communities recognize and respect the cultural, spiritual and ecological value of Manoomin.
5. Michiganders braid Manoomin into their cultural identity, ensuring they care for Manoomin across generations, similar to the way the Great Lakes are a common cultural connection in Michigan.



Stewardship Goals

1. Tribal departments of natural resources and culture, traditional ricing communities, state and federal research agencies, and universities maintain a common research agenda initially related to Manoomin protection and restoration, later investigating the effectiveness of education and public engagement approaches (practices, messages, tactics).
2. Tribal departments of natural resources and culture, traditional ricing communities, local, state and federal land management agencies, non-governmental organizations, land conservancies and private landowners maintain a suite of shared best practices for supporting Manoomin protection and restoration. These would include but not be limited to: restoration practices, such as site selection (bio-physical conditions and other site traits), seed sourcing, methods for sowing; approaches to monitoring; and social practices, such as cultural teachings, ceremonies and community consent, to integrate the genuine participation of local communities.
3. Facilitate discussions among Tribal departments, traditional ricing communities, and local, state and federal agencies to clarify jurisdiction, responsibilities and expectations for Manoomin protection and restoration. These will likely vary within and across time and space, such as seasonally or regionally.



4. Tribal departments of natural resources and culture, traditional ricing communities, and state management agencies develop a suite of best practices for Manoomin harvest. These would include, but not be limited to: a process for determining harvest season, allowable equipment.
5. Work with Tribal, state, federal and private partners to identify restoration goals for Manoomin and appropriate ways to track them.



Policy and Protection Goals

1. Ensure the recognition of the importance of Manoomin among non-Indigenous communities and institutions.
2. Federal, State and local governments with relevant regulatory authority, e.g., for permitting activities with potential impacts to Manoomin, respect Treaty rights, recognize Tribal authorities, and collaborate with appropriate Tribal authorities when reviewing permits. These governments have the responsibility to respect Tribal input, the obligation to protect Tribal interests, and the authority to act on Tribal insights. They should uphold Tribal decisions and avoid any attempts to override them.
3. Maximize harvest access to Manoomin beds on public and private bottomlands.
4. State employees who have policing authority, e.g., conservation officers, fully understand Treaty usufruct rights, are sensitive to the cultural importance of Manoomin, and are knowledgeable about appropriate harvesting practices.
5. Tribal government and state agency personnel work together to develop an approach to Manoomin harvest on state and federal lands that include how and when rice beds will be declared open to harvest, how non-Tribal harvesters will be licensed, and specifications for harvest equipment.
6. Tribal governments work with local and regional management organizations, such as land and water conservancies, as well as state and local governments to influence land use management policy.
7. Tribal governments work with local, state and federal institutions to secure consistent funding for various Manoomin-related activities.
8. Governance and collaboration dynamics across the landscape, potentially impacting Manoomin, are concretely illustrated/outlined to support stronger inter-Tribal and agency collaboration.

Thank you for your interest in *We all live together in a good way with Manoomin: Stewardship Guide*. To access the guide, visit bit.ly/manoominislife.



Cortney Collia and Kathy Smith laughing together at rice camp. (Credit: Todd Marsee, Michigan Sea Grant)



Antonio Cosme learns from Roger LaBine how to properly carve a push pole. (Credit: Antonio Cosme)

