



Remote sensing of manoomin at Tawas Lake, Michigan.
Photo Credit: NOAA

Michigan-Huron Manoomin (Wild Rice) Remote Sensing Project

NOAA's Office for Coastal Management, in collaboration with Tribal partners, recently completed the Michigan-Huron Manoomin (Wild Rice) Remote Sensing Project. The project focused on improving the mapping and monitoring of wild rice in the Lake Michigan and Lake Huron basins through airborne hyperspectral imagery and field data collection at 12 areas of interest in August and September 2021. Funded by GLRI, this project was a continuation of NOAA's Lake Superior Manoomin Project, which also sought to support ongoing efforts to protect and restore wild rice populations and habitat in the region. Manoomin harvest is of great cultural importance to many Tribal nations in the Great Lakes. This harvest activity can occur in many Great Lakes habitats, including inland lakes, tributaries and coastal wetlands.

Share your thoughts on the Great Lakes and consider the following questions.

- 1 What Great Lakes native species do you think about when you consider the Great Lakes and surrounding coastal and upland landscapes?
- 2 What Great Lakes species are most important to protect for future generations to experience?
- 3 Are there some native species that you are most concerned about when you think about the future of the Great Lakes and climate change impacts?

Sustaining Species

Overview

The Great Lakes' history and the influence of the lakes themselves create unique conditions that support a wealth of biological diversity, including over 200 globally rare plants and animals and more than 40 species that are found nowhere else in the world. The Great Lakes environment supports a world-class fishery, with an estimated 180 species of native fish, including small and large-mouth bass, muskellunge, northern pike, lake herring, whitefish, walleye and lake trout.

A multitude of threats affect the health of Great Lakes fish and wildlife. Habitat destruction and degradation due to development; competition from invasive species; the alteration of natural lake-level fluctuations due to artificial lake-level management and flow regimes from dams, drain tiles, ditches and other control structures; contaminants from urban development; and poor land management practices have impacted Great Lakes native species. The impacts of these threats has led to an altered food web, a loss of biodiversity and poorly functioning ecosystems.

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) will continue to provide significant funding resources to agencies and Tribal Nations that sustainably manage, stock and restore populations of native species. Reintroduction of species important to Tribal Nations will be planned and implemented to continue to provide important food resources and cultural uses. Coastal habitats and reefs important to native fish spawning and nurseries will be identified for each lake and species. State and Tribal fishery agencies will provide support and direction to federal agencies to continue habitat restoration in the lakes and comprehensive plans to reintroduce native fish. Funding will be provided to agency, academic and local partners so that continued monitoring occurs and improves our understanding of the impacts of projects and needed future management for native Great Lakes species.



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