

Chris Heeter

Sometimes we are our own worst enemy. This site-specific sulfate standard for wild rice is one such example. As a (caucasian) wild rice harvester for 30 years, I can attest to the degradation over the years. Climate change hits wild rice hard, impacting not just yield, but quality and health of the rice. Site to site standards leave way too much opportunity to abuse and therefore further pollute our waters, wild rice, fish, and all aquatic inhabitants. I'm sure you are getting pressure from the mining side of things. Please, please, stand strong against this. What we destroy now, we will never get back. The cost is far too high, compared to the small and short-lived gains of this mining. I am so glad for the privilege of harvesting wild rice, well aware of the history, tradition, and story that follows this most important ritual. So above and beyond all the many reasons to reject this site to site proposal, consider the tribes, the impact, and the unspeakable disrespect of not hearing/allowing their voices to be heard, particularly regarding something as sacred and financially important as wild rice. Thank you. --Chris Heeter