



**SOUTH NATION  
CONSERVATION  
DE LA NATION SUD**



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## WILD RICE BEING REPLENISHED IN SOUTH NATION WATERSHED

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South Nation Conservation is partnering with Ducks Unlimited (DU) and Plenty Canada to re-establish native wild rice in parts of its 4,000 square-km watershed. A traditional, significant food source for First Nations and migratory birds, the wild rice plant is also invaluable as a wildlife and fish habitat enhancer, and water purifier.

Plantings are taking place this month in area wetlands. With most of the rice left on existing plants to naturally re-sow, ripe seeds from them are dislodged into a canoe, soaked in buckets, and hand spread in other suitable locations.

Over the years, existing wild rice fields have deteriorated due to damming and shoreline development, as well as increasing encroachment by invasive plant species, said Naomi Langlois-Anderson, SNC Senior Fish and Wildlife Technician.

“To thrive, this aquatic annual grass requires slow-moving streams or shallow lakes and is particularly affected by flow and water level fluctuations,” Langlois-Anderson explained, adding that an independent study of the South Nation River basin suggested lack of suitable habitat cover was an inhibitor to greater waterfowl usage.

While DU is contributing funds to undertake sowing and harvesting of wild rice on SNC properties, and environmental and sustainable development group Plenty Canada is providing expertise and 100 pounds of wild rice, the authority is seeking additional partners to make the project community oriented as a means of getting local groups more involved in environmental initiatives.

“We already have letters of support from some fish and wildlife clubs to help harvest and sow wild rice,” Langlois-Anderson said. “We’d like as many clubs and groups as possible to get involved in this very significant project.”

Wild rice re-establishment has been ongoing in several areas of the province. The SNC project is an expansion of a much larger one in the south-eastern portion of Algonquin Territory where it’s seen as an important heritage revitalization effort.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Gord Shaver, SNC, 1-877-984-2948, ext. 296

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