



March 12, 2025

Chair Hawj and Members of the Senate Environment Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in regards to efforts to make foraging for wild foods more accessible to all Minnesotans. It is the goal of the Minnesota Conservation Federation to work alongside diverse foraging interests, natural resource managers, and elected officials to better understand the current rules and regulations pertaining to foraging in Minnesota and to develop new rules and regulations that ensure Minnesotans have an opportunity to forage wild foods while conserving foraging resources for future use.

Minnesotans that engage in hunting and fishing activities are able to harvest fish and game with a clear understanding of rules and regulations that are consistent across a patchwork of public and private lands and waters. Can ruffed grouse be hunted on a Wildlife Management Area? How many lake trout can a person have in their possession? What is the difference between a "daily" and "possession" limit? The answers to these questions can be found in the rules and regulations developed to provide hunters and anglers the opportunity to engage in the harvest of fish and game. These regulations also provide wildlife and land managers a tool to ensure that harvest is being done in a conservation minded manner with the long term health of the resource in mind.

Can a person harvest acorns in a Wildlife Management Area? Is it legal for someone to harvest wild mint on state forest lands? How many blueberries can a harvester pick before a permit is needed from a local Forestry office? What public lands allow for the harvest of ramps? These are the types of questions that, at the moment, are difficult to answer for folks interested in engaging in recreational and cultural foraging activities across Minnesota.

Interest in foraging for wild foods is growing across Minnesota and we are pleased to be part of a growing conversation to clarify and enhance rules, regulations, and expectations for the foraging of wild foods.

Sincerely

Brad Gausman
Executive Director
brad@mncf.org