



FOUR SEASON FORAGING

Maria Wesserle • 1536 LaSalle Ave, Apt 308, Minneapolis, MN 55403 • 612.440.5958

March 12, 2025

Senator Founj Hawj, Chair
Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee

Re: SF 1464 – MN Sustainable Foraging Task Force
For Committee Hearing, Thursday, March 13, 2025

Chair Hawj and Committee Members:

My name is Maria Wesserle; and I am a resident of District 61A, as well as a member of the Minnesota Mycological Society (MMS), a forager of over 20 years, and the owner of a small business that teaches safe and sustainable foraging practices. I am writing to respectfully ask for your support for bipartisan legislation that will determine rules for responsible and sustainable foraging on state lands. The bill ensures that public organizations are at the table when Rules are being formed. This aligns with MMS's goals of collaborating with government agencies on sustainable foraging practices.

Foraging is a time-honored tradition practiced by a great many cultural groups in Minnesota and around the world. The question regarding the sustainability of foraging has already been answered many times over, by our ancestors and by people living directly from the sustenance of the land. If foraging wasn't sustainable, it wouldn't have fed all of humanity for 95% of our existence. All around the world, there is evidence of land management and harvesting methods that promote diversity and restore fractured habitats.

My vision includes a future in which foraging is as valued and protected as other outdoor pursuits, such as hunting, trapping, and fishing. Just as harvesting game animals creates a direct connection that supports their populations, so too can foraging support the proliferation of plants and mushrooms. It's just going to take some research, education, and the development of sound policies. Foragers and the government can support each other in conducting studies and developing regulations that make sense for everybody. Coming together, we can preserve the beauty of Minnesota's green spaces while instituting a more relational method of stewarding the land we love.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

With Respect,

Maria Wesserle