

April 5, 2025

Sen. Susan Pha
3233 Minnesota Senate Bldg
St. Paul, MN 55155

Sen. Erin Murphy
3113 Minnesota Senate Bldg
St. Paul, MN 55155



Dear Sen. Pha and Chair Murphy,

On behalf of the Minnesota Mycological Society, I am writing to express our enthusiastic support for Senate File 1464 which establishes the Minnesota Sustainable Foraging Task Force. This initiative presents a meaningful opportunity to ensure sustainable, equitable access to Minnesota's diverse natural resources, guided by robust scientific data and sensitivity to cultural and traditional practices. Most of all, we are excited that this would ensure a transparent process to determining access to state lands for foraging activities.

Our members deeply value Minnesota's lands, recognizing that foraging is far more than simply gathering wild foods. It is a practice deeply rooted in tradition, culture, and a profound connection to our natural environment. Responsible and sustainable foraging promotes stewardship, ecological awareness, and community engagement, connecting Minnesotans to our shared lands and reinforcing the importance of conservation.

We commend the legislation's commitment to a scientifically rigorous approach. Decisions about foraging should be guided by accurate, data-driven assessments rather than restrictive measures based on assumptions or incomplete information. By developing science-based guidelines, the task force can effectively balance conservation priorities with the fundamental rights of Minnesotans to access and enjoy state lands.

Furthermore, the inclusive approach outlined in the bill—incorporating Indigenous voices, the MN Department of Natural Resources, local businesses, academics, and diverse cultural groups—ensures that the recommendations will honor Minnesota's rich heritage and varied practices. We strongly support the provision for educational outreach, as public education is critical to fostering a responsible foraging community.

The Minnesota Mycological Society looks forward to contributing our expertise and collaborating closely with fellow stakeholders on this important initiative.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue. We urge your full support for establishing the Minnesota Sustainable Foraging Task Force.

Warm regards,

Peter Martignacco
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125 Years of Citizen Science
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