

Legislative Response: Sustainable Foraging Task Force, DNR follow-up from October 8, 2025

Date: 11-10-2025

Prepared for: Minnesota Sustainable Foraging Task Force

Question 1: Luke Skinner: What species is the agency particularly concerned about from the impacts of foraging?

Answer: DNR does not have data or reports on any specific foraged species. In particular, vascular plants listed in our [rare species guide](#) are of concern to ensure those species are not harvested. In addition, plant species listed as endangered, threatened, or of special concern are listed in [M.R. 6134.0300](#). As we gather additional information on what is being harvested and find ways to gain additional population level detail, we will be better able to answer this question.

The NatureServe Explorer [website](#) also provides a lot of helpful information regarding species of concern regionally and specific to Minnesota.

Question 2: Gary Wyatt: Can you provide data on the number of permits issued for foraging?

Answer:

State Forests: Most special product permits that the DNR Forestry Division issues are for fuelwood, spruce tops, balsam boughs, and Christmas trees. A summary of special product permits issued in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 and 2026 are as follows:

Products	FY25	FY26	Notes
Ferns	3	0	Spring harvest
Other Herbaceous	25	0	Spring harvest, likely Solomon's Seal, etc.
Ginseng	63	70	Fall harvest
Bark	0	3	
Total	91	73	

State Parks: Foraging/collecting specifically for tribal ceremonial or medicinal purposes in State Parks may be authorized through a Special Use Permit. These have not been requested often and we issue about 1-2 parks/year/region or 4-8 total per year.

In addition, DNR issues research permits for some level of collection, including foraging educational programming hosted by other organizations. A summary of research permits issued in 2024 and 2025 are as follows:

Products	2024	2025	Notes
Terrestrial Plants	13	7	
Mushrooms	3	3	
Fungi	4	2	
Other	6	5	Lichen, Macroalgae, Wild Rice, Aquatic Plants
Total	26	17	

Question 3: Senator Steve Green: Are there currently restrictions in place for the harvesting/foraging of aquatic plants, like cattails?

Answer: Foraging for aquatic plants is addressed under Minnesota Rules 6280.0250, “STANDARDS FOR AQUATIC PLANT MANAGEMENT PERMIT ISSUANCE.” Specifically, Subpart 1 prohibits “harvesting aquatic plants or plant parts for personal use”.

This rule has been implemented to prohibit harvest of cattails even in small amounts, such as a flower bouquet, unless permitted under DNR’s Aquatic Plant Management permits. Similar to other rules and statutes applicable to DNR management, the term “personal use” is not defined.

If harvest is considered for more than personal use, a Commercial Mechanical Control (CMC) permit would be required. This is the same permit required for those wishing to remove plants for recreational access adjacent to a property.

Question 4: Peter Martignacco: Can you provide data or reports produced by the DNR regarding foraging or concerns with potential overharvest?

Answer: The DNR has not produced any reports or surveys specific to foraging/harvesting on state lands that we are aware of.