

Sustainable Foraging Task Force



Meeting 6: December 2, 2025

Welcome and purpose

- Welcome
- Adoption of previous meeting minutes
- Task Force duties, legislative report, and operating agreements

Duties of Task Force

1. **gather and review data and information**, including **traditional ecological knowledge**, on the **impact of foraging** on species resilience, ecosystem health, and other aspects of Minnesota's diverse biomes;
2. **review existing regulations** governing foraging activities on **state lands**;
3. **develop recommendations** for science-based, including traditional ecological knowledge, **foraging guidelines for state lands** that balance public access and foraging opportunities with conservation needs. The recommendations must be in the form of **draft statutory or rule language and must be consistent with Indigenous and other cultural practices and traditions**;
4. **develop recommendations for increasing public understanding of sustainable foraging practices** that include safety and ecological considerations;
5. **solicit public input**, when appropriate; and
6. **develop recommendations for reduced-priced foraging permits**.

Legislative report

- By February 28, 2026, the task force must submit a written report containing its **findings** and **recommendations** to the commissioner of natural resources and to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with primary jurisdiction over natural resources policy.
- Recommendations must be **specific** and **actionable**.
- The report must detail proposals for changes or additions to statute or rules to effectuate the task force's recommendations.

Operating agreements

- Say your name before speaking
- If online, cameras on whenever possible
- Come to meetings prepared. Review agenda and materials in advance.
- Take space, make space
- Refrain from side conversations
- Show respect to members and presenters
- Be open-minded and curious about others' opinions, viewpoints, and lived experiences
- Recognize that time or research may be needed before questions are answered
- Focus on the issue, not the people
- Assume good intent but acknowledge harm

Task Force meetings

| Meeting | Purpose/focus (<i>italics: tentative or details to be confirmed</i>) |
|---|--|
| 1. August 20, 2025 – noon-2:00pm | Learning: foraging basics |
| 2. September 9, 2025 – 10:00am-noon | Learning: MN and other states' statutes & rules |
| 3. October 8, 2025 – noon-2:00pm | Learning: DNR information; MN foraging history and context |
| October 20, 2025 – 10:00am-noon | Foraging field trip, Ft. Snelling State Park |
| 4. October 21, 2025 – 10:00am-noon | Learning: traditional foraging practices |
| Various dates and times in Nov., Dec. | Public listening sessions for input from members of the public |
| 5. November 18, 2025 – 10:00am-noon | Learning: other locations (Wisconsin DNR, Washington County DNR) Recommendations: review ideas, including those noted in meetings |
| 6. December 2, 2025 – 10:00am-noon | Recommendations: create and discuss |
| 7. December 16, 2025 – 10:00am-noon | Recommendations: discuss and refine |
| 8. January 6, 2026 – 11:00am-1:00pm | Recommendations: refine |
| 9. January 27, 2026 – 10:00am-noon | Recommendations: finalize |
| 10. February 10, 2025 – 10:00am-noon | Report: discuss draft |

Agenda

- Welcome and purpose
- Agenda and introductions
- Presentations of new information
- Reflections and key takeaways from three of five listening sessions
- Discussion of recommendations
- Next steps
- Public input
- Adjourn

Introductions

- Name, role, organization



Presentation of new information

- DNR follow-up to questions from November 18 meeting
 - Document in member materials
 - Page 2 includes comments from DNR staff that may help inform recommendations
- Administrative rules from Wisconsin
- Questions about existing research related to foraging
 - Resources found to be relevant are in member materials and on task force website
 - Review is continuing and additional resources will be shared as they're found



Reflection and key takeaways from listening sessions

Listening sessions

- Three of five listening sessions took place on November 18, 19, and 20
- Two listening sessions remain:
 - Wednesday, December 3rd from 11:30-1:00 pm
 - Thursday, December 11, 6:30pm-8:00pm
- As reminder, task force members are welcome to attend the remaining listening sessions.
- All task force members are encouraged to use their networks to invite the public to participate. The agenda and zoom link can be found the “meetings” tab of our task force website: [Minnesota Sustainable Foraging Task Force](#)

Emerging themes from listening sessions

- Support for **foraging is guided by values** including living in harmony with land and water.
- **Clear rules** of what is allowed and not allowed on different state lands.
- **Overharvest is a concern for whole plants and roots/tubers**, not fruits (including mushrooms).
- **Restrictions must come with enforcement.** Without enforcement, laws and rules don't mean anything. "If no one is enforcing, there is no point in restricting."
- Explore a **free permit** for first several years to collect data
- **More education and resources** to support responsible practices.
- The DNR tip line (1-800-POACHERS) can be used to report over harvesting.

Reflections and key takeaways from listening sessions

Questions to guide conversation:

- What stood out to you about the listening session(s) you attended or listened to?
- What key takeaways or themes emerged for you?
- How have the listening sessions impacted how you are thinking about the task force recommendations?



Recommendations

Duties of Task Force: Recommendations

1. gather and review data and information, including traditional ecological knowledge, on the impact of foraging on species resilience, ecosystem health, and other aspects of Minnesota's diverse biomes;
2. review existing regulations governing foraging activities on state lands;
3. **develop recommendations** for science-based, including traditional ecological knowledge, foraging guidelines for state lands that balance public access and foraging opportunities with conservation needs. **The recommendations must** be in the form of draft statutory or rule language and must be consistent with Indigenous and other cultural practices and traditions;
4. **develop recommendations** for increasing public understanding of sustainable foraging practices that include safety and ecological considerations;
5. solicit public input, when appropriate; and
6. **develop recommendations** for reduced-priced foraging permits.

Interview findings: Known context (1 of 4)

DNR lands: 5.6 million acres, 4 biomes, 59 state forests, school trust acres, forested lands, 1800 wildlife management areas, 66 state parks, nine recreation areas, 9 waysides, 166 scientific and natural areas, 700 aquatic management areas. **Managed by different divisions within DNR and each have different goals, laws, statutes, and rules**

[MN DNR Background Info \(Task Force Mtg. 1, 8-20-25\)](#)

Foraging occurs for a variety of reasons – food, medicine, recreation, art, and cultural purposes.

More people on lands requires more resources to monitor and educate.

Foraging may not be perceived by all stakeholders as a legitimate recreational activity on state lands, like hunting or fishing.

Interview findings: Shared hopes (2 of 4)

- Clear, simple recommendations resulting in accessible foraging on state lands.
- Recommendations accepted by DNR and legislature.
- Balanced, finding middle ground
- Support for cultural practices, including those of MN tribes

Hope we can provide suggestions for new rules or new guidance that is clear and understandable, meets the recreational needs/desires of multiple groups.

That legislature can act upon recommendations. Be very thoughtful that they are as specific as possible so that they're actionable.

Have recommendations that are acceptable to both pro-foraging open access and natural resource managers that want to conserve.

There are certain culturally significant species for our task force to be aware of.

Interview findings: Shared concerns (3 of 4)

- Balancing accessibility now, with conservation long term
- Balancing individual rights today, with protection for tomorrow

Not erring too far in either direction. Trying to protect nature by keeping us out of it, or foraging rules too wide and not being good stewards. Thoughtful, clear approach. "I do think we can come up with something that allows humans to forage and also allows nature to thrive."

Some might consider sustainable foraging to mean very limited quantities and locations. Others might say we've been foraging in Minnesota for 100 years and haven't seen any species being affected. If not detrimental, why do we need rules and regs? "Don't make rules – we've been doing it and doing fine". Finding that balance.

Interview findings: Important Actions for Consideration (4 of 4)

- Defining **key terms** (e.g. sustainable foraging, boundary of personal use)
- Clarify how **different rules apply to different lands**
- Determine when a **permit** is needed
- Explore **certification or education programs** (model from other outdoor recreation programs)
- Explore potential **ripple effects** of expanded foraging (good and bad)
- Consider **whether different rules, rights or restrictions** apply to different groups/foraging purposes (e.g., tribal or non-tribal members, food or medicine)
- Consider development of **standard criteria that would trigger limits on foraging**
- Recognize that we are **not going to solve all of the issues** across the landscape... and what we come up with may be **the best for now**, but not appropriate in 5 years

Recommendation categories

- Confirm foraging scope
- Define personal use
- Determine when a foraging permit is needed
- Modify the different rules that apply to state lands
- Collect data to improve understanding of foraging impacts
- Foraging invasive species
- Education, training, and outreach
- Establish regular review cycle of foraging statutes and rules

- What are your reactions to the draft recommendation categories?
- What statements (bullet points) within each category do you **support** or **not support** and why?

- Where does the task force have the **most consensus** on recommendations?
- Where does the task force **lack consensus**? What areas have the greatest tension?
- Where must the task force **focus future discussions**?

Building consensus

If your vote is a fist, one, or two, be ready to 1) explain your concern, and 2) suggest changes that would get you up to a three WITHOUT losing the supportive votes of others.



I do NOT support this recommendation.

I see MAJOR issues we need to resolve now.

I see MINOR issues we need to resolve now.

I see minor issues we can resolve later.

I'm fine with this as it is.

I love this! I will champion it.

Lack of Consensus

Consensus

Next steps

- Listening session schedule
 - Wednesday 12/3, 11:30am-1pm, online.
 - Thursday 12/11, 6:30pm-8pm, online.
- MIAC meeting tomorrow
- Next meeting (12/16):
 - Please come prepared with refined and written ideas for recommendations
 - Ideas emailed to staff by Monday 12/8 will be incorporated into meeting materials

- Welcome! Please introduce yourself:
 - Name
 - Location/region
 - Group/organization/community you represent (if applicable)
- Ground rules
 - Limit comments to 2 minutes (additional information in writing is welcome)
 - Respect and appreciate diversity of thought
 - Focus on ideas, not people
 - If you disagree, disagree respectfully
- Reminder: this meeting is open to the public, livestreamed and being recorded

Adjourn

- Adjourn

Thank you