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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FOURTH SESSION

H. F. No. 819

02/17/2025 Authored by Schultz, Heintzeman, Schomacker, Nelson, Skraba and others
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to natural resources; establishing the Minnesota Sustainable Foraging Task
1.3 Force; providing appointments; requiring a report.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. MINNESOTA SUSTAINABLE FORAGING TASK FORCE.

1.6 Subdivision 1. Establishment. The commissioner of natural resources must establish
1.7 the Minnesota Sustainable Foraging Task Force to develop scientifically sound, data-driven
1.8 recommendations for foraging regulations on state lands that balance the need for ecological
1.9 sustainability with the right of Minnesotans to enjoy the state's bountiful natural resources
1.10 through foraging.

1.11 Subd. 2. Membership. (a) The commissioner must establish the task force by September
1.12 1, 2025, which must include:

1.13 (1) two members of the senate committee with jurisdiction over natural resources policy,
1.14 one appointed by the majority leader of the senate and one appointed by the minority leader
1.15 of the senate;

1.16 (2) two members of the house of representatives committee with jurisdiction over natural
1.17 resources policy, one appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives and one
1.18 appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives; and

1.19 (3) the following 13 members appointed by the commissioner of natural resources:

1.20 (i) two scientists with expertise in botany, ecology, and environmental science from
1.21 Minnesota universities;

2.1 (ii) a representative of the Department of Natural Resources involved with managing
2.2 state parks and other public lands;

2.3 (iii) two representatives of Indigenous communities with knowledge of traditional
2.4 foraging practices;

2.5 (iv) two experts in food safety and public health;

2.6 (v) one representative from the Minnesota Mycological Society;

2.7 (vi) one representative from the Minnesota Foraging Alliance;

2.8 (vii) one representative from a foraging advocacy group that represents one or more
2.9 underrepresented cultural groups;

2.10 (viii) one representative from a small business teaching sustainable foraging practices;

2.11 (ix) one representative from a conservation organization; and

2.12 (x) one representative of an academic institution that conducts research on local
2.13 ecosystems, species recovery, and sustainable harvesting.

2.14 (b) A member appointed under paragraph (a) may not be a registered lobbyist.

2.15 Subd. 3. **Duties.** The task force must:

2.16 (1) gather and review data on the impact of foraging on species resilience, ecosystem
2.17 health, and other aspects of Minnesota's diverse biomes;

2.18 (2) review existing regulations governing foraging activities on state lands;

2.19 (3) develop recommendations for science-based, data-driven foraging guidelines for
2.20 state lands that balance public access with conservation needs, setting limits on foraging
2.21 activities only where supported by data. The recommendations must be in the form of draft
2.22 statutory or rule language and must be consistent with Indigenous and other cultural practices
2.23 and traditions;

2.24 (4) develop educational materials and recommendations for increasing public
2.25 understanding of sustainable foraging practices that include safety and ecological
2.26 considerations;

2.27 (5) solicit public input, when appropriate; and

2.28 (6) develop a permitting model that would include an option to pay for foraging permits
2.29 through volunteerism instead of through payment of a monetary fee.

3.1 Subd. 4. **Administration.** At its initial meeting, the task force must adopt a process for
3.2 rotating the chair at each meeting. The task force must meet at least monthly, and the
3.3 Department of Natural Resources must serve as staff to the task force.

3.4 Subd. 5. **Legislative recommendations; expiration.** No later than December 1, 2026,
3.5 the task force must submit a written report containing its findings and recommendations to
3.6 the commissioner of natural resources and to the chairs and ranking minority members of
3.7 the legislative committees with primary jurisdiction over natural resources policy. The
3.8 recommendations in the report must be specific and actionable. The task force expires
3.9 September 1, 2026, or upon submission of the report required by this subdivision, whichever
3.10 occurs later.