

Senate Fiscal Agency
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SFA**BILL ANALYSIS**

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Senate Bill 160 (as passed by the Senate)
Sponsor: Senator Dave Jaye
Committee: Hunting, Fishing and Forestry

Date Completed: 3-25-99

RATIONALE

Reportedly, Michigan woodlands offer an excellent habitat for wild mushrooms, especially in the spring. Typically, wild mushrooms grow under the cover of leaves, dead wood, and other forest debris, and usually emerge after a moderate or heavy rain. Edible wild mushrooms are collected and prepared as a side dish or used in soups and sauces, while some can be canned and frozen for future use. Currently, wild mushroom picking is prohibited on State land designated as a wilderness area, wild area, or natural area, or on State land proposed to be a designated area. Some people believe that a person should be able to pick a certain amount of wild mushrooms on the designated State lands if it is for personal consumption.

CONTENT

The bill would amend Part 351 (Wilderness and Natural Areas) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to provide that a person could pick, for personal consumption, up to one bushel of wild mushrooms per day on State land in a wilderness area, wild area, or natural area, or on State land proposed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for dedication as a wilderness area, wild area, or natural area.

Under the Act, the following are prohibited on State land in a wilderness area, wild area, or natural area, or on State land proposed to be a dedicated area:

- The removing, cutting, picking, or altering of vegetation, except as necessary for appropriate public access, preservation of a plant or wildlife species, or documentation of scientific values and with written consent. (The bill would create an exception to this prohibition.)
- Exploration for or extraction of minerals.
- A commercial enterprise, utility, or permanent road.
- A temporary road; landing of aircraft; use of motor vehicles, motorboats, or other form of mechanical transport; or any structure or

installation, except as necessary to meet minimum emergency requirements for administration as a wilderness area, wild area, or natural area by the DNR.

- Motorized equipment, except if the DNR approves its use for management purposes or conservation practices.

MCL 324.35105

ARGUMENTS

(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)

Supporting Argument

The bill would allow a person to pick reasonable quantities of wild mushrooms per day on designated State lands for personal consumption. One bushel of wild mushrooms per day for each person would not destroy the land or disrupt the natural habitat. Mushroom picking actually would help in the distribution of spores that produce more mushrooms in the area.

In addition, according to the Michigan Mushroom Hunter's Club, the hunting of the edible morel mushroom continues to be a significant tourist attraction in Michigan. The bill would allow people to enjoy and appreciate the natural beauty of more of the State lands while engaging in an outdoor leisure activity.

Opposing Argument

State land designated by the DNR as a wilderness area, wild area, or natural area, or State land proposed to be a designated area has been specially set aside for specific purposes. An exception to pick mushrooms in these designated areas could lead to an exception to perform other currently prohibited activities in the areas. According to the DNR, a person can currently pick wild mushrooms from all 7 million acres of State land except for the 43,000 acres of designated areas or areas proposed to be

designated areas.

Legislative Analyst: N. Nagata

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: G. Cutler

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.