

Singing Nettle Forest Stewards (SNFS)

2026 - 2027 Policies

SNFS Policies Agreement

Welcome & Background: Welcome! We are delighted that you/your child(ren) are enrolled in Singing Nettle Forest Stewards (SNFS) learning programs! We offer a wide array of learning, skill development, support and nurturing programs focused on the outdoors, wild and natural plant/animal identification, uses and abundance, language, sounds and communications, music and musical instruments and hands-on experiences for your homeschooled, online, at-home student!

Singing Nettle Forest Stewards, also referred to as SNFS, is organized as a not for profit (non-profit) organization and was granted tax-exempt status (July 2024). A copy of its current tax-exempt status letter from the US Treasury/IRS is posted on its website at <https://singingnettle.org>, and at its learning site located at 6922 – 55th St North, Suite C, Oakdale MN 55128. The business address is registered with the MN Secretary of State office, and is also available upon request by US mail addressed to its business address or by email to:

thistlebearhoneyherbsllc@gmail.com. Singing Nettle Forest Stewards is also registered as a Minnesota nonprofit corporation with the Minnesota Secretary of State offices; you can view its registration status online at the Minnesota Secretary of State's website tool for business look up/search. SNFS' program director is Christine Shoemaker. SNFS learning guides are Christine Shoemaker ("Mrs Christine" for students, also known as "stewards") and Debra Shoemaker ("Mrs. Debra" for students and stewards). SNFS also arranges for guest speakers/guides, mentors, and volunteers, from time to time, to assist with learning programs and activities and enhance learning opportunities for stewards. Mrs Christine is a certified Forest School Director and Teacher through the Forest School Teacher Institute, certified as a Forest Therapy guide, certified in Wilderness First Aid/Survival/CPR/AED, is a certified mushroom forager in MN and WI, and also is a local private music teacher in piano, flute, and voice technique and music theory. Mrs Christine brings her years of training, skills, talents, and experiences to offer to your child(ren) and their fellow stewards a unique, hands-on and individual experience that is uncommon in traditional classroom and home learning settings. More detail about SNFS curriculum and learning programs is available from SNFS director and learning guides. More detail about SNFS is also available on its website listed above. SNFS, its directors, and learning guides strive to bring unique learning opportunities and experiences to your child(ren) and fellow stewards in smaller group settings than offered through traditional learning settings. **To allow this to occur, SNFS needs each enrolled child(ren)'s parent and guardian to agree and commit to upholding and following the policies of SNFS, by initialing each policy statement below and signing this SNFS Policies Agreement.**

____/ ____ (initial) **Participation and Engagement:**

It is expected and required that parent(s) and guardian(s) of child(ren) enrolled in SNFS engage and support SNFS and its learning programs for stewards by ensuring that your enrolled child(ren): (a) regularly attend their enrolled SNFS learning program, for the days/times and program year/period listed on their SNFS enrollment form, (b) notify SNFS program director, Christine Shoemaker, or a learning guide if your child(ren) will be late or absent on their regularly scheduled learning program date (so that they may plan the day's activities accordingly), (c) bring a bag lunch, filled water bottle or canteen, optional snacks, spiral notebook with #2 pencil, and wear closed-toe shoes appropriate for outdoor hiking each day while attending SNFS learning programs and field trips, (d) bring jacket with hood or hooded sweatshirt each day attending SNFS learning programs and field trips when temperatures drop below 60 degrees or rain showers are expected, and (e) wear warm outerwear (such as ski or snow jacket), insulated boots, hat, gloves/mittens and optional scarf, when temperatures drop below 40 degrees.

It is also important that parent(s) and guardian(s) of child(ren) enrolled in SNFS individually engage and support SNFS and its learning programs for stewards by each parent(s) and guardian(s) agreeing to: (a) share the cost of operating the SNFS learning programs amongst other parents/guardians through timely payment of tuition fees,

supplies/materials fees, and field trip fees by the due date stated on the applicable enrollment form, field trip/travel form and supplies/materials form, (b) review, complete, and sign all SNFS required forms, agreements and documents including, but not limited to, this SNFS Policies Agreement, SNFS Acknowledgement, Release & Hold Harmless Agreement, Photo/Name/Contact Info Consent & Release Form, and Field Trip/Travel, Explore Day Consent & Release Form, (c) provide my/our family's primary mobile phone (cell) number - on the SNFS enrollment form - to receive text messages from SNFS and its director and learning guides about emergency closures and cancellations, (d) regularly review email, primary mobile (cell) phone text messages, and other communications from SNFS, its director and learning guides to stay up-to-date and informed about important announcements, weekly activities, upcoming events, and any emergency closures and cancellations, and (e) regularly review and assist my/our child(ren) with assigned homework, research or other projects, as requested by SNFS learning guides. I/we also agree to notify SNFS and its program director, Christine Shoemaker, of any changes to our enrolled child(ren)'s and family's home address, phone number, family's primary mobile phone (cell) number for emergency closures and cancellations, email address and any changes or updates to the medical information, allergies, medicines, emergency contacts etc. listed on the SNFS enrollment form and Field Trip/Travel, Explore Day Consent & Release Form.

____/ ____ (initial) **Payments, Cancellation, Refunds:**

I/we agree to make timely payment of all tuition, supplies/materials fees, and field trip fees by the due date stated in the applicable enrollment form, supplies/materials fees form, and field trip form. I/we understand that such fees must be timely paid and paid in full to ensure success and continuity of SNFS and its learning programs. I/we understand and agree that tuition payment is due, and no refunds will be made, if your child(tuhren) are tardy or absent on a regularly scheduled learning program day including absences due to illness, injury, or other unforeseen circumstances unless your absence date is listed on your Summer Session enrollment form.

In the event, closure, or cancellation by SNFS of a scheduled SNFS learning program date(s) or field trip date is needed due to weather, building/site closure or maintenance, illness/injury of all learning guides (without substitution of another guide/learning mentor) or other unforeseen circumstances, SNFS and its program director will take all reasonable steps to reschedule any missed learning program date(s) or field trip dates in coordination with parents/guardians schedules (i.e., make-up dates). If acceptable make-up dates cannot be found in connection with SNFS' cancellation of scheduled program or field trip date(s), SNFS will offset and reduce tuition fees for the next learning session's billing cycle accordingly and if none, SNFS will provide a refund of applicable paid fees.

____/ ____ (initial) **Sickness/Illness of SNFS Stewards and Volunteers:**

Each parent/guardian of SNFS stewards and volunteers is expected to assess if your child(ren) and volunteer is ill/sick or unable to participate in SNFS learning programs, activities, and field trips. For the safety and health of SNFS' director, learning guides, fellow SNFS stewards and volunteers, I/we agree to the following:

- (a) I/we will pick up our child(ren) and our volunteer at the SNFS onsite learning facility or designated field trip location if our child(ren) or our volunteer exhibits a fever, watery eyes associated with pink eye, vomiting, difficulty breathing, dizziness, diarrhea, or complains of headache or stomach pain.
- (b) I/we will keep home and not drop off/leave at SNFS learning sites and field trips any of my/our child(ren) that exhibit or are diagnosed with any of the following: feeling sick, fever (without the use of fever-reducing medications), cold or flu symptoms, pink eye, head lice, coughing spells (unrelated to seasonal allergies), sneezing spells, running nose, difficulty breathing, vomiting or diarrhea that has not stopped for 24 continuous hours, contagious disease or infection (including, but not limited to, whooping cough/pertussis, chickenpox, or measles/rubeola) or Covid symptoms as indicated by US Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) current published guidance.
- (c) If your child or your volunteer has been diagnosed or exposed to Covid, I/will keep home and not drop off/leave at SNFS learning sites and field trips such child or volunteer for the next 5 days after such diagnosis or exposure, and in all cases, will keep home and not drop off/leave at SNFS site and field trips until such child's/volunteer's symptoms get better and such child/volunteer is fever-free (without fever-reducing medications) for at least 24 hours.

____/ ____ (initial) **Conduct/Expectation of SNFS Stewards, Volunteers, Chaperones, Field Trip Attendees:**

SNFS and its director and learning guides support and strive for a positive, engaging, and safe learning environment and experience for all SNFS stewards which encourages both personal and social growth and development, engagement, curiosity, cooperation and creativity, and fosters lifelong abilities. To assist SNFS, its director and learning guides and fellow stewards in achieving these expectations, each SNFS steward, volunteer, chaperone, and field trip attendee is expected to contribute towards a safe, respectful, and positive experience for fellow stewards and attendees at SNFS learning programs, activities, and field trips. SNFS asks each parent and guardian to review the following conduct/expectations with their child(ren), family member volunteers, chaperones and field trip attendees enrolled in or attending SNFS learning programs, activities, field trips and events to ensure that the following conduct/expectations are understood and upheld. SNFS learning guides will also review the following conduct/expectations with stewards during the start of each program year/semester and periodically as they deem appropriate.

- (a) Arrive on time for your registered learning program and field trip date.
- (b) Bring lunch, optional snack, and filled water bottle. Wear closed-toe hiking-style shoes or boots.
- (c) Prepare and bring assignments and homework as requested by learning guide.
- (d) Dress appropriate for weather (see Participation and Engagement section above).
- (e) Engage and contribute toward learning program activities. Cooperate with others and learning guide requests. Be a good listener while others are talking or completing a task, and have patience with the learning needs of others.
- (f) Be ready to learn, explore, and engage with fellow stewards and learning guides. Questions are encouraged. If you have questions about homework, assignments, or experiences, ask the learning guides for help.
- (g) Engage in respectful behavior towards fellow SNFS stewards, learning guides, chaperones, volunteers, guest speakers/guides and attendees. Respect all SNFS property, onsite learning facilities and personal property of fellow stewards and learning guides.
- (h) Contribute towards a safe and respectful learning environment for everyone. If you ever feel unsafe, threatened, or notice an unsafe event or situation, reach out immediately to the SNFS director or learning guide. Never allow an unsafe event or situation to start or continue. Also, report the event or situation to your parent and guardian for further follow up.
- (i) Disruptive behavior and physical/verbal threats or violence towards fellow stewards or learning guides is not tolerated and will be grounds for removal from class and/or SNFS learning programs.
- (j) Do not bring pets or live animals to SNFS learning programs and events, except as permitted in writing by SNFS' director and learning guides.
- (k) Do not bring treats, candies, snacks, and other foods (including your own lunch/snack items) to share with fellow stewards unless your parent has obtained permission from the SNFS program director and each parent/guardian. Important: Fellow stewards may have food, ingredient and color dyes allergies.
- (l) While onsite at SNFS program learning center, stewards must remain in designated areas and not enter other businesses unrelated to SNFS. SNFS program director and learning guides will show each SNFS steward the onsite learning center's designated area as well as "off limit" areas. SNFS stewards agree to not enter "off limit" areas at any time.

____/ ____ (initial) **Conduct/Expectation of Parents/Guardians of SNFS Stewards:**

SNFS asks each parent and guardian to review the following conduct/expectations and agree to uphold them:

- (a) Review the above Conduct/Expectation SNFS Stewards, Volunteers, Chaperones, Field Trip Attendees with my/our child(ren) and family who are SNFS stewards, volunteers, chaperones, and field trip attendees to ensure they understand and uphold the stated conduct/expectations.
- (b) Provide constructive feedback and input to SNFS program director and learning guides. Timely respond to inquiries and requests from SNFS program directors and learning guides.

- (c) Engage in respectful behavior with SNFS program directors, learning guides, SNFS stewards, fellow parents/guardians of SNFS stewards, volunteers, chaperones, guest speakers, and field trip attendees.
- (d) Support and assist your SNFS steward in reviewing and completing homework and assignments as requested by SNFS learning guides.
- (e) Ensure your child(ren) arrive on time for their registered SNFS learning program and field trip.
- (f) Do not use, disseminate, or share names and contact lists of fellow SNFS stewards, families, parents and guardians without written permission of SNFS program director and each parent/guardian.
- (g) Do not photograph, post (including via social media sites) or publish images or photos of SNFS stewards without the written permission of SNFS program director and each parent/guardian.
- (h) Volunteer your time and talents as you are able! We all learn from each other!

____/____ (initial) **Presence of Active, Live Bees & Bee Hives:**

I/we acknowledge and consent to (a) the presence of active, live bees, and bee hives located at/near SNFS onsite learning program and other sites visited from time to time, and (b) learning about bee activity and beekeeping by my/our child(ren), field trip attendees, chaperones, and volunteers. I/we acknowledge and agree that the presence of active, live bees, and learning about beekeeping poses risk of bee stings to my/our child(ren), field trip attendees, chaperones, and volunteers. If my/our child(ren), field trip attendees, chaperones, volunteers are allergic to bees or bee stings, I/we have made disclosure of such allergy and allergic reactions below:

Child #1: _____
(print name and allergy/reaction)

Child #2: _____
(print name and allergy/reaction)

Child #3: _____
(print name and allergy/reaction)

Child #4: _____
(print name and allergy/reaction)

Family/Volunteer: _____
(print name and allergy/reaction)

Family/Volunteer: _____
(print name and allergy/reaction)

I/we acknowledge and agree that I/we have read the entirety of this SNFS 2026-2027 Policies and Policies Agreement and understand its terms and conditions. By signing below, I/we acknowledge and agree that I am/we are legally authorized to sign this form and are the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of my/our child(ren) enrolled in SNFS learning programs or family volunteers attending SNFS learning programs, activities and field trips.

_____, _____ / __/20__
Print Name: Parent or Legal Guardian (circle which applies), and Add Your Signature Date

_____, _____ / __/20__
Print Name: Parent or Legal Guardian (circle which applies), and Add Your Signature Date