POLLINATORS FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

Crystal Boyd
Pollinator Coordinator
Minnesota Biological Survey
Division of Ecological and Water Resources
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Pollinators support Minnesota's ecosystems and economy. They pollinate one out of every three bites of our food. Pollinators also provide food and habitat for wildlife, sustain plants that improve water quality, prevent soil erosion, store carbon, and provide color to our landscape.

Charismatic insects such as honey bees, monarch butterflies, and bumble bees often capture the public's imagination. These pollinators, and many more, face a series of challenges; habitat loss, pesticides, climate change, pathogens, and parasites can all impact pollinator populations.

Local officials and planners can address pollinator conservation in their Comprehensive Planning Process through the following suggested actions:

- **Protect natural areas.** Encourage active management of existing natural areas, including removal of invasive species. Collaborate with local natural resource managers to include best management practices for pollinators in their work.
- **Restore and enhance pollinator habitat.** Designate areas to preserve as green space. Plant local, native wildflowers and blooming trees and shrubs. Consider converting lawns and marginal areas to pollinator habitat. Use the MN Board of Water and Soil Resources' Pollinator Toolbox to learn more about pollinator habitat. Local, native plants can be found through the DNR's list of Native Plant Suppliers and Landscapers.
- **Connect natural areas.** Plan for and create "green infrastructure" that connects pollinator habitats. These corridors help pollinators to disperse and find resources such as pollen, nectar, and nesting habitat.
- **Promote** Integrated Pest Management (IPM) **and** Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM)**.** Combine monitoring of unwanted insects or weeds with diverse control methods, such as manual removal or biological control. Delay using pesticides until other strategies have proven insufficient.
- **Support pollinator research and long-term monitoring.** Work with researchers to track the results of pollinator efforts. Engage researchers early in the process so they can compare data from before and after the pollinator-related changes take place.
- **Educate the public about native and managed pollinators.** Provide accurate information about pollinators through newsletters and community events. Find out more about Minnesota's native pollinators from the DNR. Consider engaging with the Bee Squad from the University of Minnesota to learn about honey bees. The local non-profit Pollinate Minnesota identifies Pollinator Friendly Cities and suggests pollinator-friendly ideas for local Resolutions. The City of Maplewood is a great local example of a pollinator-friendly community with habitat preservation, participation in public education programs, and bee monitoring.