Minnesota Pollinator Action Framework (DRAFT)

Interagency Pollinator Protection Team

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Purpose

The purpose of the Minnesota Pollinator Action Framework is to guide the strategic alignment of resources, policies, and programs to help Minnesota's pollinators. The Interagency Pollinator Protection Team shares this first draft to promote conversations about ways to advance pollinator protection in the state.

Developing the draft

To develop this first draft, we sought input from the public through an engagement platform where individuals and organizations shared their ideas for action with us. Additionally, we sought input from subject-matter experts who provided feedback on our draft ideas and offered new ones.

To gather more diverse perspectives and comprehensive expertise on pollinator protection, we will host a second round of public engagement in early 2023. This process will inform the final Minnesota Pollinator Action Framework, which we expect to release by the summer of 2023.

Understanding the draft

This draft is organized by the pollinator protection goals outlined in the Executive Order 19-28, and the desired outcome of healthy, diverse pollinator populations that sustain and enhance Minnesota's environment, economy, and way of life. Each goal is divided into categories and subcategories describing the intention of specific actions.

Additional information about each action includes noting those that state agencies can **lead** by taking administrative action, actions the state Legislature can **enact** by writing laws and allocating funds, and actions the state can **encourage** individuals, communities, and organizations to do. Some actions expand on existing efforts, while other actions could require the creation of new policies, programs, or grants. Many actions will require collaboration, partnership and initiative beyond state government.

Goal 1. Lands throughout Minnesota support healthy, diverse, and abundant pollinator populations

Category	Subcategory	Action	Lead	Enact	Encourage
1.1. Intentional land stewardship	1.1.1. Protect pollinator habitat	Work with public land managers, private landowners and land stewards to identify and protect existing pollinator habitat	X		X
		Expand and improve compensation rates for DNR's Prairie Bank Program	X	X	
	1.1.2. Restore and create pollinator habitat	Work with public land managers and land stewards to promote the installation of pollinator habitat in rights-of-way		X	X
		Expand beneficial reuse at state-managed Closed Landfill Program sites to facilitate pollinator habitat creation	X	X	
		Promote opportunities to partner with the MPCA Closed Landfill Program to install pollinator habitat on closed landfill sites	X		
		Engage public land managers to convert lawn or unused spaces and new developments to pollinator habitat (e.g., expanding the capacity of the Lawns to Legumes Program to include public lands)	X	X	X
		Support and expand existing programs that provide incentives for farmers that implement pollinator-friendly farming practices (e.g., no till, cover crops, prairie strips, etc.)	X	X	
		Provide incentives to private landowners and land stewards to install pollinator habitat	X	X	X
		Create a program to incentivize the installation of a certain percentage of pollinator-friendly landscaping in new developments	X	X	
		Engage residents in establishing habitat areas of current lawn, unused spaces and new developments (e.g., provide rebates for pollinator garden installations)	X		X

Category	Subcategory	Action	Lead	Enact	Encourage
	1.1.3. Enhance the quality of existing pollinator habitat	Prioritize the use of native plants in state-managed landscapes	X		X
		Prioritize the use of non-chemical habitat management tools in state-managed landscapes	X		X
		Promote the use of farming and other land management practices that provide multiple benefits to soil, water and wildlife	X		X
		Encourage farmer-to-farmer workshops focused on incorporating and protecting pollinator habitat in agricultural lands			X
1.2. Strategic policy and programs to protect, restore, create, and enhance pollinator habitat	1.2.1. Develop policy and programs to increase native plant supply	Create a state native seed program with an emphasis on early season species	X	X	
		Update the state seed mixes and related guidance with an emphasis on pollinator benefits	X		
		Collaborate with and support seed and native plant vendors and other partners to increase the production of plant species important to pollinators (including trees and shrubs)	X		X
		Provide funding to diversify seed mixes used in private land restorations		X	
	1.2.2. Design strategies to support pollinator habitat	Develop guidance about integrated habitat management approaches in public and private lands			X
		Develop a strategy to increase connectivity of habitat in highly fragmented landscapes	X		X
		Create a certification program for pollinator-friendly landscaping available to landscape and gardening companies	X		X

Category	Subcategory	Action	Lead	Enact	Encourage
		Develop state regulations to increase habitat protections for rare, threatened, and endangered pollinators (e.g., remnant prairie protections)	X	X	
		Develop technical assistance and resources to increase pollinator habitat to support pollination from native pollinator species	X	X	X
1.3. Comprehensive research and data collection related to pollinator habitat	1.3.1. Understand pollinator habitat needs	Understand how habitat management practices affect pollinator populations	X		X
		Support the development of resources to guide strategic prioritization of habitat conservation efforts	X		X
		Increase capacity to evaluate the quality and success of habitat conservation projects		X	X
		Identify low diversity areas on state lands that would be good candidates for restoration or enhancement (e.g., brome fields)	X	X	

Goal 2. Minnesotans use pesticides judiciously and only when necessary, to reduce harm to pollinators from pesticides while retaining economic strength

Category	Subcategory	Action	Lead	Enact	Encourage
2.1. Judicious use of pesticides	2.1.1. Support integrated pest management (IPM) on agricultural and non-agricultural lands	Develop IPM programs for crops and non-agricultural systems where they do not yet exist			X
		Develop and collect standardized methods to evaluate and analyze the adoption of IPM on Minnesota farms and in non-agricultural systems			X
		Continue to fund projects that include implementation of or research on IPM		X	X
		Continue to strengthen compliance assistance for pollinator and IPM language on pesticide labels	X		X
	2.1.2. Promote IPM on agricultural and non-agricultural lands	Increase IPM education for all pesticide users	X		X
		Create and distribute signage about the use of IPM and reducing risks to pollinators for different settings	X		X
	2.1.1. Support IPM in managed pollinator colonies	Continue to fund projects that include research on or implementation of IPM		X	X
		Continue to strengthen support compliance assistance for legal pesticide use			X
		Promote the use of existing IPM programs			X
		Provide education on IPM for pollinator colony health			X
2.2. Robust protections	2.2.1. Support or develop strategic policy and programs	Determine what it would take to list pesticide ingredients used on treated seeds on the seed label		X	X
		Reinstate the funding for the "Pollinator Research Account"		X	

Category	Subcategory	Action	Lead	Enact	Encourage
	2.2.2. Reduce off target movement of pesticides	Increase promotion of mitigation strategies to reduce pesticide movement off-site	X		X
		Expand promotion of existing BMPs for using and disposing of treated seed	X		X
	2.2.4. Report pesticide misuse	Increase awareness about pesticide misuse reporting	X		X
		Strengthen capacity to investigate pesticide misuse reports		X	
2.3 Focused research	2.3.1. Understand pesticide exposures in the environment	Monitor pesticides in soil and pollinator friendly plants in natural landscapes			X
		Collect data on how and where pesticide-treated seed is being disposed of in Minnesota	X	X	X
		Evaluate methods to reduce abraded dust from planting of pesticide treated seed			X
		Collect data on how the restriction of the use and sale of neonicotinoid insecticides to licensed applicators has impacted pollinators in other states	X		X
	2.3.2. Study the effects of pesticides and pesticide inert ingredients on pollinators and their habitat	Conduct native pollinator species pesticide toxicity studies following EPA guidelines that can be used in risk analyses			X
		Conduct studies on the effects of pesticide inert ingredients on pollinators following EPA guidelines that can be used in risk analyses			X
		Conduct studies on how pesticides interact with each other and other stressors to affect pollinator health following EPA guidelines that can be used in risk analyses			X
		Create new or update outdated thresholds for common pests in Minnesota			X

Category	Subcategory	Action	Lead	Enact	Encourage
		Research and document obstacles pest managers face to adopt IPM and what factors lead to increased adoption			X

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Goal 3. Minnesotans understand, value, and actively support pollinators

Category	Subcategory	Action	Lead	Enact	Encourage
3.1. Strong partnership and relationship building	3.1.1. Build intentional relationships with individuals and organizations for pollinator protection	Connect with communities that have adopted pollinator-friendly resolutions to learn from their experiences and strategize ways to engage cities that have not participated	X		X
		Strengthen relationships with Tribal Nations to work on environmental issues related to pollinators	X		
		Strengthen relationships with non-profit and for-profit organizations that work to protect pollinators	X		
		Create a communications plan to reach out to organizations (companies, associations, etc.) and create interest in pollinator protection	X		
	3.1.3. Build strategic partnerships to advance pollinator protection goals	Collaborate with GreenStep Cities program to increase education and promotion of pollinator-friendly practices	X		
		Collaborate with stores that sell retail pesticides and flowering plants to include information and resources about how to protect pollinators and their habitat	X		X
		Create a process with Tribal Nations to work together on pollinator protection	X		
		Collaborate with the Minnesota Science Teacher's Association to promote pollinator educational resources for use in K-12 classrooms	X		X
3.2. Diverse and inclusive public participation	3.2.1. Increase participation in decision-making	Provide different mechanisms for members of the public to provide public comment in decision-making processes			

Category	Subcategory	Action	Lead	Enact	Encourage
	3.2.2. Increase participation in initiatives and programs	Assess which communities have not been involved in pollinator protection actions, reach out to them, and learn how to align this subject with their community priorities	X		X
3.3. Informed communities	3.3.1. Effective public access to information	Improve accessibility of pollinator protection resources	X		X
	3.3.2. Increase public awareness about pollinator needs and ways to help them	Leverage Pollinator Week to raise awareness about pollinator protection through different strategies: pollinator costume contest, pollinator garden sign design contest, webinar series with pollinator experts, etc.	X		X
		Promote pollinator-related apps (i.e., Bumble Bee Watch, iNaturalist) at community events			X
		Promote pollinator protection actions at the State Fair	X		X
		Provide clear information about how to create and improve pollinator habitat	X		X
		Provide information about the benefits to wildlife of using native vs non-native plants			
		Increase visibility of bee friendly lawn alternatives (e.g. media campaign that shows what pollinator habitat looks like)	X		X
		Review local ordinances and coordinate with municipalities to make those ordinances compatible with adopting pollinator friendly landscaping			X
3.4. Sustained education and training	3.4.1. Strengthen programs with pollinator protection resources and information	Develop an interagency communications plan to promote pollinator resources and programs	X		
		Include pollinator-related education and resources in current agency-led programs where appropriate (e.g., as done in Ag in the Classroom)	X		

Category	Subcategory	Action	Lead	Enact	Encourage
		Develop programming in partnership with youth organizations like Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, YMCA, etc. to educate and facilitate pollinator projects and participation in pollinator-related community science projects.			
	3.4.2. Make pollinator protection educational resources readily available for the public	Create a hub of pollinator-related curriculum/materials that makes it easy for educators to incorporate in their programs	X		
		Encourage members of the Master Gardener's program to be a resource for schools that want to install pollinator habitat	X		X
		Work with SWCDs to increase pollinator guidance and resources	X		
		Increase the availability of technical expertise to assist land owners, land stewards, and land managers in creating and managing pollinator habitat	X		X

Desired outcome. Healthy, diverse pollinator populations that sustain and enhance Minnesota's environment, economy, and way of life

Category	Subcategory	Action	Lead	Enact	Encourage
4.1. Informed decision-making	4.1.1. Long-term monitoring	Secure permanent funding to inventory and monitor pollinators	X	X	
		Explore and promote monitoring techniques that don't require lethal captures	X		X
	4.1.2. Generate new information and create a framework for sharing information	Create a group to develop a pollinator-specific research priority list and identify funding streams	X		X
		Develop a framework to facilitate collaboration, data and information sharing about pollinators between organizations	X		X
		Research risk of environmental pollutants (e.g., salts and heavy metals) on pollinators			X
4.2 Strategic protections	4.2.1. Develop effective policy to protect at-risk pollinator species	Include a question on the Environmental Assessment Worksheet form that provides information about potential reductions in pollinator habitat and identifies proposed mitigation that will offset those reductions	X		
		Increase capacity for state listing at-risk species (including staffing, taxonomic expertise, and data gathering)	X	X	
	4.2.2. Protect pollinators from diseases and parasites	Develop a model local ordinance for hobby beekeeping addressing managed pollinators' health concerns			X
		Raise awareness and provide guidance to protect managed pollinator health from diseases and parasites due to interstate managed pollinator transport			X
		Raise awareness of BMPs for commercial bumble bee colonies to address risk of disease spread to wild bees	X		X

Category	Subcategory	Action	Lead	Enact	Encourage
4.3. Long-term planning	4.3.1. Improve interagency coordination	Align state agencies' policies, practices and procedures to effectively protect pollinators and reduce inconsistencies	X		
		Create and maintain an inventory of ongoing pollinator protection programs and initiatives	X		
		Synergize strategies and priorities that benefit pollinators with the Climate Action Framework	X		
	4.3.2. Improve intra-agency coordination	Clarify internal pollinator policies and streamline their implementation across agency actions.	X		
		Update state policies in light of new information	X		
	4.3.3. Improve coordination with non-agency organizations	Create a coalition of pollinator conservation stakeholders to increase collaboration, resources and capacity for statewide implementation of pollinator priority actions		X	X