

2018 Pollinator Protection Efforts in Dane County



Progress Report

The Dane County Environmental Council is charged with guiding the implementation of the report recommendations produced by the Dane County Pollinator Protection Task Force. The Council developed a workgroup made up of four members of the Council plus its staff member to proceed with yearly planning and undertaking the implementation. This workgroup meets after Environmental Council meetings and holds additional meetings as needed. The group developed an implementation plan for 2018 that focused on the first two goals of the PP plan. The county has funded these efforts.

The goals that were focused on are:

1. Expand education and outreach efforts
2. Maximize pollinator-friendly land use and management

In 2018 the following was accomplished:

- Reviewed the Pollinator Protection Plan and developed a 2018 work plan
- Worked with nine local non-profit organizations to **plan, design, and install pollinator educational gardens** in both rural and urban public spaces. Gardens are being established at: Centro Hispano, Bock Community Garden, a part of Pheasant Branch Conservancy in Middleton, Anderson County Park, Silverwood County Park, Schumacher Farm Park, Village of Cross Plains – Zander Park,

City of Sun Prairie near public library, Lyman Anderson Conservation Center, and the Lussier Family Heritage Center

Photo of planting pollinator garden at Centro Hispano



- Partnership agreements were developed and signed for long-term maintenance and ongoing educational outreach commitment at each of the gardens. In return the gardens will receive plants, permanent educational outdoor signage (that has been researched and developed to accompany the gardens), plant signage and on-going educational support.
 - Additionally began conversations with the Village of Waunakee, Village of Oregon, Lussier Community Education Center, Friends of Donald Park, Madison City Parks, and the City of Verona regarding pollinator gardens. At this time they were not able to move forward with the project.
- Presented at several **events and workshops** with pollinator focus in Dane County. These included events for Monona Community Center Eco-Action Day, Centro Hispano, Dane County Conservation League, Olbrich Botanical Gardens Butterfly Extravaganza, Nelson Institute Earth Day Conference, and Park Trails Unite Day. The pollinator educational materials and activities were additionally borrow by groups to support additional events including: Garden Expo, Dane County Bee Keepers Association, Madison Friends of Urban Nature Bird and Nature Festival, Winterland Nursery Staff Education, Dane County Time Bank event, Biological Research Outreach Day at Lake Farm Park and the Harvest Moon Festival.



Photo of pollinator education at Olbrich Botanical Garden

- Sponsored and provided educational materials for two workshops on *Pollinator Habitat Planning For Farmers & Landowners* organized by Silverwood County Park



Photo of Rural Landowner Workshop for Pollinator Protection, Silverwood Park

- Developed a photo resource of pollinators, BMPs for pollinators and added these to a resource collection for use in websites and displays, brochures and other educational materials
- Developed and utilized a technical review team (consisting of three members of the Pollinator Protection Task Force, Susan Carpenter, UW Arboretum; David

Liebl, UW Extension and Mindy Habecker, Dane County UW-Extension), the chair of the Madison Pollinator Protection Task Force, Members of the Dane County Beekeepers Association, and UW Specialists in entomology and other related fields (Christy Stewart, Claudio Gratton, Hannah Gaines, and Olivia Bernauer)

- Designed, had peer reviewed and developed the following materials:
 - Permanent outdoor signage (2' x 3' educational interpretive signs) to accompany educational pollinator gardens. Developing signage in both English and Spanish. These signs will be installed beside established pollinator educational gardens in county parks and other public high visibility locations.
 - Developed Table-top artistic display holders for municipal sites, community centers, and public libraries to hold pollinator educational brochures
 - Website information – all new resource materials posted and kept updated on both Environmental Council and Dane County UW-Extension sites
- Drafted a progress report for County Board and presented progress to Dane County Environment, Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee - January 2019 meeting
- Communicated with other Dane County Departments, the following progress was made on pollinator protection by other departments in 2018.

Dane County Regional Airport

- Dane County Regional Airport has incorporated several BMP's from the initial DCPPTF report in 2015. The first step was to engage Airport staff and educate them of the concerns and issues with pollinators and brainstorm ideas where the Airport could implement DCPPTF BMP's.

Education:

- There have been several instances when relocating hives have transitioned through Airport property. Now if there is an issue the Noise Abatement/Environmental Officer is notified and monitors the situation. Local Bee Keepers will be notified if there are any safety issues requiring an expedited relocation process.

Land Use:

- The Prairie Plantings along International Lane (leading in and out of the Airport terminal), have been updated and rejuvenated since the original DCPPTF report in 2015. The area has received several seasons of prescribed burns and spot/spray herbicide treatments to reduce invasive plant species. This has also been coupled with an increased seeding of flowering plants and native grasses.
- There is not a lot of habitat modification that can be done inside the security fence at the Airport. The vegetation height is managed for wildlife mitigation, as directed by the FAA. The seed blend utilized on the airfield is a mix of tall

fescue, to deter grazing by wildfowl. The seed mix has been updated and a short clover species has been included as a recommendation from the DCPPTF 2015 report.

Long Term:

- Dane County Regional Airport will continue to consider DCPPTF's BPM's in future projects, and implement them where applicable. The possibility of an apiary on Airport property is also under consideration.
- Note there are no pesticides used in airport operation areas.

Dane County Public Works, Highway and Transportation

- Public Works is doing a pollinator friendly seed mix for the Westport site and for the landfill site for the borrow pits.
- Highways does not use any chemicals except stump treatment herbicides. No insecticides used

Dane County Land & Water Resources Department.

- Parks Division held pollinator educational events at several of its larger events such as Prairie Moon Festival, Lake Farm Park Biolab Education Day, and Park Trails Unite.
- Parks also uses no insecticide except for emerald ash borer on county land.

Mindy Habecker, Dane County Environmental Council staff

Background Information Pollinator Protection Efforts in Dane County

In Wisconsin, pollinator-dependent crops account for over \$55 million in annual production. These crops include apple, cranberry, cherry, green beans, pickling cucumber and fresh market fruits and vegetables. Honey and beeswax are also important commodities in Wisconsin, accounting for \$3.5 million in annual production.

Many people are concerned about the health and survival of bees, including honey bees, native bumble bees and the hundreds of lesser-known native and wild bees that call Wisconsin home. Bees are threatened by an assortment of factors such as pests, pathogens, pesticides, climate change and a lack of nesting habitat and forage plants.

While honey bee hive counts are not declining globally, high rates of annual colony loss are of concern in the United States and Europe. During the 2014-15 winter season, Wisconsin was among the U.S. states suffering an annual honey bee colony loss greater than 60%.

The Dane County UW-Extension has been leading an effort to develop Pollinator Protection educational materials and outreach. Working in cooperation with the Dane County Environmental Council and the University of Wisconsin staff, Extension has secured funding to be able to develop various educational pieces including a display board, brochure, seed card insert, and youth activities. All the educational materials have been extensively reviewed by peers and University specialists and 10,000 of each piece printed for use at public events.

These materials can also be found at:

https://www.countyofdane.com/commissions/environmentalcouncil/pollinator_protection.aspx

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