

Pollinator & Beneficial Insect Conservation Plans

Each Xerces Society POLLINATOR & BENEFICIAL INSECT CONSERVATION PLAN is a comprehensive blueprint that identifies baseline habitat conditions for pollinators and other beneficial insects on your farm, and offers recommendations that can increase their abundance.

Eligible farmers can apply for financial assistance through the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to receive this service at reduced or no cost. Once the plan is complete, eligible farmers have the option to apply for additional NRCS support to implement the plan's recommendations. Xerces' pollinator and beneficial insect conservation planning services are available whether or not you choose to enroll in NRCS programs.



THE BENEFITS

Restoring pollinator habitat can contribute to a farmer's bottom line by **enhancing crop pollination and yields**. Even if your farm does not rely on pollinators, other beneficial insects may provide important benefits such as natural pest suppression.

Pollinator & Beneficial Insect Conservation Plans identify field-level practices designed to **improve pollinator foraging and nesting habitat**. These practices may include installing hedgerows, wildflower meadows, incorporating beneficial cover crops, and adjusting pesticide practices.



In addition to enhanced crop pollination and pest control, conservation practices can provide additional benefits to farms, including:

- ⇒ **Improved water quality** and **soil health** with native plant buffers.
- ⇒ Replacement of weedy areas with **high quality wildlife habitat**.
- ⇒ **Farm beautification** with wildflower meadows, hedgerows, and other plantings.
- ⇒ Supports **biodiversity conservation standards** for various **farm certification programs**.



WHAT'S INCLUDED






Pollinator & Beneficial Insect Conservation Plans provide recommendations tailored to the individual farm. Conservation plans may include the following elements, based on farmer objectives:

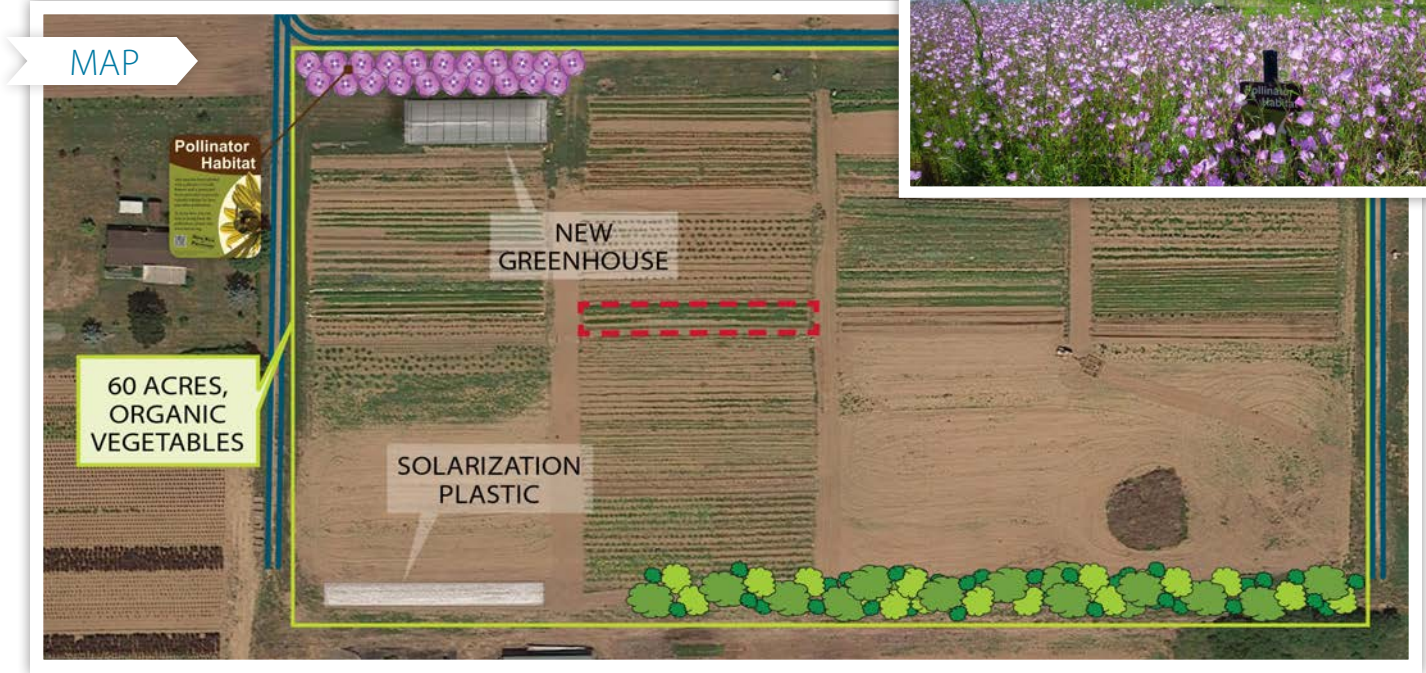
- ⇒ **Assessment** of existing pollinator habitat and opportunities for improvements.
- ⇒ Maps and templates for **pollinator habitat projects**.
- ⇒ **Step-by-step implementation plans** for installing wildflower meadows, cover crops, hedgerows, and more.
- ⇒ **Pesticide risk assessment** and strategies for mitigating pesticide impacts.
- ⇒ Recommendations for **natural pest suppression** and **invasive species control**.



EXAMPLE CONSERVATION PLAN

The following example demonstrates habitat features recommended in a Conservation Plan for a 60-acre organic vegetable farm in Oregon. Solarization was used as a herbicide-free method to successfully establish a wildflower field border with flowers that provide season-long forage. A beetle bank and hedgerow were installed to provide foraging and nesting habitat for native pollinators and beneficial insects.

MAP KEY	
	Plan Boundary
	Hedgerow Hedgerow Planting (NRCS Practice 422) Mulching (NRCS Practice 484) Micro-Irrigation (NRCS Practice 441)
	Farm Roads
	Wildflower Planting Field Border (NRCS Practice 386)
	Beetle Bank Field Border (NRCS Practice 386)



THE PROCESS

To apply for a Plan through the NRCS, please follow the steps below.

1. Contact your local NRCS office to determine if you are eligible for a “Conservation Activity Plan” through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). For more information on the application process—and to find your local office—visit <http://tinyurl.com/nrcs-cap>.
2. Once your application is approved, you may select the Xerces Society as your Technical Service Provider (TSP).
3. After confirming with the NRCS that the Xerces Society is your TSP, please contact our headquarters at (855) 232-6639. Our staff will help you with next steps.

Don't want to apply for NRCS programs? The Xerces Society also works directly with producers. Please contact us at (855) 232-6639 to get started.

