

## Scientist Letter of Support for the Monarch and Pollinator Highway Act of 2021

March 17, 2021

We, the undersigned scientists, are writing today to show our support for the Monarch and Pollinator Highway Act of 2021.

Monarch and Pollinator Highway Act of 2021 would provide \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2028 for grants to benefit pollinators on roadsides and highway rights-of-way, including the planting and seeding of native, locally appropriate grasses and wildflowers, and incorporating the monarch butterfly's host plant, milkweed.

Pollinators are critical to our food supply as well as to the health of ecosystems. A diversity of pollinators are vital for pollination of more than 100 food crops as well as 80% of all wild plants on the planet. A recent study found that pollinators are worth \$34 billion to the US economy.

Wild pollinators such as the monarch butterfly and a number of bumble bee species are in decline, and beekeepers in the United States have reported significant losses of managed European honey bee hives. Studies show that many native wild bee species are at risk of extinction—including over 25% of North American bumble bees. Long term studies from across the United States show that butterflies are in steep decline. Monarch butterfly populations have declined by over 80% in the eastern US and over 99.9% in the western states. The western population of monarchs is on verge of collapse. Recently the US Fish and Wildlife Service found that the monarch butterfly met the criteria for being listed as threatened under the US Endangered Species Act.

With more than 12 million acres of land in roadsides in the US alone, transportation rights-of-way are a significant, yet often overlooked resource for pollinator conservation. Roadsides can benefit pollinators by providing foraging habitat; places to breed, nest, and overwinter; and may act as corridors, linking patches of fragmented habitat. In landscapes that have been highly altered, roadsides are some of the last remaining habitat for pollinators. The good news is that transportation agencies can adjust practices to help pollinators without compromising safety or other primary objectives.

The Monarch and Pollinator Highway Act of 2021 will help state departments of transportation, Native American tribes, and federal land management agencies make roadsides more pollinator friendly.

This bill would provide grants to:

- Promote early successional vegetation and limit disturbance during periods of highest use by target pollinator species;
- Implement integrated vegetation management plans;
- Plant or seed of native, locally appropriate grasses and wildflowers, including milkweed host plants for monarch butterflies, to enhance pollinator habitat; and
- Remove nonnative grasses from planting and seeding mixes, except for use as nurse or cover crops.

Please help bees, monarchs, and other butterflies by supporting the Monarch and Pollinator Highway Act of 2021.

Sincerely,

Amanda Barth, Rare Insect Conservation Coordinator, Utah Department of Natural Resources  
Angela Laws, PhD Endangered Species Conservation Biologist, The Xerces Society  
Bonnie L. Harper-Lore, MS, Restoration Ecologist, Ret. FHWA/USDOT  
Cheryl Schultz, PhD, Professor, Washington State University  
Christine Urbanowicz, PhD in Biology, Geospatial Data Scientist  
Craig Hensley, MS Zoology, Texas Nature Trackers Biologist, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
Cynthia Wright, BS in Education, citizen scientist  
D. Casey Sclar, PhD, Executive Director, American Public Gardens Association  
Danielle Frevola, MSc  
Danielle Lake Diver, Integrated Biosciences Master's Candidate, University of Minnesota - Duluth  
Dennis Paulson, PhD, Director Emeritus, Slater Museum of Natural History  
Diane Tracy, MS, YBCU Ecologist, Southern Sierra Research Station Southern Sierra  
Dr. Collin Edwards, PhD, Postdoctoral research associate at Tufts University  
Dr. David W. Inouye, PhD, Professor Emeritus, University of Maryland  
Dr. Patti Wohner, PhD, research associate, Oregon State University  
Emilie Snell-Rood, PhD, Associate Professor, Dept. Ecology, Evolution and Behavior, University of Minnesota  
Emily A Carlson, Graduate Research Assistant, Oregon State University  
Gail Morris, MA, Southwest Monarch Study Coordinator  
Ilse Gebhard, Monarch Watch Conservation Specialist, Citizen Scientist  
James Tracy, PhD, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Department of Entomology, Texas A&M University  
Jay Withgott, MS in Biological Sciences and in Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, Textbook Author  
Jaydee Hanson, MS biogeography Center For Food Safety  
Jenna Stanek, Ecologist, Los Alamos National Laboratory  
Jessica Griffiths, MS, Senior Biologist/Project Manager at Althouse and Meade, Inc.  
Jillian Murphy, student of Biology at Portland State University  
John Malone, PhD  
John Tooker, PhD, Professor of Entomology, The Pennsylvania State University  
Joseph Engler, BS, Wildlife Biologist (retired), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Judith G. Villablanca, MD, Professor of Clinical Pediatrics  
Katarzyna Nowak, PhD, Fellow at The Safina Center (New York) and Research Associate at U of Alberta/Yukon U  
Kelsey Schaefer, Biology, Student of Conservation Biology  
Kenneth J. Kingsley, PhD, retired  
Kerry Crowningshield, MS, Executive Director of Lake Placid Land Conservancy  
Kevin Hansen, MS, LHG, County Hydrogeologist  
Kirk J. Larsen, PhD, entomologist, professor of Biology, Luther College  
Lauren Muller, M.S Horticulture, Conservation Outreach Coordinator, State Botanical Garden of Georgia  
Lisa Kuder, PhD Candidate in Entomology, University of Maryland  
Louie H. Yang, PhD, Associate Professor, University of California, Davis

Malcolm Peavy, Associates degree, Portland State University  
Marcus B. Gray, MS, Executive Director, Sustainable Monarch  
Margot Monson, MS Entomology, Xerces Society  
Mary Duffy, Earth Discovery Institute Senior Biologist  
Matthew Forister, PhD, Professor of Biology, University of Nevada, Reno  
Michelle Duennes, PhD, Assistant Professor of Biology, Saint Vincent College  
Ms. Anna Walker, MS, Species Survival Officer for Invertebrate Pollinators  
Nick Jensen, PhD, Conservation Program Director, California Native Plant Society  
Ola Fincke, PhD, Professor Emeritus, Dept. Of Biology, University of Oklahoma  
Orley R. Taylor, PhD, Dir, Monarch Watch, University of Kansas  
Rachel Hughes, MNR, Lecturer  
Ray Conrow PhD Pharmaceutical Chemist Retired  
Rella Abernathy, PhD, Applied Ecological Programs Coordinator, City of Boulder, CO  
Robert N. Coulson, Professor, Texas A&M Universotu  
Robert Okazaki, PhD Professor Emeritus of Zoology, Weber State University  
Samantha Alger, PhD, University of Vermont  
Sarina Jepsen, MS, Endangered Species Program Director, The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation  
Scott Black, MS, Executive Director, Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation  
Shannon Westlake, PhD, Conservation Social Scientist, 21sustainability  
Stephanie Mcknight, BS, The Xerces Society  
Susan Masta, PhD, Associate professor, Department of Biology, Portland State University  
Susan Meyers, MS, Monarchs Across Georgia, Environmental Education Alliance  
Susie Vanderlip, Monarch Butterfly Citizen Scientist and Conservation Specialist, Monarch Watch  
Tim Miklasiewicz, PhD, Entomologist, Oakland Nurseries, Ohio  
Travis Fisher, Senior Horticulturist, Atlanta History Center  
Trecia Neal, MS, Monarch Watch Conservation Specialist