

Approved by:  
/s/ Tom Landwehr, Commissioner  
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Date: 15 December 2014



## Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

### Pollinator Habitat

**Operational Order..... 130**  
**Policy Owner ..... Bob Welsh, Wildlife Habitat Program Manager, Division of Fish and Wildlife**  
**Policy Contacts ..... Carmelita Nelson, Fish and Wildlife Division**  
**Crystal Boyd, Ecological and Water Resources Division**  
**Related Policies..... Op Order 113 Invasive Species**  
**Operational Order 124 Plant Material Standards for Native Plant Community**  
**Restoration**  
**Related Procedures..... DNR Pollinator Habitat Program Guidelines**  
**Effective Date ..... 15 December 2014**  
**Last Update ..... n.a.**  
**Next Review ..... 2018**

### Policy Statement

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) uses best management practices (BMPs) and habitat restoration guidelines for pollinator habitat enhancement on DNR lands. Prairie restorations on state lands or using state funds must include an appropriate diversity of native species to provide pollinator habitat through the growing season. BMPs and restoration guidelines are available to all staff in the “DNR Pollinator Best Management Practices and Habitat Restoration Guidelines” document.

The DNR is a major provider of pollinator habitat in the state and includes multiple habitat types. Restoration projects on DNR managed lands are typically designed to meet specific objectives, such as providing nesting cover for upland game birds or replicating appropriate native plant communities (NPCs) previously found on the site. Augmenting restoration activities to benefit native pollinators can be implemented in ways that meet multiple objectives.

### Purpose and Scope

This operational order establishes policies and procedures for pollinator habitat enhancement in compliance with Minnesota Statutes, section 84.973. The 2013 legislature established several provisions relating to the

decline of pollinator species and the resulting ecological and economic consequences in appropriations to Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Department of Agriculture (MDA), Pollution Control Agency (PCA), and Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). Growing public concern and momentum around the plight of pollinators has resulted in this legislative policy direction.

The DNR's internal "DNR Pollinator Best Management Practices and Habitat Restoration Guidelines" document provides best management practices (BMPs) for restoring and enhancing habitat for native insect pollinators (such as bees, butterflies, moths, and flies) on DNR managed lands and on state funded prairie restoration projects. This operational order and the guidelines provide direction to staff to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts of management activities on native pollinators. This policy is designed to ensure that DNR resource management benefits native pollinators and it applies to:

- all DNR habitat management activities by employees and non-DNR individuals or organizations on DNR-administered lands and public waters, and
- activities associated with DNR permits, grants, or funds.

Consistent with other DNR policies, such as Operational Order 124 "Plant Material Standards for Native Plant Community Restoration," these guidelines do not recommend the planting of non-native or invasive species to enhance pollinator habitat on DNR lands. This document targets native plant communities, but does not mandate specific species or seed mixes to be used in a restoration. It is not intended to dictate management on non-NPC sites such as parking lots, building perimeters, other facility-oriented lands, or farmed fields. It does provide land managers with information on how to augment NPC practices to comply with state law regarding pollinator habitat.

## **Procedures**

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will maintain the DNR Pollinator Habitat Guidelines on the DNR's public website and Intranet. Divisions may make stronger guidelines and additional policies as long as they are consistent with this Operational Order.

DNR grant agreements and contracts to accomplish habitat restoration or enhancement on DNR lands or prairie restorations using state funds must include standard "Specific Pollinator Best Management Practices for Grants and Contracts," which can be found in the Contract Language section of the guidelines. DNR may not require vendors and grantees to comply with this operational order or internal guidelines by reference; the requirements must be outlined using the standard language in the contract or grant agreement. Any modifications to the standard language should be approved by one of the Contacts on this Operational Order.

The BMPs address various habitat management activities including: prescribed fire, invasive species control and pesticide use, mowing, haying, native seed harvest, conservation grazing, forest management, riparian and shoreline management. Restoration guidelines provide resources and techniques to aid managers with NPC restoration efforts.

BMPs will be frequently reviewed and improved as knowledge gaps are filled.

## Roles and Responsibilities

**Division Directors and Regional Directors** are responsible for distribution of updates of pollinator habitat guidelines to managers and supervisors. Division directors ensure that staff has appropriate resources to meet the pollinator guidelines.

**Operations Managers** are responsible for communicating the requirements of pollinator habitat guidelines to supervisors and staff. Operational managers will also be responsible for approving guidelines and future revisions.

**Managers and Supervisors** are responsible for communicating the requirements of pollinator habitat guidelines to staff and for approving site-level management plans.

**Program managers** are responsible for implementing procedures set forth under this policy, including boilerplate language into grants/contracts/permits, and for communicating appropriate actions/requirements to any grantees/contractors/permittees.

**Policy Owner** will assemble the Pollinator Project Team annually (at a minimum) to discuss and initiate revisions as needed.

**DNR employees** will follow the pollinator guidelines to the extent practical. Efforts to improve pollinator habitat must not compromise 1) the restoration/enhancement, or 2) neighboring plant communities.

## Contacts

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## Definitions

**Lands under the commissioner's control** – Land either in fee title ownership/management by DNR (except county tax forfeit land), or land on which DNR has management responsibility (including easements, management agreements, leases, and trust fund lands).

**Habitat enhancement** – All activities that involve management of a substantially intact habitat with the goal of improving ecological structure and/or function and increasing the site capacity to sustain habitat and natural processes. Management activities include, but are not limited to, prescribed burning, wetland drawdown, hydro-axing brushlands, and commercial or timber harvest. This excludes activities related to facilities or headquarters maintenance activities that tend to be user and employee oriented.

**Habitat restoration** – Management of a substantially degraded habitat with the goal of returning or creating desired-ecological structure and/or function.

**Pollinators** – For purposes of this project, pollinators are insects that transfer pollen between the anthers and stigma. In particular, this includes species in the orders Hymenoptera (bees, wasps, ants, etc.), Lepidoptera

(butterflies and moths), Coleoptera (beetles) and Diptera (flies) which are known to transfer pollen. It does not include vertebrate species, such as mammals, birds and reptiles which are also known to transfer pollen.

**Pollinator habitat enhancement** – Habitat enhancement as defined above with the goal of improving ecological structure and/or function specifically for pollinator survival and reproduction.

**Prairie restoration** – The act of recreating a planted prairie where prairie historically existed, but no features of a prairie are detected prior to restoration efforts.

**State funds** – Funds directly appropriated to or through DNR including all direct annual appropriations, bonding, grants to DNR, and grants from DNR (including Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund and Outdoor Heritage Fund appropriations).

**State lands** – Defined as lands owned in fee title by the DNR in the context of this operational order.

## **Forms and Instructions**

See document titled “DNR Pollinator Best Management Practices and Habitat Restoration Guidelines”

## **History**

**Supersedes:** ..... n.a.

**Maintenance:**  
MM/DD/YYYY ..

**Amended:**  
MM/DD/YYYY ..