



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Washington, D.C. 20240

OCT 15 2014

To: WSFR Regional Assistant Directors and Branch Chiefs
From: Assistant Director, Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs
Subject: Federal Grants and Engaging in Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Conservation

Hannibal Bolton

On June 20, 2014 the White House issued a Presidential Memorandum promoting pollinator conservation. In addition, Director Dan Ashe has been tasked by Secretary Jewell to convene an interagency High Level Working Group to develop and implement a U.S. strategy for monarch butterfly conservation. Both initiatives have an ambitious schedule and expectations. These efforts cannot be accomplished by the Service alone.

Given the breadth, severity, and persistence of pollinator losses, it is critical to expand Federal, State, and private efforts and take new steps to reverse pollinator losses and restore populations to healthy levels. The President has established the Pollinator Health Task Force, a multi-agency effort to formulate an action plan to bring together our national resources to address this crisis in collaboration with State and local governments, public-private partnerships, and engaged citizens.

The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR) serves an important role in our partnership with States and through the grant programs we administer. I am writing you to ask for your proactive cooperation to encourage your State partners to consider monarch butterfly and pollinator conservation when implementing projects funded by WSFR grants. The State Wildlife Grants Program can help States plan for and implement pollinator conservation for species of greatest need. However, there are considerations that can be made for all grant projects. Examples of things to consider are:

- Adding monarch butterfly and pollinator conservation to the State Wildlife Action Plans if none exist, identifying species already in SWAPs as pollinators (where applicable), and/or enhancing existing pollinator conservation projects.
- Developing strategies and approaches for habitat conservation that either directly support pollinators, or are executed in a manner that does not interfere with pollinator habitat or life cycles. For example, planting milkweeds and other native flowering plants as part of habitat restoration programs, and adjusting timing of mowing to reduce impact to pollinators.
- Reviewing agricultural practices on State lands, especially those funded through Federal grants, and adjusting as needed to be monarch butterfly and pollinator friendly.

- Reviewing Integrated Pest Management Plans and Invasive Plant Management Plans to consider impacts to pollinators; assuring integrated pest management is being used to address pest problems while reducing impacts on non-targets; and eliminating the routine use of neonicotinoid pesticides.
- Promoting monarch butterfly and pollinator education among Federal and State agencies, and the public, including information on how these entities can help pollinators and the important and economically valuable services pollinators provide to people and ecosystems.

WSFR staff will be developing a web-based space to share guidance and make available resources and information for States and other partners receiving WSFR grants to use when planning projects for, or in consideration of, monarch butterfly and pollinator conservation. We intend this to be a dynamic site that will grow based on visitor input, suggestions, and needs. We will be loading initial content into this space between September and December 2014. We encourage interaction and ideas from your staff as the site develops and grows.

We welcome your suggestions for how we might efficiently and effectively approach pollinator conservation in WSFR-funded projects. Please provide suggestions to Lisa Van Alstyne at Lisa_Van_Alstyne@fws.gov or 703.358.1942.

cc: Regional Directors