



NEWS RELEASE

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National Pollinator Week is June 18-24 ***Dairyland is supporting bee and butterfly habitat with pollinator gardens***

La Crosse, WI— Declining populations in pollinator species and habitat is a global concern. A decade ago, the U.S. Senate unanimously approved a week in June for designation of National Pollinator Week to raise awareness about the growing issue. The 2018 National Pollinator Week is June 18-24.

Dairyland Power Cooperative is the founding member of the Electric Power Research Institute's Power-in-Pollinator Initiative, which is the largest pollinator collaboration in North America. Dairyland is dedicated to protecting natural resources through sustainable practices and environmental stewardship.

Pollinator gardens are being created at 18 of Dairyland's solar energy facilities in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois. SoCore Energy and CMS Energy, the solar project developers, are using native seed mixes of grasses and flowers to create beneficial bee and butterfly habitat at each site. When complete later this year, a total of **nearly 250 acres of new pollinator habitat** will be established at the 18 sites.

Dairyland is also moving forward with plans to create pollinator habitat at three of its substations. Pollinator gardens were seeded by Kulig Contracting (Whitehall, Wis.) earlier this month on two, one-acre substation sites in Wisconsin. Prairie Restorations, Inc., (Princeton, Minn.) will seed a third, 3.5 acre substation site in Minnesota this fall.

"As a utility and a cooperative, Dairyland has both a responsibility and a devotion to being a good steward of the environment. Our local and regional stewardship actions help improve a world-wide concern, while benefitting area communities," said Brad Foss, Dairyland Senior Environmental Biologist.

Pollinator Facts (*Sources: Minnesota Department of Agriculture and pollinator.org*)

- Most pollinators are beneficial insects such as bees, wasps, flies, beetles, butterflies and moths. Pollinators also include birds and bats.
- Monarch butterflies have declined by 90 percent in the last 20 years.
- About three-quarters of the more than 240,000 flowering plants in the world rely on pollinators.
- Pollinators provide one of every three bites of food we eat.

With headquarters in La Crosse, Wis., Dairyland Power Cooperative (www.dairylandpower.com) provides wholesale electricity to 24 member distribution cooperatives and 17 municipal utilities in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois. These cooperatives and municipals, in turn, supply the energy needs of more than a half-million people. Today, the cooperative's generating resources include coal, natural gas, hydro, wind, solar and biogas.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative