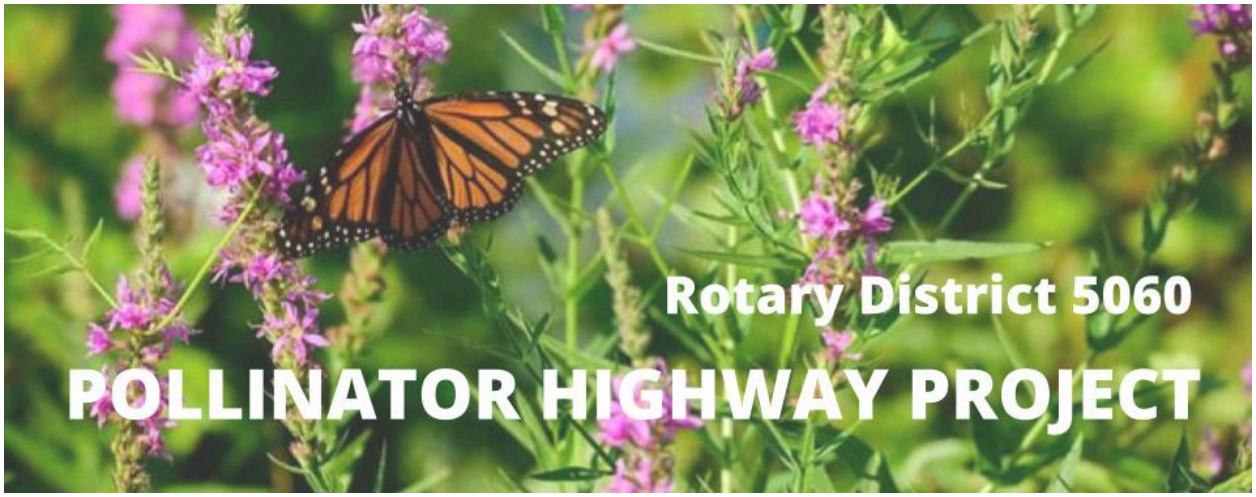

Pollinator Highway Project

THE VISION

Every club grows a pollinator garden in their community to create a mappable District 5060 Pollinator Highway, linking our clubs together through welcoming habitats and Rotary's newest area of focus: "Protecting the Environment."

For the inaugural, district-wide environmental service project, Gov. Karl Ruether and the District Environmental Sustainability Committee have made it a priority to create a mappable Pollinator Garden Highway throughout the District from B.C. to southern WA. Gov. Ruether is calling on every club to participate and offering a $1,000 prize for clubs that grow gardens in a drawing at

next year's District Conference. He also hopes clubs will grow at least 700 new plants total to represent Rotary's 7th Area of Focus - Protecting the Environment.

The Committee intends to measure our impact through recording the number of gardens, plants, and volunteers, and whether clubs recruited new members, formed club environmental committees, or made new partnerships in their communities. Resources will be posted on the district website to support clubs in their efforts and track their progress as much as possible. Eventually, an online story map will be created where every club's garden story will be highlighted.

THE PLEDGE

As a friend and advocate of native bees, butterflies, birds and insects, I pledge to encourage my club to create a pollinator garden in our community to help grow a D5060 Pollinator Highway, linking our clubs together through welcoming habitats and Rotary's newest area of focus - "protecting the environment."

SIGN UP HERE

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are Pollinators important?

- Bees, butterflies, moths, ants, beetles, wasps, flies, birds and bats pollinate up to 95% of all flowering plants on earth
- 180,000 plant species and more than 1200 crops rely on pollinators
- 4,000 species of native bees are the primary insect pollinator of many agricultural plants
- Pollinators add $217 billion to the global economy
- Honey bees provide up to $5.4 billion in agricultural productivity in the U.S.

Why are we concerned about Pollinators?

Due to habitat loss, climate change, pesticides and diseases:

- Monarch butterflies declined by 90% in the last 20 years.
- 28% of bumble bee species are in serious decline.
- 99% of bees native to the U.S. and Canada are in decline
- 51 species of butterflies, 111 species of moths, and 3 species of bumblebees are at major risk
- Colony Collapse Disorder decimated honey bee hives in North America.

What is our District Environmental Sustainability Committee doing to help?

Our vision is to help every club in our district to establish Pollinator Gardens in their communities, or to identify and record existing Rotary gardens, in order to create a continuous, mappable “Rotary Pollinator Highway” from Clearwater, BC to Grandview, WA. Every club that plants a new garden will be entered to win $1,000 at the 2023 District Conference.

What can I do to help?

First, take the Rotary Pollinator Pledge, emphasize the importance of a Pollinator Garden to your club members and employ best practices to protect pollinators in your own backyard.

How do we get started?

1. Gather support and record your club’s commitment by having at least one person from your club sign up with the District ES Committee by taking our Rotary Pollinator Pledge.

2. Talk to club leadership now about funds for a garden in next year’s budget. Don’t know what to say? Use our Talking Points or Pollinator Presentation.

3. Next steps: Locate, Design & Prep, Plant, and Report, Maintain & Enjoy! See our RESOURCES.

*****VERY IMPORTANT: TAKE VIDEO & PICS throughout your project!*****

Talking Points

Rotary District 5060 DE Karl Ruether and the District Environmental Sustainability Committee have made it a priority to create a mappable Pollinator Garden Highway throughout the District from B.C. to southern WA. DE Ruether is calling on every club to participate and offering a $1,000 prize for clubs that grow gardens in a drawing at next year's District Conference. He also hopes clubs will grow at least 700 new plants total to represent Rotary's 7th Area of Focus - Protecting the Environment. I hope that our club will take part in this first-ever, District-wide Environmental service project.

I know you may have some questions about what's involved and how to get started, so I would like to offer a few reasons why we should participate in this effort.

Talking Point 1: Bees, butterflies, moths, ants, beetles, wasps, flies, birds and bats pollinate up to 95% of all flowering plants on earth.

- One of every 3 bites of food is due to pollination.
- 180,000 plant species and more than 1200 crops rely on pollinators
- Of more than 20,000 native bee species globally, 4,000 in the US & CAN are the primary insect pollinator of many agricultural plants
- Pollinators add $217 billion to the global economy

Talking Point 2: Due to habitat loss, climate change, pesticides and diseases, our pollinators are suffering and at risk of extinction or serious population decline.

- Of the more than 4,000 native bee species in North America, more than half are in decline and one in four is imperiled and at increasing risk for extinction, according to a 2017 survey conducted by the Center for Biological Diversity.
- Loss of plant diversity is the primary cause of native bee decline. About 30-50% of all native bees are highly specialized, so if the plant they rely on disappears, the bees go away. If the bees disappear, the plant is unable to reproduce and dies out.
- While some of the plants pollinated by native bees are important food crops, other plants pollinated by native bees are critical for healthy forests, wildlife, and watersheds.
- Honey bees are not native to North America. While important in the pollination of some crops, honey bees are also significant competitors of native bees and should not be introduced in conservation areas, parks, or areas where you want to foster the conservation of native plants and native bees.
- Loss of pollinators threatens agricultural production, the maintenance of natural plant communities, and the important services provided by those ecosystems, such as carbon cycling, flood and erosion control, and recreation. Without pollinators providing the

transportation of pollen from flower to flower, about 75 percent of all native North American plants could gradually become extinct as they lose the ability to reproduce.

Talking Point 3: A Pollinator Garden would be beneficial to all including: Pollinators, our Rotary club and District, and our community.

- Adding native flowering plants to even the smallest yard can help. The pollen and nectar from only about 5 flowers supports the food needs of a bee from egg to adulthood.
- Some pollinators like the monarch butterfly will only survive with certain native plants like milkweed.
- Pollinator Gardens are a long-term, highly visible, hands-on service project for minimal costs and labor, while participating in the District 5060 Environmental Sustainability Committee's inaugural, district-wide, service project and answering our DG's call to action. We raise awareness about pollinators and Rotary, create unity among our members and clubs, and receive a sign and designation on the District's Rotary Pollinator Highway Map.
- Pollinator gardens are a community gathering place where volunteers from partner organizations could build relationships while working side by side. The garden could function as an educational site for youth and encourage community service.

Call to Action: What's next?

Will our club work to grow a pollinator garden this year?

- The District ES Committee is working on step-by-step project guides and resources. Meanwhile, we can work to find a location, talk about budget, volunteers and get in touch with local experts.

Not quite?

- Please ask how the District can help and contact the District ES Committee or DGE Karl Ruether.

Yes?

- Great! Make sure to get onboard with the SIGN ON PLEDGE and get started with our RESOURCES! (To be published). Also see our 5 Steps to Creating your Pollinator Garden. You are good to grow

Sources:
https://www.newswise.com/articles/biologist-has-a-plan-to-help-the-pivotal-pollinators-in-the-pacific-northwest

https://www.usgs.gov/faqs/how-many-species-native-bees-are-united-states#:~:text=There%20are%20over%2020%2C000%20known,sized%20species%20of%20carpenter%20bees.

5 Steps to Creating your Pollinator Garden

1. **Pollinator Pledge**
   - ☐ Sign the pledge! Let the District Environmental Sustainability Committee know that you and/or your club is committed!
   - ☐ Talk to your club leadership about providing funds in the budget or creating a fundraising project.
   - ☐ Speak to other club members about their interest in getting to work. Does your club have an environmental committee? If not, perhaps this could be the start of one.
   - ☐ Reach out to potential partner organizations, Interact, youth orgs, churches, etc.
   - ☐ Contact local experts; assess the current situation in your area - will your garden be the first?
   - ☐ Any other gardens already in your area to use as a model?
   - ☐ Make a project plan

2. **Locate**
   - ☐ Consult with experts for location (i.e consider sun, soil, water, human interaction, maintenance, etc.)
   - ☐ Consult with landowners or public entities for possible locations
   - ☐ Think about visibility: town entrance; electric vehicle charging stations, Rotary parks
   - ☐ Consider distance from current gardens to create an effective “highway?” Native bees don’t travel far.
   - ☐ Take before pics/video

3. **Design & Prep**
   - ☐ Consult with experts for the best type of plants for pollinators, particularly native, non-invasive.
   - ☐ How big, how many plants, continuous blooming through the seasons, most resilient, etc.
   - ☐ Size? Shape?
   - ☐ Cost? Grants? Fundraising?
   - ☐ Soil Prep?
   - ☐ Irrigation prep
   - ☐ Fencing or other hardscape features?
   - ☐ Source for plants/seeds?
   - ☐ Maintenance plan

4. **Plant**
   - ☐ Set a date

- ☐ Gather people - club members, experts, youth groups, RECRUIT new members
- ☐ Work with partner organizations - offer to volunteer swap and build long-term relationships
- ☐ Gather supplies
- ☐ Get planting! TAKE PICS & VIDEO

5. **Report, Maintain and Enjoy**
   - ☐ Share before and after photos and video with D5060 Environmental Sustainability Committee.
   - ☐ Complete report (LINK) (Plant numbers, volunteers, etc.)
   - ☐ Get mapped!
   - ☐ Receive sign!
   - ☐ Celebrate and share!

Pledge: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfxAx63Pxn4x9DqFvw_q-_dU7ACC9lAEZyBqLXFvipNQRGshw/viewform

Challenge video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Sgar9JI2_w

Project Criteria & Guidelines

If you've never experienced the joy of accomplishing more than you can imagine, plant a garden.

– Robert Brault

Rotary District 5060 Clubs should strive to create gardens "of some substance," but every garden's characteristics such as location, cost, size, design, and number of plants will be as unique as the gardeners themselves. While recognizing this fact, in order to be entered into the contest for a $1,000 prize at the Rotary District 5060 Conference in 2023, please keep in mind these simple guidelines:

- Clubs should create NEW pollinator gardens appropriate to their environment, incorporating best practices such as native, non-invasive plants, and milkweed for monarchs. While many online checklists will help determine those features, clubs may use their best judgment to design their unique spaces. Clubs are encouraged to consult with local plant and pollinator experts in their communities. See Pollinator Resources for more information.
- Clubs may collaborate on a project to provide the necessary volunteers in order to ensure the long-term maintenance and success of the garden. Clubs are encouraged to record their mutual understanding in a written agreement including responsibilities and division of any prize money.

Clubs may partner with other organizations such as land management agencies, garden clubs, schools, churches, etc. to build a new garden if a sign recognizing Rotary's contribution to the project is allowed.

- All clubs should report (link tbd) their garden location, with photos and video (filmed horizontally), to the District Environmental Sustainability Committee to be included on an online story map. If possible, record the number of volunteer hours, plants, cost and whether the garden is the first pollinator garden in the community. Note whether your club gained new members or formed new partnerships. All these details will help measure our impact.
- Once reported, clubs will receive a sign celebrating their success!