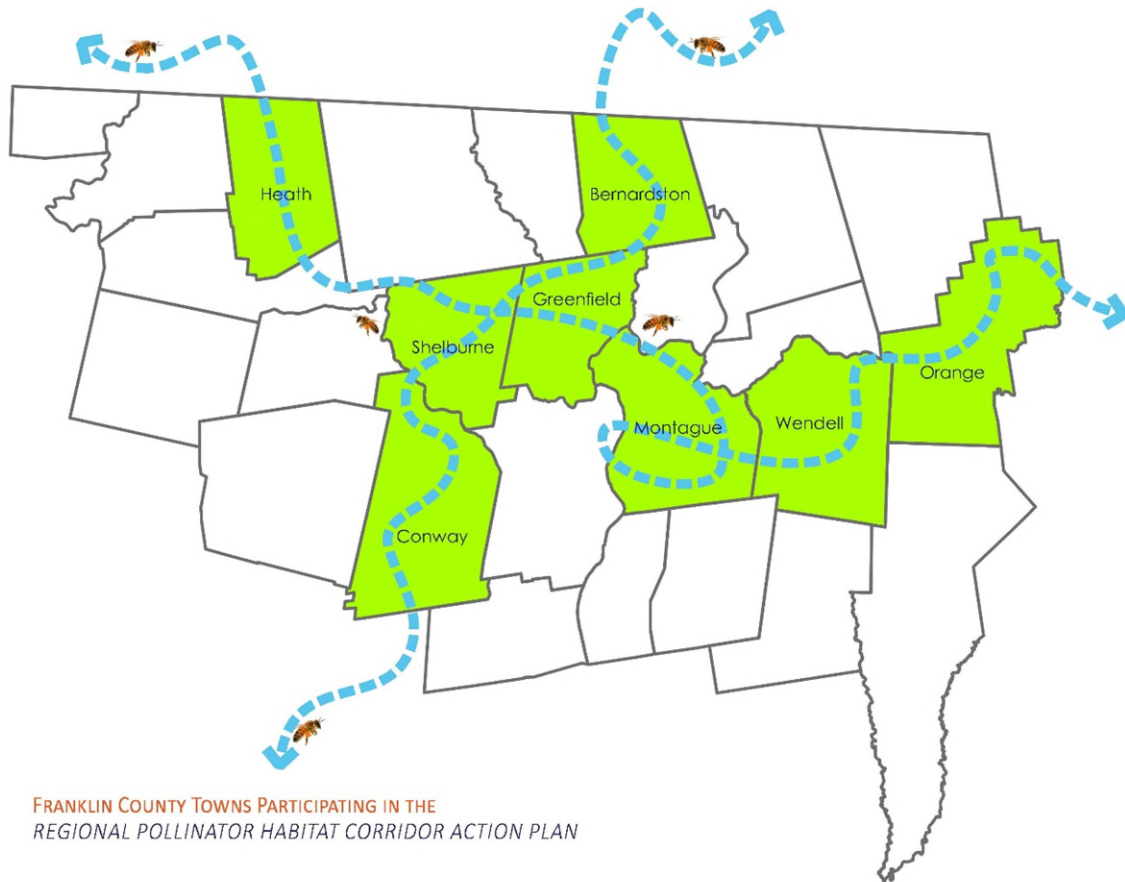


Eight Franklin County Towns will participate in a
Regional Pollinator Habitat Corridor Action Plan

in collaboration with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG)

AND

National Pollinator Week is June 22-28, 2020



Not everyone thinks of bees, bats, butterflies, birds and other bugs when they consider municipal infrastructure, but eight forward-thinking Franklin County towns and planners at the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) do. With National Pollinator Week only days away, it seems fitting to kick-off FRCOG's *Regional Pollinator Habitat Corridor Action Plan* project — the first of its kind in Massachusetts!

The Commonwealth has a rich diversity of native wild pollinators, including an estimated 380 species of bees and 120 species of butterflies. Native pollinators evolved with native plants and are critical to biodiversity and the health and climate resiliency of ecosystems. Pollinators face many threats to their survival, including habitat loss, invasive species, pesticides, disease and parasites.

With funding from an Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Planning Grant and the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program, FRCOG will work with Greenfield, Heath, Shelburne, Conway, Bernardston, Montague, Wendell, and Orange to map local pollinator habitat and resource areas and identify corridor linkages, update local land-use regulations to include requirements for native plantings for development and pollinator-friendly landscape management practices, and create a Pollinator Habitat Corridor Implementation Toolkit. These communities recognize the need to create habitat corridors in and around areas of development to respond to declining populations of native pollinator species.

The sustainability of our local ecosystems, farms, and food systems, as well as our own well-being over time, is linked to pollinators. Franklin County has an abundance of green spaces, which improve the flood resiliency of rivers and riparian areas, and provide clean water, recreation, wildlife habitat, and carbon sequestration. Pollinators are essential for plant reproduction in these spaces, and for providing genetic diversity in the plants they pollinate. The more diverse ecosystems are, the easier it is for them to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Healthy and diverse pollinator populations help provide resiliency to weather changes and extremes.



National Pollinator Week is June 22-28, 2020

Visit <https://www.pollinator.org/pollinator-week> to find information and activities for all ages and join with others across the country to celebrate pollinators and spread the word about what we can do to protect them.



What can you do?

- ✓ Plant a garden to provide, food, nesting and overwintering habitat. Avoid pesticide use and purchase of plants and trees that have been treated with neonicotinoids.
- ✓ Build a bee condo!
- ✓ Be involved in FRCOG's project. Contact Kimberly Noake MacPhee, kmacphee@frcog.org or 413.774.3167 x130