

**Pollinator Protection Working Group**  
**Monthly Zoom Call**  
6/7/21  
Call Notes

<https://zoom.us/j/91804937970?pwd=aDBLNWtNN0hwZitOb3IFbVAXUzFUQT09>

Meeting ID: 918 0493 7970

Passcode: pollinator

**Pollinator Protection Working Group Members Present:**

- Nina Hapner
- Jasmine Brown
- Larry Scrapper
- Loren LaPointe
- Amanda Hauff
- Mary Rust
- Ed Spevak

**1. EPA Regional Tribal Report – Loren LaPointe, EPA**

Loren presented information collected from EPA Regional Tribal contacts regarding interest in and ongoing pollinator activities across the tribes in each region. All regions reported interest from the tribes in pollinator work and learning more about pollinators. Specific interests include native pollinators, habitat enhancements, hives, creating pollinator protection plans, and education and outreach on pollinators. Some examples of ongoing activities include pollinator gardens and apiary programs. Not many tribes reported having pollinator protection plans in place, but Loren will follow up to ask that question specifically as it was not addressed directly in the questions posed to regions. Jasmine mentioned the Region 9 pollinator template tool, which we will discuss at a future meeting.

**2. Native Foods Initiative – Ed Spevak, St. Louis Zoo**

Ed started with some brief background on himself saying that he has worked at the zoo for 42 years, everything he knows about pollinators is self-taught, and mentioned several initiatives he is involved in including the Honey Bee Health Coalition and Missourians for Monarchs, but there were several others listed.

The Native Foods, Native Peoples, and Native Pollinators initiative serves as a connection between food, culture, health, and the environment. Ed can connect almost any discussion to pollinators and broaden the scope of his work. Traditional foods modify plants to meet the land whereas modern foods modify the land to meet the plants. As a result, there has been nutrient loss from traditional foods and wild species have more nutrients. This initiative aims to bring people back to their traditional foods. Bees are involved in these food relationships, as well as diversity of pollinators. Ed showed a comprehensive slideshow of plants with pollinators present. Many tribes do not know

which agricultural crops require pollinators. For example. Tomatoes are very difficult to pollinate and corn does not require pollinators yet they forage on corn and do impact how corn is managed.

The Four R's: Relationship (kinship, relationship to land), responsibility (community obligation), resources, and reciprocity (indigenous idea based on very long relational dynamics in which we are all seen as "kin" to each other). Seasonal diversity and needs support pollinators year to year.

A visit to Glacier National Park motivated Ed to study native people. He then described many of the ongoing projects this group is doing with tribes. One example is the work with the Winnebago and Ho-Chunk tribes of Nebraska including community gardens, giving support through funding, planting flowers along the colors of the medicine wheel to increase cultural connection, and bee guides for outreach. Another project is working on bison pollinators, which is much needed as you can't go online and find a bison seed mix.

Lastly, Ed shared his Native Foods survey results:

- a. Bees are important personally and culturally
- b. Bees are seen as relations
- c. Majority know what they pollinate, though some identify corn and grains as being bee pollinated
- d. Need more information on bees needs, only honey bees require a hive
- e. All interested in learning more about native bees
- f. Majority are interested in workshops and webinars: native bee biology, creating habitat for pollinators traditional foods, seed saving, preserving and storing crops, food preparation
- g. Additional resources (major: seeds and plants, also education materials, workshops, training)

Jasmine asked if our group can share the survey with the TPPC tribes, to which Ed said yes though we are unsure how to collect and organize responses. Ed explained that there is an online version (St. Louis has a department that organizes the data) as well as a paper version.

Ed mentioned a free course available in the fall: [LINK](#)

### **3. Next Steps**

Our next meeting: we will digest Ed's presentation and discuss survey options.