

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Task Force on Pollinator Health was established during the 2014 Legislative Session by the enactment of House Bill 4139. A copy of the full Task Force report can be found at <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2013I1/Downloads/CommitteeMeetingDocument/41335>.

In June 2013, at least 25,000 bees were found dead in a Target parking lot in Wilsonville, Oregon. The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) concluded that the bee deaths were directly related to the use of the pesticide dinotefuran, which had been applied to nearby Linden trees to control aphids. ODA will be adopting permanent rules restricting the use of certain pesticide products containing dinotefuran and imidacloprid on Linden trees; and began requiring a label statement prohibiting the use of dinotefuran and imidacloprid on linden trees, regardless of application method, as a condition of annual registration in 2014. Beginning January 1, 2014, application of these products on linden, basswood, or Tilia tree species is prohibited.

During the 2014 session, House Bill 4139 was introduced partly in response to a number of bee kills associated with the use of these products on Linden trees. As enacted, House Bill 4139 established the Task Force on Pollinator Health to examine issues relevant to pollinator health and report to an interim legislative committee related to agriculture no later than October 1, 2014. The measure also directs Oregon State University (OSU), in consultation with ODA, to develop educational materials on best practices to avoid adverse effects from pesticides on pollinators.

The Task Force held seven meetings from June through October 2014. In addition to the sharing of information gathered by Task Force members, testimony was received from individuals with expertise in a variety of areas related to pollinator health. Both testimony and Task Force discussions make it clear that pollinator health is a complex and multi-factorial issue; these issues include parasites, pathogens and diseases, agricultural intensification, malnutrition, habitat, pesticides and genetics. The Task Force developed many recommended actions to improve the health of both native and managed pollinators that are detailed in this report. Four priority recommended actions emerged from Task Force discussions (numbers in parentheses refer to specific actions that support a recommendation):

- I. Oregon should develop a strong, effective **outreach and education strategy** on pollinator health, including **best management practices**. (See 1.1 – 1.3; 4.1, 4.3(c), 4.4(a), 4.4(b), 6.1(b) and 6.1(c))
- II. Oregon should fully fund a **state-of-the-art bee health diagnostic facility** at Oregon State University. (See 5.1(a))
- III. An **integrated pollinator health research plan** should be developed and funded to improve understanding of the many issues affecting pollinator health. (See 5.1(b)–(d) and (f), 5.2(a)–(c), 6.1(a), and 6.1(d))
- IV. A sustainable **revenue stream to fund** the proposed outreach, education and research programs is needed. (See 6.1(a)–(d))