

Reduced Roadside Mowing in the Town of Starkey

The Town of Starkey has observed that in areas where the roadside mowing was limited, there was an abundance of pollinators (ie. butterflies, bees etc.) in 2019. This has sparked research and discussion about limiting in season roadside mowing to the immediate shoulder and intersections. The entire right of way will continue to be mowed in the fall to eliminate brush build up as well as to reduce potential snow drifting in the winter months. This will result in the increase of habitat for bees and butterflies would increase pollination of crops and flowers. Pollinators and Roadsides: Managing Roadsides for Bees and Butterflies states that roadsides with native plants provide a habitat and a food source for pollinators. Jennifer Hopwood, The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation Senior Pollinator Conservation Specialist, goes on to state that between 60%- 80% of flowering plant and 87 of the 124 most cultivated crops depend on animals--mostly insects--for pollination. The full article can be found at: https://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/Documents/R2ES/Pollinators/7-PollinatorsAndRoadsides_Guideline_Xerces_2014.pdf

As we contemplate what course to take with roadside mowing, we welcome any input you may have.