

7/31/2017

More Native Pollinator Habitats Needed

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The USDA recently released a report taking a look at studies conducted over the last 30 years in regards to the effects of land use on pollinator health, both for native pollinators and honey bees. It found a population decline in both types of pollinators, due to a myriad of factors, including lack of foraging and nesting habitats, diseases, parasites and pesticides.

“Improved nutrition for pollinators can be part of the solution: a body of research suggests that if pollinators eat better, they can better withstand other stressors,” the study concludes. “This can be achieved by modifying the Nation’s land-use/land-cover (LULC) patterns so as to provide pollinators with higher quality forage—the pollen and nectar from blooming plants.”

The study calls for more research to determine the best way to provide nesting and foraging habitats for both native pollinators and honey bees, since they may not require the same thing. You can download the full report for free on the USDA’s Economic Research Service website at www.ers.usda.gov. **GP**