**Honey Bee Pollinator Initiative, HBPI**

Montana is working to increase the health of honey bees by improving floral forage habitat on private and tribal lands that will benefit hive nutritional health as well. Feral honey bees and other pollinators will also benefit from the establishment of plant forage habitats high in nectar and pollen. Increased availability of forages that have low or no pesticide exposure should improve the condition and eventual survival of honey bees.

**Eligible Applications based on Applicability Question in CART Ranking Tool:**

Is the application within 3.5 miles of an apiary and if application includes a honey bee pollinator planting, is planting 125 feet or greater in width if adjacent to cropland, or pasture or hayland treated with insecticides, or 250 feet or greater if cropland, or pasture or hayland treated with insecticides, are on both sides of the planting.

**Resource Concerns National Initiatives**

There is a limited suite of practices available for this Initiative based on the resource concerns to be targeted. The Initiative is available on all ag land uses and non-industrial private forest lands to address:

- Livestock Production Limitation – Inadequate Feed and Forage
- Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Food, Cover/Shelter, Water and/or Habitat Continuity
- Degraded Plant Condition – Undesirable Plant Productivity and Health

**Applicable Conservation Practices**

A core practice must be scheduled. Supporting practices may be installed in addition to core practices where needed to meet the identified resource concern. Supporting practices are not eligible to be installed on any additional acres beyond the planned core practice area.

**Core Practices**

- 327 – Conservation Cover
- 386 – Field Border
- 390 – Riparian Herbaceous Cover
- 511 – Forage Harvest Management
- 512 – Forage and Biomass Plantings
- 528 – Prescribed Grazing
- 550 – Range Planting
- 612 – Tree/Shrub Establishment
- 645 – Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
- 647 – Early Successional Habitat Development

**Supporting Practices**

- 315 – Herbaceous Weed Control
- 328 – Conservation Crop Rotation
No practices can be scheduled for implementation through this Initiative unless it is within the defined area. At least 50 percent of the field or planned acres must be within the eligible area or it will not be considered for funding under this Initiative. Seedings must be a minimum of half an acre to be eligible for cost-share.

Montana will include on the conservation plan map the location of registered apiaries or apiaries where sufficient documentation has been provided, that shows the apiary is located within the 3.5-mile radius required for eligibility.

If a landowner does not have an apiary registered with the Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA), they still can be eligible for the HBPI if an apiary can be sufficiently documented. Sufficiently documented is defined as photographically documented with either a GPS location of site or drawn on the map with signature and date of the landowner. A field visit to verify site will be needed.

MDA registered apiary site locations are coordinated from the center of a section and do not necessarily reflect the exact location of the apiary. Due to this variation of actual apiary locations, before payment can be made, the landowner must provide an identifiable and dated picture of hive(s) and mark on a map the exact location(s).

Tool to help with planning and the required HBPI State Guidance can be found on the Montana SharePoint.