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To whom It May Concern:

The Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative (OPHI) is a nonprofit organization working to improve and create pollinator habitat in the state of Ohio. We also strive to raise awareness for all Ohioans about the importance of pollinators.

As part of this effort, we certify large and small scale habitat projects that create new pollinator habitat or enhance existing habitats. This certification is available to non-profits, private landowners, highway development projects, and for-profit landowners. To date, over 150 acres of land have been restored or re-naturalized back to native Ohio vegetation. In addition, 20 projects in Ohio have received OPHI certification. One certification option assesses the benefits of pollinator habitat established in conjunction with solar array development. The University of Dayton's 6.5 acre solar array and pollinator prairie are certified using this assessment.

To qualify for solar site certification, sites are evaluated for the percent of the site that is planted with native or beneficial introduced flowering plants, the flower diversity in the site perimeter, number of seasons with at least 3 blooming species, availability of additional habitat components within ¼ mile of the site (such as trees and shrubs, forest edge habitat, cavity nesting sites, and clean perennial water sources), planned vegetative buffers adjacent to the solar site, planned management practices to maintain biodiversity benefits, and an evaluation of insecticide risk from off-site sources. Points are assigned for each criterion met. Sites exceeding 85 points are recognized as high quality pollinator habitat. Sites with 74-84 points are recognized as meeting OPHI standards.

The University of Dayton (UD) Solar Prairie earned 135 points, exceeding the 85-point standard and achieving high quality pollinator habitat ranking. At least once each year, OPHI staff or partner biologists visit the site to provide management guidance and re-certify that the site is meeting the standards for promoting biodiversity and that it is continuing to provide pollinator habitat.

We are pleased to partner with the UD and recognize their efforts promoting biodiversity and creating pollinator habitat through our certification process.

Highlights of UD's Solar Prairie include:

- 6.5 acres of pollinator habitat created from a converted turf lawn
- over 80 species planted, and over 60 species accounted for in 2021
- regular and on-going management to control invasive species
- student research and projects include honors thesis research on pollinator use of the site; and the design and installation of interpretive signs for a senior capstone graphic design course

In addition to the solar prairie, UD has established additional pollinator habitat plantings on campus. These sites include a bioswale with natives (~600 sf, started in 2018); 1200 sf upland site, started in 2017; and a 1.5 acres site established in 2020. We look forward to our continued partnership to raise awareness about pollinators while incorporating restoration efforts on the UD campus.

Yours in Conservation,

Marci Lininger