

Citizen Resolution # 050423



Urging powerline companies not to mow low native vegetation in summer

The Concern: Cooperatives and companies that operate electric powerlines throughout Wisconsin are mowing low ground vegetation under powerlines during nesting season destroying valuable wildlife habitat.

Power companies need to eliminate tall trees growing under powerlines so that the trees do not impact the electrical transmission lines. Some power companies use large mowers to completely mow all ground vegetation, including milkweed, hazel, dogwood, and native prairie species. Milkweed is the one basic plant that is required by monarch butterflies, which is considered "endangered" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service states that the monarch is "a candidate for listing." Monarchs lay their eggs on milkweed plants, which are the only foods that the Monarch Caterpillars eat once the egg hatches". Mowing in mid-summer not only destroys the plant but any eggs that are left on the leaves by adult monarchs. In addition, this vegetation is often native vegetation, that nobody planted under the powerlines, shrubs provide nesting habitat for late nesting songbirds, wild turkeys, and shade for amphibians.

In Wisconsin powerlines traverse the entire state. Dairyland Power Coop says it has 3,200 miles of powerlines, ground that can be disturbed, and monarch habitat mowed down in prime breeding season.

Would you support that the Wisconsin Conservation Congress advising the Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Conservation Bureau to request powerline companies refrain from mowing during the summer months and encourage powerline companies to work with private landowners to manage powerline vegetation that provides habitat for insects and wildlife?

Additional Information provided by author:

<https://monarchjointventure.org/images/uploads/documents/Monarch.Habitat.Manual.ROW.NEast.ver16.pdf>

<https://fws.gov/initiative/pollinators/monarchs>

<https://www.dairylandpower.com/about-us>

<https://beyondpesticides.org/dailynewsblog/2022/07/monarchs-listed-as-endangered-by-international-safety-group-while-u-s-fails-to-take-meaningful-action/>

For another example see pdf: "Utility Helping Wildlife" Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative and the National Wild Turkey Federation sign Memorandum of Understanding by Ron Brenneman, Turkey Call Magazine, September/October 1993

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