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FARM BILL POLLINATION EFFORTS SUCCESSFUL

*Pollinator Partnership Applauds Congress for Strong Pollinator Protection Measures
in Farm Bill Conference Report & Supports Final Enactment*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA May 15, 2008 – The Pollinator Partnership applauded Congress for including strong pollinator protection provisions in the final Farm Bill conference report (H.R. 2419) passed overwhelmingly by both the House and Senate this week.

“We applaud the congressional leaders who have taken decisive action to include key pollinator protection provisions in the final Farm Bill,” declared Roger Lang, Pollinator Partnership Board Chair. “For the first time ever, the Farm Bill specifically mentions pollinators and contains meaningful pollinator protection measures; and we support final enactment of this Farm Bill.” Lang is a Montana rancher and conservationist.

Representatives Alcee L. Hastings (FL) and Earl Blumenauer (OR) and Senators Barbara Boxer (CA), Max Baucus (MT) and Saxby Chambliss (GA) recognized that pollinators were in peril and took the early lead in 2007 by introducing 4 pollinator protection bills. They were joined by over 90 colleagues as cosponsors in a truly bipartisan effort. They successfully worked to incorporate provisions from these bills into the Farm Bill.

Laurie Davies Adams, Pollinator Partnership Executive Director, issued an important cautionary note, however, that not all is good news for pollinators in the Farm Bill. “While we are pleased about the pollinator protection provisions, we recognize that there are significant shortcomings in other parts of the Farm Bill, such as the failure to include an adequate sodbuster safeguard and other rollbacks in key conservation programs, that are of great concern,” warned Adams. “We will continue to urge Congress and the Administration to work aggressively and find ways to address these deficiencies, as they could result in major losses of pollinator habitat.”

“The campaign to pollinate the farm Bill has been an outstanding, collaborative effort,” said Tom Van Arsdall, Pollinator Partnership Public Affairs Director. “Pollinator protection provisions were supported by an amazingly diverse array of over 50 agriculture, conservation, wildlife and environmental organizations.”

The new pollinator protection research and conservation measures are the culmination of a 5-year campaign by the Pollinator Partnership and many allied groups to ‘pollinate’ the Farm Bill. The new provisions will help shape important programs in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) with the objective of protecting and enhancing the habitat and health of both native and managed pollinators—benefiting both agricultural producers and wildlife systems that are vitally dependent on pollination services. The Pollinator Partnership is committed to partnering with

USDA agencies and allied stakeholder groups to realize the potential of the new provisions in the form of sound science and helping farmers and ranchers improve pollinator habitat and practices on agricultural lands.

A summary analysis of the legislative language and Statement of Managers covering pollinator conservation, pollinator research and honey bee provisions—“*Pollinating the Farm Bill, Conference Report Summary*”— and other pollinator-related Farm Bill documents can be accessed at http://www.pollinator.org/farm_bill.htm.

The **Pollinator Partnership** works to promote awareness and scientific understanding of pollinators; gather, organize and disseminate information about pollinators; provide a forum to identify and discuss pollinator issues; and promote projects, initiatives and activities that enhance pollinator conservation. **National Pollinator Week** is June 22-30, 2008, with events being planned around the nation, including the release of eco-regional pollinator plantings guides. For additional information about the Pollinator Partnership and National Pollinator Week, visit www.pollinator.org.

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