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COEVOLUTION INSTITUTE APPLAUDS INTRODUCTION OF BLUMENAUER POLLINATOR HABITAT CONSERVATION LEGISLATION

WASHINGTON, DC –The Coevolution Institute (CoE) applauded Representative Earl Blumenauer for his continued leadership on behalf of pollinators and pollinator conservation in introducing The Pollinator Habitat Protection Act of 2007. Representatives Alcee Hastings and Randy Kuhl signed on as original cosponsors.

“Insect and other animal pollinators that help American agriculture produce much of the food we eat are at risk due to habitat losses and other problems,” said Laurie Adams, CoE Executive Director. “This legislation takes an important step in toward addressing pollinator challenges by utilizing existing Farm Bill conservation programs to strengthen both native and managed pollinator habitat. If enacted, existing conservation programs will acknowledge pollinator habitat as an important conservation resource and reward producers whose conservation practices are beneficial for pollinators.”

Insect and other animal pollinators play a pivotal part in the production of food that humans eat—with estimates as high as one out of every three bites—and in the reproduction of at least 75 percent of flowering plants. Commodities produced with the help of animal pollinators generate significant income for agricultural producers.

“By increasing pollinator habitat on the land, this bill supports a diversity of native and managed pollinators,” said Scott Hoffman Black, Executive Director of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. “It will improve crop security and the sustainability of agriculture, by helping farmers in the United States diversity their pollinator portfolio.”

CoE advocates amending, or 'pollinating,' existing farm bill programs on a targeted basis to address the needs of pollinators—both wild and managed. Recommendations include: (1) Pollinators and pollinator habitat should be identified as a priority resource concern; (2) pollinator habitat and other practices should be specifically recognized in conservation programs providing technical and cost-share assistance and conservation incentives; and (3) research should be directed to provide the science and tools needed to address a range of pollinator challenges and conservation practices. “Pollinators, agriculture and healthy ecosystems deserve no less,” concluded Adams.

Blumenauer announced his intention to introduce pollinator habitat legislation during his June 26 testimony before the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans concerning pollinators and their role in wildlife habitat on public lands.

Blumenauer’s pollinator habitat bill is similar to S. 1496 and complements H.R. 1709, introduced by Representative Alcee Hastings, which focuses on pollinator research. Blumenauer is also a cosponsor of H.R. 1709.

“The Pollinator Habitat Protection Act would help growers like me provide additional natural forage for pollinators at a time well after almond bloom when food supplies for bees are critical to maintaining strong hives for almond pollination the following winter.”

Dan Cummings, Chico, California almond grower.
Cummings is a Blue Diamond board member and chairs the Almond Board of California’s Bee Task Force.

CoE's Farm Bill position, a group statement by a diverse array of organizations, researchers and other stakeholder expressing support for the legislation, and other Farm Bill information can be accessed at http://www.pollinator.org/farm_bill.htm.

The mission of CoE is to catalyze stewardship of biodiversity. CoE places a high priority on efforts to protect and enhance animal pollinators (invertebrates, birds and mammals) and their habitats in both working and wild lands. More information about CoE may be accessed at <http://www.coevolution.org>. CoE facilitates the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC), a tri-national collaboration working 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 pollinators. For more information about NAPPC, go to <http://www.nappc.org> or call 415.362.1137.

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