



MINNESOTA LTAP

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



# Local Operational Research Assistance (OPERA) Program

## Pollinator Habitat Along Roadsides

During the past 10 years, pollinator species such as monarch butterflies and other wildlife have declined due to the loss of native habitats from increasing development, intensive agricultural practices, and greater use of insecticides. Roadsides, in particular, have grown in importance as a refuge for pollinators.

Washington County public works staff, in collaboration with the Washington Conservation District, are testing four different methods of site preparation and seeding to determine which is the most effective and efficient way to increase floral resources for pollinators along roadsides. Those methods include application of various conventional and organic herbicides, mowing, and broadcast seeding.

Washington County received a \$5,000 grant through the Local OPERA Program for the project team to purchase 22 pounds of seed for the three-year project. The team designed the seed mix specifically to provide nectar for pollinators during the spring, summer, and fall. In addition, the seed is readily available at most native plant retailers and costs of less than \$500 per acre.

Once the floral seed has become established and been maintained over the course of three growing seasons, the project team will use what they've learned from the process to determine the best methods for enhancing roadsides with pollinator resources. Ultimately, the project team will share their findings with other local agencies seeking to provide habitat and demonstrate stewardship at the local level.

### Project Leader

Wayne Sandberg

### Agency

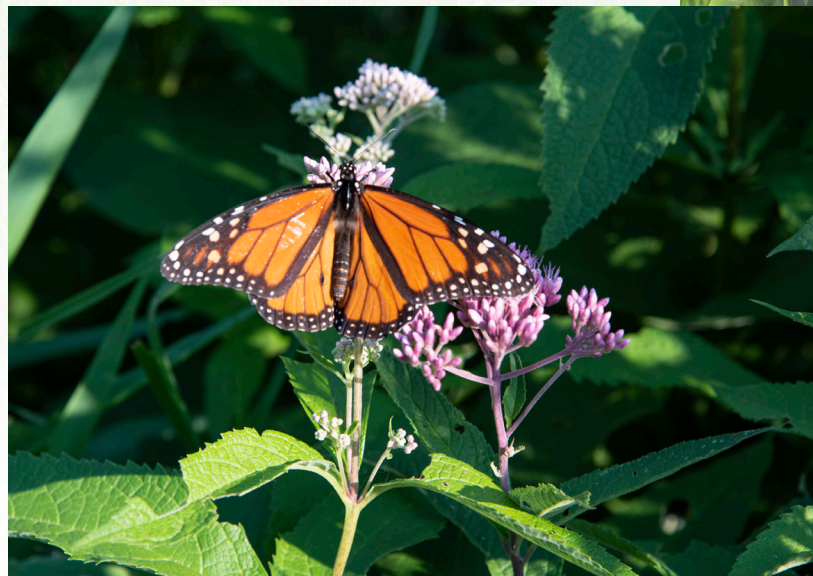
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### Phone

651-430-4323

### OPERA Funding

\$5,000



*More information about the Local OPERA Program is at [mnltp.umn.edu/opera](http://mnltp.umn.edu/opera)*



*Test plot locations for pollinator habitat along roadsides in Denmark Township, Washington County, Minnesota*

The Local Operational Research Assistance (OPERA) Program encourages maintenance employees from all cities and counties to get involved in operational, “hands-on” research. OPERA helps to develop innovations in the construction and maintenance operations of local government transportation organizations and share those ideas statewide.

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Local OPERA Program partners: Minnesota Local Road Research Board (LRRB), Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), and Minnesota Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) at the Center for Transportation Studies, University of Minnesota.

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