Toyota, NEEF and P2 Team Up on Pollinator Friendly Places Project

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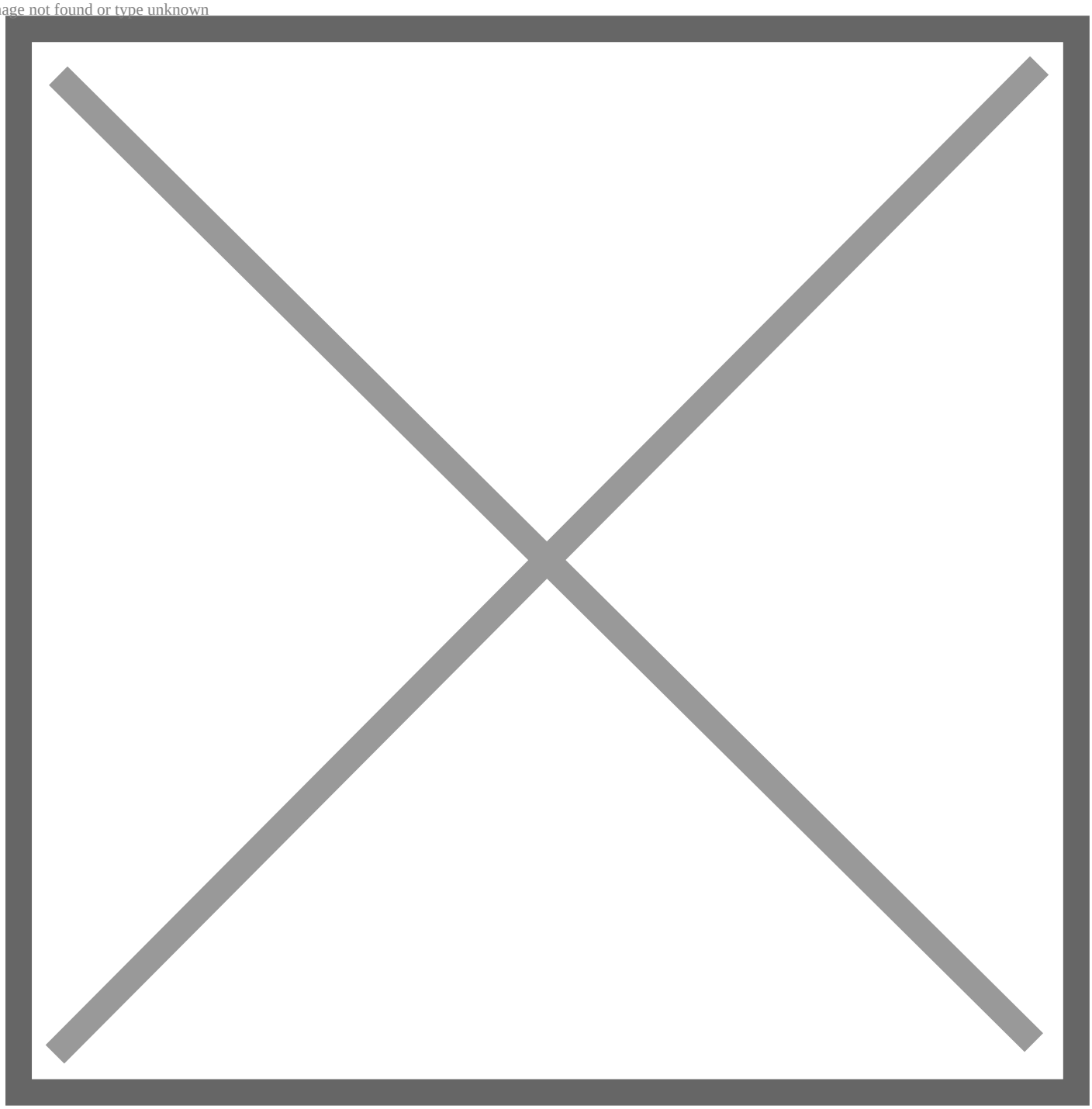

PLANO, Texas (April 29, 2022) – Pollinators put food on our tables. One out of every three bites we eat comes to us courtesy of pollinators such as bees, butterflies, moths, flower flies, beetles and bats. Today, Toyota is donating $400,000 to the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) and the Pollinator Partnership (P2) that will be used to enhance 26,000 acres of pollinator habitat across North America over the next five years.

“Toyota believes in supporting pollinator populations because they are so critical to our food system,” said Becky Martin, manager of environmental sustainability at Toyota. “We are working with NEEF and P2 to enhance 26,000 acres of habitat, which is the same size as our land footprint in North America, with experts in pollinator conservation.”

The nonprofit NEEF will develop and administer the 2022 Biodiversity Conservation Grant Program, which will fund projects to create, improve and protect habitats for butterflies, bees, bats and others. The organization will select the grantees, manage the payments and work with the grantees during the life of their project. NEEF will also be responsible for evaluating and reporting back to Toyota on the projects and their impacts.

“NEEF will also work with Toyota to provide hands-on volunteer activities to allow Toyota team members and their families to actively participate in pollinator enhancement projects supported by the grant program,” said Tony Richardson, program director for Public Lands Engagement at NEEF. “There is an incredible demand for this type of support and incredible work going on throughout the country.”

P2 will distribute native wildflower seeds to qualified applicants to plant in prairies, meadows, gardens or other habitats that already have flowering vegetation. Adding flowering plants boosts the overall health and diversity of the habitat. Recipients of the seeds include private landowners, non-profits and local, state and federal government agencies. Thus far, P2 has supported 76 project sites across 13 states, Mexico and Canada totaling 1500 acres.

“About 75% of crop plants require or benefit from pollination and ecosystems would seriously decline or go extinct without pollinators,” commented Kelly Rourke, executive director of P2. “Pollinators play a necessary role in the reproduction of up to 90% of flowering plants around the world.”

P2 is partnering with the World Wildlife Fund Mexico to support their ongoing reforestation work in the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve (MBBR), located on the border of the central Mexico states of Michoacan and Estado de Mexico. Funding from this program is being used to support the production of 40,000 tree seedlings, including 20,000 oyamel firs and 20,000 Mexican pines, which monarchs use for their overwintering ground. These trees will be used to reforest around 100 acres of land.

In Canada, P2 is working with Pollinator Partnership Canada (P2C) to support habitat restoration on smaller parcels in British Columbia that will be used for community education and engagement.

Biodiversity is one of Toyota’s four environmental sustainability focus areas in North America. Biodiversity refers to the variety and interdependence of species and ecosystems and the natural patterns they form. Toyota’s biodiversity strategy is based on harnessing the knowledge of experts to help protect species, restore habitats and expand the reach of Toyota’s efforts to achieve broader positive conservation results.

Seventeen Toyota sites across North America have already planted pollinator gardens to nurture monarch butterflies and other pollinator species along the monarch migration path. In addition, Toyota has also worked with the Suppliers Partnership for the Environment to launch the Pollinator Project Challenge. Participating automakers and suppliers across North America have planted more than 200 pollinator gardens during the period from 2020-2021.

To learn more about the expansion project, please read a feature story published on Toyota's newsroom: https://pressroom.toyota.com/toyota-and-environmental-leaders-work-to-expand-pollinator-habitats/

If you want to learn more about Toyota's efforts in biodiversity, please visit Toyota's website: https://www.toyota.com/usa/environmentreport/biodiversity.