Bumblebees Are Now An Endangered Species

The rusty patched bumblebee (*Bombus affinis*), once such a common site in North America, is now on the endangered species list. This bee species was once abundant and thriving in 28 states and the District of Columbia. They were common in the grasslands and prairies of the East and the Midwest. Now, the bees that are left are mostly confined to small areas within twelve states and the province of Ontario Canada.

> *We are thrilled to see one of North America's most endangered species receive the protection it needs. Now that the Fish and Wildlife Service has listed the rusty-patched bumble bee as endangered, it stands a chance of surviving the many threats it faces – from the use of neonicotinoid pesticides to diseases." – Xerces Society director of endangered species, Sarah Jepsen*

The bee's population is down almost 90 percent since the 1990s. But other pollinators may reap the benefits of protecting the bumblebee as well.

> *"While this listing clearly supports the rusty patched bumble bee, the entire suite of pollinators that share its habitat, and which are so critical to natural ecosystems and agriculture, will also benefit. This is a positive step towards the conservation of this species, and we now have to roll up our sleeves to begin the actual on-the-ground conservation that will help it move toward recovery." – Rich Hatfield, Xerces Society senior conservation biologist*

It wasn't easy getting the bee listed, and there is a good chance the designation of bumble bees as an endangered species

will face more resistance from several industries and corporations. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service finalized the bumblebee's listing as an endangered species on January 11th, but it took longer than expected to put the bee on the list of endangered species. The National Cotton Council, the National Association of Home Builders, and the American Petroleum Institute pushed to postpone the decision and Trump's administration delayed Obama-era regulations that hadn't yet taken into effect, which delayed the rusty-patched bumblebee from being listed.

The Endangered Species Act was passed by Congress in 1973 and signed into law by President Nixon in December of the same year. The legislation is considered the most significant and powerful wildlife protection act in U.S. history. The Trump administration is interested in gutting or possibly ending the Endangered Species Act.

Related:

- *Monsanto's Name To Be Retired – Bayer Aims To Erase Sordid History*
- *Derailed Train Leaks 230,000 Gallons of Crude Into Iowa River*
- *GMO Rice Approved While Other GMO Grasses Cannot Be Contained*
- *Puget Sound Mussels Contain Opioids, Antidepressants, and Chemotherapy Drugs*