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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bee City USA Expands Coast To Coast As Talent, Oregon, Is Approved for Designation

Ever since Asheville [NC] City Council voted unanimously to become the inaugural Bee City USA in June, 2012, Bee City USA founders have been building a movement to welcome other cities into the Bee City USA network. Talent, Ore., located on the southern end of the Rogue River Valley, took their place as the second Bee City USA community with their unanimous vote on July 2. Asheville Mayor Esther Manheimer was thrilled with the news, expressing pride that this worthwhile program started in Asheville.

Talent's City Council let it be known that they understand the importance of pollinators, and therefore want to make their city more pollinator-friendly. Mayor Bill Cecil said, "It is fitting that the City of Talent, whose origins are rooted in the agricultural industry, should be the first City in the Rogue Valley, and the second City in the United States, to call attention to the need to protect our pollinators. There are many small adjustments we as a City can make that will have a positive effect on protecting bees, butterflies, and other pollinators for years to come." City Manager Tom Corrigan said, "We already know exactly where the street signs will go!"

The idea was brought to the city's attention by one determined beekeeper, Dolly Warden, and the Together For Talent Committee on which she serves. Already Warden's enthusiasm has inspired her neighbors in Ashland, Ore. to approach their City Council about joining the Bee City USA

movement. One of Warden's goals is to establish a pollinator corridor through town, rich in masses of flowers that are native to Oregon.

Bee City USA founder and director Phyllis Stiles has at least three-five phone and email conversations each week with people interested in having their cities designated, with the hope of raising more awareness of how residents can help the pollinators. She aspires to make people more PC (pollinator conscious, that is).

There are grassroots organizers at work in Seattle, Washington; Braselton, Georgia; and Washington, DC, to name a few. "If lots of individuals and communities begin planting native, pesticide-free flowering trees, shrubs and perennials, it will create large-scale change for thousands of species of pollinators at risk—including bees we all depend on for our food production," said Stiles. "How each city celebrates pollinators is up to them, but we especially encourage educational programs for children, like school gardens. When a child falls in love with pollinators, they are friends for life."

Bee City USA urges municipalities, individuals, organizations, corporations, and communities to promote and establish pollinator-friendly landscapes that are free of pesticides. For more information about the application process for becoming a Bee City USA community, visit www.beecityusa.org.
