

## Rusty patched bumblebee officially added to endangered species list

*[Editor's note: Read the GLP's coverage of pollinators [here](#).]*

The rusty patched bumblebee on Tuesday [March 21, 2017] became the first officially endangered bee species in the continental U.S., overcoming objections from some business interests and a last-minute delay ordered by the Trump administration.

One of many bee types that have suffered steep population declines, the rusty patched has disappeared from about 90 percent of its range in the past 20 years. It previously was common across the East Coast and much of the Midwest, where it played a crucial role as a pollinator of crops and wild plants.

Its listing as an endangered species means the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will devise a plan for returning the imperiled bee to “a healthy and secure condition,” the U.S. Department of Interior said. “We will work with stakeholders to ensure collaborative conservation among landowners, farmers, industry, and developers in the areas where the species is native.”

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Scientists say disease, pesticide exposure, habitat loss and climate change are among possible reasons for the decline of the bee, named for the rusty reddish patch on the backs of workers and males. Most of the grasslands and tallgrass prairies where they once thrived have been converted to farms or urban areas.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Rusty Patched Bumblebee First of Species Called Endangered](#)**

**For more background on the Genetic Literacy Project, read [GLP on Wikipedia](#)**