

# UNION COUNTY

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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### News Release

## **Union County Bringing Back the Bees** *Plants Clover on Inactive Landfill to Support Pollinators*

**MONROE, NC (November 17, 2016)** – Union County is bringing the buzz back to its Solid Waste Management Facility. Union County’s Cooperative Extension, Parks and Recreation, and Public Works Division of Solid Waste partnered with the Union County Master Gardeners and Union County Bee Keepers Association to plant bee-friendly clover over sections of the Union County landfill in an effort to support the declining pollinator population.

The last decade has been hard on bees, reducing their number year after year. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, three-fourths of the world’s flowering plants depend on pollinators to reproduce, and in the U.S., bees are the main pollinators of fruits and vegetables. But bees are struggling as habitat loss, disease, parasites, and environmental contaminants have all contributed to the decline of more than 4,000 species of native bees in North America. One simple way that conservationists recommend to support the pollinators is to plant wildflowers native to the region.

Thanks to the collective effort of these public and private organizations, Ladino Clover was recently planted at the County’s municipal solid waste (MSW) landfill. This portion of the MSW landfill covers approximately 10 acres and was declared inactive in December of 1997 and properly closed per NCDENR requirements in March of 1998. The organizations hope the clover covering the site will create a pollinator-friendly habitat that allows bees to thrive as well as other local wildlife that will benefit from the new ground cover.

“This is a very important project and we’re proud to be a part of it,” said Ron Gilkerson, Director of Solid Waste Division, UCPW. “Bees are extremely valuable to us and over the last decade, startling research has shown that these hardworking creatures are in decline. We’re excited to work with the Master Gardeners and Bee Keepers Association to do our part and help reverse the trend.”

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