



News Release

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Federally-endangered bee species discovered at Pine Bend Bluffs Natural Area in Dakota County *Flint Hills Resources and partners celebrate 20 years of restoring large natural area*

Inver Grove Heights, Minn. – A rare, federally-endangered bee species was recently discovered at the Pine Bend Bluffs Natural Area. Identified as a rusty patched bumble bee, the lone male pollinator found in the habitat represents approximately 0.2% of the species' known world population. Minnesota is home to the largest population of the pollinator species at about 35%, with most bees making their home in the Twin Cities metro area.

“The Pine Bend Bluffs Natural Area is a beautiful bluffland along the Mississippi River filled with unique hidden treasures,” said Karen Schik, ecologist at Friends of the Mississippi River. “We are thrilled that the rusty patched bumble bee has made the habitat its home and look forward to continue working with Flint Hills Resources in these successful restoration and preservation efforts.”

Owned by Flint Hills Resources, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and Macalester College; and located across the highway from its Pine Bend refinery, the [Pine Bend Bluffs Natural Area](#) is one of the largest natural areas in the Twin Cities. For 20 years, Flint Hills has partnered with [Friends of the Mississippi River](#) to restore hundreds of acres of natural prairie and oak savanna with the goal of restoring healthy, functioning ecosystems. Located along the Mississippi River in Inver Grove Heights, the area provides critical habitat for both resident and migratory animals and is a migration corridor for millions of songbirds and 40% of North America's waterfowl and shorebirds – and now, a rusty patched bumble bee.

“The discovery of this endangered bee species in the Pine Bend Bluffs Natural Area is a testament to the environmental dedication of our volunteers and employees,” said Don Kern, engineering and facilities manager at Flint Hills Resources Pine Bend refinery. “We're proud to partner with the Friends of the Mississippi River, and thank them for their fantastic work in helping to restore this natural area.”

About Flint Hills Resources

Flint Hills Resources Pine Bend refinery produces transportation fuels used throughout the Midwest, including most of Minnesota's gasoline, diesel fuel, jet fuel, as well as other products people rely on such as propane and asphalt. Located 17 miles southeast of Minneapolis, Pine Bend has a capacity of 345,000 barrels per day and is among the cleanest, most efficient and safest oil refineries in the country. Flint Hills Resources directly and indirectly supports more than 4,000 Minnesota jobs and has invested nearly \$1.7 billion in upgrades and improvements to its Minnesota facilities since 2010. With 1,000 full-time employees, the Flint Hills Resources Pine Bend refinery is one of the largest

employers in Dakota County. More information about the company is available at pinebendrefinery.com.

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