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Bumblebee Endangered Species Listing Urged by Green Groups

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Two environmental groups on Monday petitioned the Biden administration to protect the bumblebee under the Endangered Species Act to prevent the pollinator's further decline.

The Center for Biological Diversity and the Bombus Pollinators Association of Law Students [are asking](#) the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to declare the bumblebee as endangered because they say it's vanished from eight states, mostly in the Northeast.

The bee, once found in 47 states, is an essential pollinator to native plants and crops, but its numbers have plummeted over the last 20 years due to pesticide and fungicide use, the groups said.

"The American bumble bee, like the rusty patched bumble bee and monarch butterfly, is a once wide ranging insect that, due to threats such as habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change, now needs the protection of the Endangered Species Act to dodge extinction," the groups said in their petition.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service didn't immediately respond to a request for comment Monday about next steps in the listing process.

"It's unfortunate that we're forced to call upon the Endangered Species Act to protect a species so fundamental to human and ecosystem health," Keith Hirokawa, a professor of law at Albany Law School, said in a statement. "It is our hope that the Biden administration grasps the gravity of this moment."