City of Richfield

Richfield, MN

Mayor Maria Regan Gonzalez

Pledge Summary

Richfield is a first-ring suburb of Minneapolis, MN and home to 36,000 residents. The City has 23 parks in under 7 square miles, including the 150 acre Wood Lake Nature Center. Pollinator gardens have been established in multiple city parks and city staff regularly assess where more pollinator gardens and natural landscaping can be introduced. Mayor Regan Gonzalez and the Richfield City Council recognizes the importance of pollinator education and habitat restoration/creation. By signing on to the Mayor's Monarch Pledge, Richfield will continue engaging residents about this important topic!

Action Items Committed for 2021

Communications and Convening

- Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat. This proclamation must incorporate a focus on monarch conservation.
- Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.
- Engage with city parks and recreation, public works, sustainability, and other relevant staff to identify opportunities to revise and maintain mowing programs and milkweed / native nectar plant planting programs.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- Launch or maintain an outdoor education program(s) (e.g., at schools, after-school programs, community centers and groups) that builds awareness and creates habitat by engaging students, educators, and the community in planting native milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

Systems Change

- Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).

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- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Maria Regan Gonzalez	2021	3/18/2021	Signatories

Action Items

In total, how many individuals have been reached through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in your community this year (Jan-Dec)? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field below (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.).

1200

Of the total number of individuals engaged, how many youth (0-18) were reached through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in your community this year (Jan. - Dec.)? If none, please write 0." (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.)

950 youth and 250 adults

In total, how many acres of monarch habitat have been created in your city in the last 12 months? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 3). Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

1

Where was the habitat created this year? Example locations may include residences, schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, shared public spaces, and more.

Parks

How are you leveraging the Mayors' Monarch Pledge program to engage marginalized communities, such as low-income communities or communities of color?

We spend a lot of time and effort in the native plants and pollinator education at our local nature center which has been doing a lot of work to reach all members of our community.

What was your community's motivation for taking and continuing to work on the Mayors' Monarch Pledge?

Request from a city councilmember

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What resources have been most helpful to you thus far and what new resources would you like to see to help meet your goals? What resources would be useful to help expand equitable engagement in community processes and access to high-quality, usable nature?

At this time, we are not sure what would help regarding resources. Unfortunately, most of our work around these topics is limited by staff capacity, not due to a lack of educational resources.

What else should we know about your monarch butterfly conservation efforts over the last year?

We have many existing efforts and continue to look at ways to increase pollinator habitat in the city. We are currently planning a pollinator garden to be installed next year at our new inclusive playground instead of traditional turf. We are also identifying areas and boulevards in the city for planting native seed mixes.

Selected Action Items

Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat. This proclamation must incorporate a focus on monarch conservation.

Date of Proclamation:

Title of Proclamation (i.e. – Monarch Day or Pollinator Week):

Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.

Please describe the groups you engaged with and how you engaged with these groups below.

Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.

Where are the medians, roadsides and public rights-of-way? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible, or describe the location)

How many milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

What is the total acreage of median and public right-of-way that has been planted with milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

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Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

How many plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Launch or maintain an outdoor education program(s) (e.g., at schools, after-school programs, community centers and groups) that builds awareness and creates habitat by engaging students, educators, and the community in planting native milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).

What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? If you are involved with another National Wildlife Federation program, please mention that below. (Please include a link to the program, if possible)

We educate all first graders in Richfield and other schools on pollinators with our bee program and we have had public programs on honeybees and native pollinators as well. All second graders in the district plus many other groups also learn the value of insect pollinators in our apple cider classes and third graders learn it again in the plant & animal adaptation class which emphasizes the interdependence of plants & animals and we use insects as the primary plant propagators.

How many schools, community groups, leaders, or centers were engaged in this effort? How many of these collaborations and partnerships are "new"? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

6

Please list the names of the schools you are working with.

Richfield Public Schools (Centennial, STEM, RDLS, Sheridan Hills); Blessed Trinity Catholic Schools, Cornelia Elem

What resources, if any, are you providing to educators?

Pre-fieldtrip videos and activities and post-trip edu materials

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How many students and educators would you estimate are being reached? Please limit your answer to only number of adults and youths engaged in the answer field (e.g., 200 students and 20 educators).

950 students and 54 teachers

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Wood Lake Nature Center

How many acres of monarch and pollinator habitat have been planted through this effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 0.5 acres). For reference, 1 acre = 43,560 square feet and is about the size of a football field without the end zones. Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

0

What is the maintenance schedule to ensure planted habitat is maintained?

N/A

Engage with city parks and recreation, public works, sustainability, and other relevant staff to identify opportunities to revise and maintain mowing programs and milkweed / native nectar plant planting programs.

How many community organizations and groups participated? Please list them below.

Wood Lake Nature Center staff and volunteers

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and revisions/maintenance implemented for mowing or planting programs.

Nature center staff planted small raised garden beds on the west side of the building with native, pollinator-friendly prairie flowers and labelled them for visitors to identify the plants (passive education), and volunteers restored the rain garden in the parking lot with all native pollinator plants. We manage a courtyard garden as a bee garden and a demonstration garden by bird feeders as a butterfly garden. Volunteers spread milkweed seed in our prairies and trail edges by the marsh earlier this fall, and we are spreading more seed – coneflowers and asters in our prairie and some mixed native flowers in our forest area this week. This past spring and summer we improved habitat of the forest floor in 4 acres of our forest on the east side by planting 7500 native sedges, grasses and flowers. Last fall we also planted 300 native fruiting shrubs in that same area.

Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

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What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

12

Please describe the extent of revisions or maintenance to invasive species removal programs, as well as the practices or techniques used to remove the invasive plants.

This year at Wood Lake Nature Center, we continued our 6th year of prairie restoration on the 10-acre prairie that is home to the rusty patch bumblebee. The staff spread more seed of native pollinator flowers this fall and Prairie Restoration has been managing invasives for us. We also improved habitat in the 2-acre savanna that is adjacent to the prairie by removing invasives (pulling garlic mustard and removing buckthorn, among others) and thinning the aspen trees to promote the prairie plants and bur oak trees. This year, our Sustainability Commission created an event series at the nature center where volunteers came during different seasons and helped remove different invasives, including garlic mustard and buckthorn.

Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

N/A

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

Complete (The City references the County and State noxious weed lists, neither of which list milkweed)

Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

N/A

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

Complete

If this action is Complete, please include the date it was completed and share a 1-2 sentence description. Please include a copy of the policy by uploading or linking below.

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2013; https://library.municode.com/mn/richfield/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CHIXPUSA_S925NU_925.06PUNUSPPRLAMA

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