City of Solana Beach

Solana Beach, CA

Mayor Lesa Heebner

Pledge Summary

Solana Beach, located along the northern coast of San Diego County, is known for its beautiful beaches, parks, prime surf spots, and abundant walking and hiking trails. There is sunshine almost every day and winters are just a few degrees cooler than summers. Fog and low clouds usually hug the coastline in the summertime in the late evening and the wee hours of the morning but burns off by midday. Mayor Lesa Heebner has committed to saving the monarch butterfly and other pollinators by signing this Mayors' Monarch Pledge and looks forward to engaging residents to build more pollinator habitat throughout the city.

Action Items Committed for 2022

Communications and Convening

- Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.
- Engage with gardening leaders and partners (e.g., Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, Nature Centers, Native Plant Society Chapters , other long-standing and influential community leaders) to support monarch butterfly conservation.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

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

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Lesa Heebner	2026	5/14/2026	
Mayor Lesa Heebner	2025	12/12/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Lesa Heebner	2024	2/20/2024	Signatories
Mayor Lesa Heebner	2023	3/9/2023	Signatories
Mayor Lesa Heebner	2022	12/15/2021	Signatories
Mayor Lesa Heebner	2021	3/25/2021	Signatories

Action Items

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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.).

145

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.)

100 adults; 45 children

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.

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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.

Habitat is being created in all of the above. Examples: • Residents purchased nearly 100 milkweed and nectar plants for their private gardens during our May 2022 sale. • An additional 45 plants were purchased for public gardens maintained by the City and for our local Boys & Girls Club garden at the Center for a Healthy Lifestyle. • The pollinator garden at Saint James Academy and Catholic Church is nationally recognized. • Pollinator habitat is regularly expanded along our Coastal Rail Trail linear public park along Hwy. 101 through Solana Beach. This habitat includes a Community Garden tended by our SeaWeeders Garden Club. • Our first dedicated pollinator garden was planted in 2021 at La Colonia Community Center, located in the historic first neighborhood of Solana Beach, which was established by Mexican-American ranch and farm-hands and still is home to fourth- and fifth-generation descendants of these families.

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

The pledge and its purpose are promoted during all planting events and featured at our annual Dia de los Muertos celebration, held on October 23 in 2022 in the historic La Colonia de Eden Gardens community. In preparation for this event, one of our SeaWeeder Garden Club members gave a brief presentation about the City's pledge efforts and the importance of sustaining and expanding monarch habitat to a group of students and volunteers who were creating craft-paper monarch decorations for the fiesta. At Dia de los Muertos, as well as at our May Fiesta del Sol city-wide street fair, the SeaWeeders Garden Club hosts a booth featuring family-oriented craft activities and educational information about monarchs and other pollinators. Activities this year included making origami butterflies and the sale of the children's book Monarch Butterflies by Ann Hobbie (illustrated by Olga Baumert), chair of the board at Monarch Joint Venture. The book covers the life

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cycle of monarchs, their annual migrations, and the importance of the butterflies in Mexican culture. At both events, the garden club also gave away native milkweed and nectar plant seeds, as well as their proven recipes for do-it-yourself, non-toxic garden remedies for weed and pest management. Both events attracted not only Solana Beach residents, but also visitors from throughout San Diego County.

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

Members of our citizens Climate Action Commission teamed with the SeaWeeders Garden Club in 2020 to bring the goals of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge to the attention of the City Council and Mayor Lesa Heebner. We immediately recognized that taking the Pledge would further the goals of our Climate Action Plan, adopted in 2017. In February 2020, the Commission expanded and amended Chapter 4 of the City's Climate Action Plan to specifically include the following strategies relative to protecting our coastal habitat: Strategy 1: Landscaping. Encourage the use of native landscaping. Educate the public on the LUP requirements to protect native trees including oak, manzanita, sycamore, cottonwood, willow and toyon trees. Strategy 2: Protect and restore native habitat and ecosystem functioning. Increase public knowledge, engagement and cooperation to support climate-informed restoration. Support and explore the possibilities of activities such as restoring habitat along roadways, managing invasive and/or problematic species, and restoring native plant communities. Restore the open portions of the Stevens Creek drainage. Strategy 3: Enable wildlife movement. Improve wildlife connectivity passages and riparian corridors and plant native plant species to attract local pollinators including bees and butterflies.

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?

It has been helpful that our SeaWeeders' Garden Club has been so successful in generating funding from private donors to augment City funding of habitat development and maintenance. It would be helpful to have eco-regional recipes for creating pollinator habitat, keeping in mind the diversity of native plants that are needed to keep butterflies, bees and other pollinators happy and healthy. For example, for a given square-footage of land in Coastal Southern California, how many one-gallon plants would you want to plant? How many one-gallon plants would a five-gallon plant replace. What is a good ratio of milkweed to flowering nectar plants, and of milkweed to plants that provide structure for chrysalides.

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

We would like to believe that our Pledge efforts have inspired citizen scientists and pollinator-habitat promotional activities by members of our community, but in reality our residents inspire us. Examples: One Solana Beach family has been protecting and documenting monarch preservation efforts for many years right in their own garden. This couple annually grows milkweed in 6-inch pots and, when caterpillars appear, protect the plants and their larval visitors in mesh containers. After the monarchs metamorphosize and the butterflies appear strong, they release the fliers. In recent years, as monarch

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preservation has become a more and more compelling cause, this family puts the word out about their “release days” so friends and neighbors can join to watch. This year, this humble couple released 58 butterflies — each of whose life they documented in their annual spreadsheet. (See attached spreadsheet) Our local schools reopened this year, after two years of full or partial closure due to the Covid 19 pandemic. But their educational vegetable gardens had died from neglect. In recent weeks, a team of local parents have approached the SeaWeeders and the Solana Beach School Board to advocate for funding to replant the gardens and resume the educational activities they provide. Since school landscapes have always been a target for expanding local pollinator habitat, the City and the garden club look forward to supporting this effort. The SeaWeeders already have pledged $1,000 to help purchase plants.

Selected Action Items

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.

As noted previously and as described in answer to Action 19, in May 2022 our SeaWeeders Garden Club of Solana Beach sponsored a native plant sale, offering Salvia 'Bee's Bliss,’ coastal sunflower, yarrow, verbena, California aster, Santa Barbara Daisy and two types of native milkweed.

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?

SeeWeeders Group

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

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Please describe your effort in completing this action.

In December, 2021, our local Seaweeders Garden Club launched an “Adopt a Pollinator” fundraising campaign to generate funding for current and future additions to pollinator habitat. Local businessman Kevin Lustig, CEO of Scientist.com, pledged a $3,000 matching contribution. The City helped publicize the campaign, which culminated in May 2022 with a native plant sale sponsored by the SeaWeeders. Nearly 100 native milkweed and nectar plants were purchased for private gardens by our residents, another 45 were donated by the SeaWeeders to the City of Solana Beach and planted by our contractors in three public gardens. As mentioned above, the SeaWeeders Garden Club also has sustained sales of the book Monarch Butterflies to raise funds for plant purchases. The

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club purchased books at a deep discount offered to non-profit organizations and packages them with native milkweed and nectar plant seeds. In addition to the city-wide Dia de los Muertos and Fiesta del Sol events, the club promotes online sales through its own website and the website of its parent organization, the Solana Beach Civic & Historical Society.

Engage with gardening leaders and partners (e.g., Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, Nature Centers, Native Plant Society Chapters , other long-standing and influential community leaders) to support monarch butterfly conservation.

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

On April 29, our local Civic & Historical Society and SeaWeeders Garden Club hosted University of California, San Diego PhD researcher Dillon Travis as a speaker at their first in-person meeting following Covid 19 pandemic shut-downs.

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and their monarch butterfly conservation efforts.

Travis has been conducting field research on the diversity, importance and health of native bee and other pollinator populations in Southern California. He is a researcher with the Kohn Lab, Section of Ecology, Behavior and Evolution, Division of Biological Sciences. His well-attended discussion included suggestions for replacing residential lawns and gardens with native pollinator habitat. Copy this link to view meeting: https://youtu.be/-A0OP1ENBjE Local garden club members also have teamed with the City of Solana Beach landscape contractor to supervise planting and care for our pollinator gardens. Our plants are all purchased from native garden nurseries, including Native West Nursery, Moosa Creek and the Luca and Micaela nursery at Butterfly Farms, a vivarium and educational organization located in neighboring Encinitas.

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