City of Solana Beach

Solana Beach, CA

Mayor Lesa Heebner

Pledge Summary

In 2020, the population of Solana Beach was approximately 13,000 residents. The City's boundaries enclose an area of 3.5 mi2 with 1.7 miles set along the coastline. Temperatures average 62 degrees in winter and 77 degrees in the summertime. Mayor Lesa Heebner and the City Council 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 2023

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

- 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.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

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Mayor Lesa Heebner	2022	12/15/2021	Signatories
Mayor Lesa Heebner	2021	3/25/2021	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.).

500

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.)

200 youths and 300 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.

0.5

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.

All of the above.

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 22 in 2023 in the historic La Colonia de Eden Gardens community. 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 again 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 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, nectar plant and native tree seeds, as well as their proven recipes for do-it-yourself, non-toxic weed and pest management solutions. Both events attracted both Solana Beach residents and visitors from throughout San Diego County.

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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 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 and currently in the process of being updated. 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 (land use plan) 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 butterfly.

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 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. When butterflies appear strong, they release the fliers. In recent years, as monarch 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 close to 80 butterflies — each of whose life they documented in their annual spreadsheet. Also in 2023, a team of local elementary-school parents has renovated and expanded the educational garden at two Solana Beach elementary schools, Skyline and Solana Vista. Since the schools reopened after Covid-19 shutdowns, parent volunteers had been reviving, cultivating and

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tending the educational vegetable gardens, which had been abandoned after grant funding for garden education expired. In March, the parents teamed with 50 volunteers from the Solana Beach Presbyterian Church's Community Service Day -- as well as dozens of school-aged "Junior Gardeners -- to dramatically expand the Skyline garden. The church donated bags of compost, as well. They planted dozens of pollinators, 12 kinds of tomatoes, fruit trees and flowering vines for three arbors. A sidewalk was lined with corn and sunflowers. They added wind chimes, birdhouses, gnomes, bunny statues and painted rocks. The project is part of a broader effort to re-establish a garden education position and program in the Solana Beach School District. The SeaWeeders have pledged $1,000 to support the cause.

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.

The City has engaged the local community gardening group the SeaWeeders to promote the planting of native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants. As discussed prior in this report, the SeaWeeders have worked with local groups such as the Boys and Girls Club, St. James Academy, local elementary schools and residents to plant several areas city-wide. These collaborations also include education efforts, especially for the youth. In addition, the City coordinated with the local elementary schools and parents to give a Honey Bees Presentation and install a Mindfulness Garden behind Skyline Elementary.

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.

As stated prior, the local groups the City has engaged with include: SeaWeeders Master Gardeners La Colonia Community Foundation Skyline and Solana Vista Elementary Schools Boys and Girls Club of San Dieguito

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

Please see the following video showing a presentation at our local Civic and Historical Society https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnnvf2Gki-U. Other activities have been described in depth in previous answers.

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

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

The City partnered with the SeaWeeders to add and maintain native milkweed and nectar producing plants in 2 community gardens on our Coastal Rail Trail. We also added new locations at our La Colonia Community Center, Fire Station and El Viento Pocket Park.

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

100

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

The City's Public Works Staff worked with the SeaWeeders to maintain existing milkweed plants at our Coastal Rail Trail and improved another area of our CRT with new plants. In addition, the milkwees and nectar gardens at our City facilities were maintained and are thriving.

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

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

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Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

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Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

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

The City has planted pollinator-friendly plants at City facilities including City Hall (635 South Hwy 101), La Colonia Park (715 Valley Avenue) and the Fire Station (500 Lomas Santa Fe Drive). In addition, many plants have been installed on the City's Coastal Rail Trail (CRT), which is a multi-use path the runs the length of the City north to south along Highway 101. The CRT has two community gardens where pollinator plants and milkweed were planted in large quantities, and then throughout the trail along the 2 mile stretch.

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

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200

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.

2

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

These planted areas are maintained by the City's professional landscape contractor on a regular basis. In addition, the SeaWeeders tend to the Community Gardens along the CRT. Also, the attached pictures show the dedication event of our Monarch Garden at La Colonia Community Center. The pictures are of our Mayor and Councilmembers at the event and cutting the ribbon.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

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Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

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Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

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How many garden signs are being displayed and where are they located? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

5

Please describe the educational information on the sign(s), and provide any links to externally purchased sign(s).

The educational signs are located at our community gardens and at our dedicated garden at the La Colonia Community center.

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

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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)

https://www.delmartimes.net/lifestyle/story/2023-04-25/parent-volunteer-brings-skyline-school-garden-back-to-life

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.

Solana Vista Elementary Skyline Elementary

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

N/A

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).

300 students, 5 educators

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

Same as previously mentioned.

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.

0.5

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

Habitat areas are maintained on a regular, set schedule.

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