City of Solana Beach

Solana Beach, CA

Mayor Lesa Heebner

Pledge Summary

Solana Beach is a city in northern San Diego County with a population of roughly 13,000. It is a coastal community and has long been a leader in environmental protection. Solana Beach first joined the Mayor's Monarch Pledge in 2021 and looks forward to continuing to engage with residents and the community to expand pollinator habitat.

Action Items Committed for 2024

Communications and Convening

- 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.
- 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

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- 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
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.).

1250

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.)

750

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.

Habitat is being created in all of the above. Planning continues for a significant expansion of local pollinator habitat through a joint project between the City of Solana Beach and the Santa Fe Irrigation District. The Irrigation District has offered to share a half-acre of land fronting its large Larrick Reservoir for development of a public park.

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

The 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 rand and farm-hands, and still is home to fourth- and fifth-generation descendants. This garden features bilingual (English/Spanish) educational signage about the plants growing there and the lifecycle of the monarch butterfly.

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

Members of the Climate Action Commission teamed up with the SeaWeeders Garden Club in 2020 to bring the goals of the Mayor's Monarch Pledge to the attention of City Council and the Mayor. The City recognized the Pledge would further the goals of the adopted Climate Action Plan.

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

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help expand equitable engagement in community processes and access to high-quality, usable nature?

It has been helpful that the SeaWeeders' Garden Club has been successful in raising funds from private donors to augment the City investment in habitat development and maintenance. We also rely on the SeaWeeder's members knowledge about appropriate native pollinators for our coastal micro-climate. The CalScape online garden planner tool is another valuable resource. The Wildlife Federation could be helpful in providing audio-visual resources that could be linked from QR codes planned to augment the educational signs. It would be helpful if the Monarch Project could provide micro-climate regional recipes for creating pollinator habitat in residential and public gardens. For example, what is a good ratio of milkweed to flowering nectar plants, and of the milkweed to plants that provide structure for chrysalides?

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

In April, Heidi Dewar, a Commissioner on the Climate Action Commission, presented to the Climate Action Commission about the importance of expanding pollinator habitat in urban areas and why that goal is included in our Climate Action Plan. Our Pledge efforts may be inspiring additional pollinator-habitat protection and promotional activities by members of our community. Several families now report that they have adopted monarch caterpillars during the growing season and protected them and resulting chrysalides from predators in mesh enclosures stocked with milkweed. Two of the families undertaking these efforts together released 140 monarch butterflies this year. Also this fall, we celebrated the opening of a renovated garden at Skyline Elementary School. The mindful garden is designed as a space for children (and adults) to connect to the present moment through nature.

Selected Action Items

Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.

How many plants were sold and/or given away at your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

113

How many people attended your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

9

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to host the event?

SeaWeeders

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Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.

Where is the demonstration garden located and how does this location relate to the cultural significance of the monarch (if relevant)? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible)

The first location is at the La Colonia Community Center, located int he heart of the Latino community, whose traditions celebrate the monarch butterfly as a representation of souls returning to visit their families.

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

SeaWeeders; Climate Action Commission

What is the size of the demonstration garden (in acres)? 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.

0.25

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

2

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

Two bilingual signs are located at the initial demonstration garden. More are planned for the liner park, the Coastal Rails Trail, and at City Hall.

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.

SeaWeeders Garden Club; Solana Beach Junior Gardeners; Climate Action Commission; Climate Action Commission Pollinator Friendly City Sub-Committee.

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

In 2024, the City of Solana Beach expanded pollinator habitats in four public gardens, adding 108 native milkweed and nectar/pollinator plants. The City is exploring adding a pollinator garden to City Hall. This would involve removing drought-tolerant landscaping and re-planting with pollinator 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.

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

SeaWeeders and Climate Action Commission

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

Ongoing, day-to-day partnership with the Climate Action Commission and SeaWeeders on projects. Note that six Solana Beach residential gardens featured in the 2024 California Native Plant Society/San Diego Chapter Native Garden tour. In addition, we co-hosted a pollinator plant sale for private, residential gardens with the SeaWeeders. Local residents purchased 113 plants. The Solana Beach Junior Gardeners and their parents expanded the Mindful Garden at Skyline Elementary School to include milkweed and other pollinator plants.

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