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 expand pollinator habitat.

Action Items Committed for 2025

Communications and Convening

- 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.
- Engage with Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.

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.
- 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).
- Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Systems Change

- Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.
- Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

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

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.).

13000

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.

0.05

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.

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Pollinator habitat is being created in all the above. The City has continued to work with the SeaWeeders, whose mission is to promote the sustainable beautification of the City of Solana Beach through social interaction, garden education, and home and civic enrichment to restore and enhance pollinator habitat throughout the City. In addition to the monarch garden at La Colonia Community Center, the SeaWeeders have planted on the Coastal Rail Trail, within Skyline Elementary School's Mindful Garden, and on the east side of the Fire Station. Most recently, the Pollinator Friendly City Subcommittee of the Climate & Resiliency Commission joined forces with the SeaWeeders Garden Club, Water's Path Landscape Design/Hidden Agave, and the City's Public Works department to plant a pollinator garden in front of City Hall.

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 the La Colonia Community Center (715 Valley Ave.), located in the historic first neighborhood of Solana Beach, which was established by Mexican American ranch and farm-hands. This neighborhood is still home to fourth and fifth generation descendants of these families as the heart of our long-time Latino community. The traditions of this community celebrate the monarch butterfly as a representation of souls returning to visit their families. Monarch Pledge projects continue to be promoted during public planting events and celebrations hosted in the City.

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

Members of the Climate and Resiliency Commission teamed with the SeaWeeders Garden Club in 2020 to bring the goals of the Mayor's Monarch Pledge to the attention of City Council and Mayor Lesa Heebner. The City immediately recognized that taking the Pledge would further the goals of the Climate Action Plan. The City's Climate Action Plan was amended to include 3 strategies for protecting our coastal habitat, including support for native plant and pollinator species. The City, in collaboration with the CRC's Pollinator Friendly City Committee and the SeaWeeders Garden Club, continues to work with community members to move towards the goals of the Pledge.

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?

The SeaWeeders' garden club has been helpful in spearheading planting efforts and raising funds from private donors. The SeaWeeders created a plant list in 2025 as well. This list can be used by community members as guidance on what to plant in Solana Beach to support the health and habitat of Monarchs and local pollinators. CalScape online garden planner tool has continued to be a helpful resource for staff and community members.

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

The City is currently in the process of adding interpretive and illustrative signage to three native pollinator gardens in the City: La Colonia, the Coastal Rail Trail, and the newest addition at City Hall. This signage will provide residents and visitors with information on what native and pollinator plants are in the garden, what their significance is, and which local pollinators they may attract. The garden at La Colonia will have an additional Monarch sign, which will provide visitors with more information about the life cycle of a Monarch Butterfly, and their migration.

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.

Local community garden group, the SeaWeeders, supports planting native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants whenever possible. The City works closely with this group when planting pollinator gardens on public land.

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.

Community Groups: SeaWeeders Garden Club and Climate and Resiliency Commission – Pollinator Friendly City Committee

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

The SeaWeeder Garden Club upkeeps the Coastal Rail Trail (CRT) pollinator garden through routine maintenance every Wednesday morning.

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)

60

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

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10

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

SeaWeeders

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 original demonstration garden is located at La Colonia Community Center (715 Valley), which is the City's historic first neighborhood and still home to fourth and fifth generation descendants of the original Mexican American families. Demonstration gardens have since been added on the Coastal Rail Trail and at City Hall.

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

SeaWeeders, the Climate and Resiliency Commission's Pollinator Subcommittee. Additionally, for the new City Hall garden, Water's Path Landscape Design/Hidden Agave and Scientist.com were partners.

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.

.05

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?

The SeaWeeders Garden Club and the Climate and Resiliency Commission – Pollinator Subcommittee

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

60

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Native milkweed were added to existing gardens on City properties. Native milkweed and pollinator plants were added as a part of the new pollinator garden at City Hall.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

Image (28).jpg

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

Image (33).jpg

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).

Currently, two signs are displayed at the pollinator garden at La Colonia Community Park. This site is an official Monarch Waystation and includes a native plant identification sign and a Monarch Lifecycle sign. Both signs are in Spanish and English.

Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city’s Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

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

In 2020, members of the Climate and Resiliency Commission teamed with the SeaWeeders Garden Club to bring the goals of the Mayors’ Monarch Pledge to City Council and Mayor Lesa Heebner. In response, the CRC amended the City’s Climate Action Plan to include the following strategies for protecting the coastal habitat: Strategy 1: Landscaping. Encourage the use of native landscaping. Educate the public on the (land use plan) Landscape Use Plan (LUP) requirements to protect native trees including oak, manzanita, sycamore,

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cottonwood, willow and toyon trees. Strategy 2: Protect and restore native habitat and ecosystem functioning. Increase public knowledge, engagement and corporation 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. These strategies are continuously in progress as the City continues to expand native pollinator habitat in public spaces. These efforts are done in collaboration with the SeaWeeders Garden Club, the Climate and Resiliency Commission (CRC) and the CRC Pollinator Friendly City Committee.

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.

October 2024 - https://www.cityofsolanabeach.org/sites/default/files/Solana%20Beach/Environmental%20Sustainability/SolanaBeachCAP.Final_10.29.24.pdf

Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

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

The SeaWeeders Garden Club

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

In Progress

If this action is In Progress, please describe your progress and a target date when you plan to complete action.

Ongoing - The SeaWeeders Garden Club provides helpful information about how to avoid herbicides, pesticides, and other harmful pesticides on their website: https://www.seaweedersgardenclub.org/post/mix-your-own-non-toxic-gardening-solutions

Engage with Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.

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

None - we did not accomplish this task in 2025. We hope to make progress in 2026.

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

None - we did not accomplish this task in 2025. We hope to make progress in 2026.

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)

Mindful Garden at Skyline Elementary and Solana Vista were maintained in 2025.

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)

2

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

Skyline Elementary School Solana Vista Elementary School

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).

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2700

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

The Junior Gardeners of Solana Beach helped re-establish gardens at Skyline and Solana Vista after COVID-19 pandemic closures. As part of the District's Environmental Stewardship initiative, the Solana Beach School District has adopted formal garden instruction at each of its seven elementary schools. For the 2025-26 school year, the District hired four garden instructors who partner with classroom teachers to provide hands-on garden instruction at least once a month for up to 2,700 students in all grade levels, kindergarten through sixth, as well as for Jumpstart pre-kindergarten four-year-olds. There are raised-bed gardens at each school in the district. The instruction includes teaching about the role pollinators play in growing our food, as well as the importance of milkweed and nectar plants to the lifecycle of the Monarch butterfly. Garden education is part of the District's Environmental Stewardship program aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards and California's Environmental Principles and Concepts framework. Funding for maintaining the gardens is supported through the Solana Beach School District and has been augmented by contributions from the Solana Beach Schools' Foundation. In addition, the Mindful Garden at Skyline School features planted fruit trees, native narrowleaf milkweed, and other native nectar plants, with signage that highlights plant species in designated sections. The space encourages visitors to engage their senses and reflect through prompts. Each year, Junior Gardeners and their families help care for the garden alongside Community Serve Day volunteers from Solana Beach Presbyterian Church. SeaWeeder Garden Club volunteers also help to tend El Jardin de los Niños at the Boys & Girls Club in La Colonia Park.

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.

.5

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

Every Thursday, a dozen or more Skyline students during each lunchtime help and learn during "Open Garden" time. Skyline students also have opportunities to attend "Garden Club," organized by the Garden Instructor.

Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.

How many estimated individuals participated in your community science effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 150).

10

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

SeaWeeders

Please describe the community science program that you supported or initiated. Provide a link to any relevant programs, if possible.

We continue to hear, anecdotally, that several other Solana Beach families have adopted the practice of protecting caterpillars and chrysalides from predators, but don't have a count on those additional efforts.

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