Reston, VA

Reston, VA

Chief Executive Officer Larry Butler

Pledge Summary

Reston is a planned community located in Fairfax County, Virginia with approximately 65,000 residents.. The community is located 20 miles west of Washington, DC and is renowned for its preservation of natural areas and commitment to environmental stewardship. Reston has been certified by NWF as a Community Wildlife Habitat. It is also a Tree City USA as designated by the National Arbor Day Foundation and a designated Biophilic City. Reston recognizes the plight of the Monarch species and endeavors to conserve habitat on Reston Association property, which is accessible to residents and visitors. Reston Association staff educate homeowners about monarch conservation efforts and provide resources for people to create butterfly habitats on their own properties and in their neighborhoods.

Action Items Committed for 2022

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.
- Launch or maintain a public communication effort to encourage residents to plant monarch gardens at their homes or in their neighborhoods. (If you have community members who speak a language other than English, we encourage you to also communicate in that language; Champion Pledges must communicate in that language.)
- 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.
- 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.
- Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.

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- 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.
- 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.
- Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Acting Chief Executive Officer - Reston Association Peter Lusk	2026	3/17/2026	
Chief Executive Officer - Reston Association Mac Cummins	2025	3/21/2025	Signatories
Chief Executive Officer Larry Butler	2022	12/16/2021	Leadership Circle
Chief Executive Officer Larry Butler	2021	3/26/2021	Leadership Circle

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.).

8000

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.)

300, 7700 adult

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

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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.

Residences, community gardens, nature center, parkland/open space

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

All programs and volunteer opportunities are open to the public at large. Reston is a diverse community with a socioeconomic mix of people as per our founding principles.

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

Reston is known for its environmental stewardship and education since its inception. This is a good fit for us.

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?

Monthly calls, often very good guest presenters

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

We were honored to be on Ed Begley, Jr.'s book tour in 2022. As part of his visit to Reston, he helped us dedicate a new pollinator garden near the Reston Community Center in a very diverse section of our community.

Selected Action Items

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.

Our HOA has 22,000 members. We also also partnered with Audubon at Home this year. We coordinate mowing with the Transco Pipeline.

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

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We maintain HOA policy that allows for pollinator gardens and meadows. We do not require residents to maintain turf or mow to any designated height. We also have internal policy that preserves and enhances meadows that contain milkweed on open space and pipeline easements in Reston, where timing of mowing is scheduled to protect milkweed.

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.

Reston Association

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

See response in previous action item.

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)

Approximately 1,000 at Spring Plant Sale and 100 at Spring Festival where Monarch seeds were given away.

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

550

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

Reston Garden Club, Sunrise Valley Elementary School

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)

Reston Community Center/Hunters Woods Village Center

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

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Reston Association, Reston Community Center, Fairfax County

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.

.25

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).

16

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

Reston Association, North American Butterfly Association, and Caterpillars Count

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

Volunteers participated in the annual Reston Butterfly Count and submitted data to NABA. Volunteers also participated in the UNC Caterpillars Count citizen science project.

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?

Reston Association

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

100

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Butterfly weed, common milkweed and numerous native nectar plants added to Walker Nature Center gardens and new pollinator garden near the community center

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

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

800

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.

Continuation of Reston Association's invasive plant removal conducted by staff and volunteers. Community engaged through volunteerism at monthly Habitat Heroes project sites. Hand pulling and pesticide control.

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)

18

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

Had 15 existing and added 2 Pollinator Garden Signs from Xerces Society at Reston Community Center new garden and Walker Nature Center as well as one Audubon At Home Wildlife Sanctuary sign at Walker Nature Center. They talk about need to help conserve habitat and sanctuary species of concern.

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

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

Reston Climate Assessment, 06-02-22, Report.pdf

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

Reston Association and its Environmental Advisory Committee, shared with Fairfax County. See page 46-48

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

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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.

June 23, 2022

Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

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

Reston Association, its Design Review Board/Covenants Department, and lighting consultants

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.

2023

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:

11/19/2021

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

Mayor's Monarch Pledge

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Mayors Monarch Proclamation 2021 SIGNED.pdf

Engage with gardening leaders and partners (e.g., Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, Nature Centers, Native Plant Society Chapters , other

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long-standing and influential community leaders) to support monarch butterfly conservation.

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

Master Naturalists, Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, Reston Community Center, Fairfax Master Naturalists, Lake Anne Elementary School (5)

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

These groups help educate the public at our nature center events. They work with townhome clusters and single family home owners. Lake Anne is an Eco-School with amazing butterfly gardens and great stands of milkweed. These groups also provide volunteers for our annual butterly count, which Monarchs were observed on.

Launch or maintain a public communication effort to encourage residents to plant monarch gardens at their homes or in their neighborhoods. (If you have community members who speak a language other than English, we encourage you to also communicate in that language; Champion Pledges must communicate in that language.)

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

Reston Patch Pollinator Garden Article 4-12-2022.pdf

Please describe the methods of public communication below (e.g., printed materials, social media, print media).

Included in nature center newsletter Branching Out. Video shared electronic media about new garden. Also new pollinator garden dedicated by Ed Begley, Jr. received press coverage (see upload).

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