# Reston, VA

Reston, VA

Chief Executive Officer - Reston Association Mac Cummins

## 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 2025

### 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.
- Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat program).

### 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.).**

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.)**

40

**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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0

**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.**

We are maintaining natural areas with monarch and other pollinator habitat in or near residences, rights of way, roadsides, community gardens, nature center, and parkland.

**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, including those related to monarch conservation, are open and accessible to our diverse Reston community. 1,300 acres of open space are equitably distributed throughout the community as per our Master Plan. 55 miles of pathways and trails connect people to nature and are heavily used. Partnership with the Friends of Reston help to provide some free programs as well as scholarships.

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

Reston has been known for its environmental stewardship and education since its inception in the 1960's. This program is a natural fit for us. We have many residents and staff concerned about Monarchs, native plants and pollinators, who are motivated to help as they can.

**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?**

We hope to be more active in the community calls in 2026. We have our annual Spring Festival on Saturday, May 2, and would love to have a representative from your team there to table on Monarch Conservation.

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

Wildlife programs in Reston pursue a dual objective of cultivating wildlife appreciation across all age groups and promoting sustained involvement through citizen science initiatives. We work hard to encourage visitors and participants to consider becoming involved as their next step in learning, through volunteering in events like invasive plant pulls, wildlife counts and native plantings. Also, through our volunteer plantings and native plant sales, we facilitated the planting of over 1,850 native plants in our community.

## Selected Action Items

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**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:**

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

**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.)**

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

**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.**

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

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

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

**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.**

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

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## 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?**

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

**Please describe your effort in completing this action.**

## 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.**

**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.**

## 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?**

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

**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.**

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

## 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?**

**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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**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.**

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

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

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

Walker Nature Center Native Plant Sale Flyer 2025.pdf

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

Walker Nature Center 2025 Native Shrub and Tree Sale Flyer.pdf

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

Spring Sale - 1,648 plants; Fall Sale - 161 plants

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

326

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

Reston Garden Club members volunteered with check-in, customer service and quality checks on the pickup dates for both events.

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

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

Monarch in Sun Garden Reston VA June 2026.jpg

**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)**

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The Walker Nature Center (11450 Glade Drive) has demonstration naturescaped gardens for sun, shade, rain garden and pond habitats. In 2026, we maintained and enhanced all gardens.

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

Volunteers were community members. Reston Garden Club members assist throughout the year.

**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.**

0.04

## Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat program).

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

Biophilic Cities Reston.png

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

Biophilic Cities Network; Arbor Day Foundation.

**What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? (Please include a link to the program, if possible)**

Reston earned "Tree City USA" for its 31st year. Reston maintained its designation as a Biophilic City. https://www.biophiliccities.org/

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

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

Reston's BioBlitz fliers.pdf

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

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2025 Butterfly Count Results.pdf

**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).**

112

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

Fairfax Master Naturalists; North American Butterfly Association.

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

Each year since 1994, Reston Association has hosted the Annual Reston Butterfly Count, engaging volunteers to search for butterflies throughout Reston's 1,300 acres of open space. Since 2010, our count circle has been registered with the North American Butterfly Association, and data has been shared with NABA for its Fourth of July Butterfly Count Report (https://naba.org/butterfly-counts/). Our 2026 count was held on July 5. 168 butterflies of 19 species were observed, including 3 Monarchs.

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

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

Garden Signs.png

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

15

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

There are 4 styles of purchased signs displayed on open space throughout Reston such as the Community Gardens, Monarch Waystations, Lake House and the Walker Nature Center. (see photo attached). There are also a number of custom interpretive signs at the Walker Nature Center and at meadows throughout the community.

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