City of Arkansas City

Arkansas City, KS

Mayor Scott Rogers

Pledge Summary

Arkansas City is a city in south-central Kansas, just north of the Oklahoma state line, with a population of roughly 12,000. The city lies between the Arkansas and Walnut rivers and is home to 18 parks and recreation areas, plus 8 miles of paved walking and bicycle trails. Ark City lies along the monarchs' annual migration route to Mexico and as such, the City Commission has committed to helping to save the monarch butterfly and other pollinators with his signing of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge. The Beautification and Tree Advisory Board looks forward to engaging residents and Pollinator Project partner agencies in building more pollinator habitat throughout the city.

Action Items Committed for 2021

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.
- 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.
- Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.
- Host or support a monarch neighborhood challenge to engage neighborhoods and homeowners' associations within the community to increase awareness, support community unity around a common mission, and/or create habitat for the monarch butterfly.

Systems Change

- Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native nectar producing plants at city properties.

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

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Scott Rogers	2021	3/31/2021	

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.).

50

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.)

50 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.

1

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, rights-of-way, vacant lot north of recreation area (in progress), park (in progress)

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

The entire City of Arkansas City is classified as a low- to moderate-income community, so all planning and development work being done will benefit all citizens. In addition, equity will be a huge piece of the new Comprehensive Plan, which also will incorporate goals for monarch sustainability and preservation. The full integration of these goals in a way that specifically benefits communities of color will be monitored by the City's Equal Opportunity and Accessibility Advisory Board, which also is contributing to the development of the Comprehensive Plan.

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

We are on one of the primary migration routes for monarchs. Our local Chaplin Nature Center has participated in butterfly counts and habitat growth for years. Many of our Beautification and Tree Advisory Board members and City staff are passionate about this topic and want to help with public outreach and education. They have successfully engaged with the City Commission for several years now to show leadership on this topic. We have been an active pledge community since 2017.

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 can always use more access to best practices from other communities of similar size and composition. Resources where we can access and obtain free or low-cost plants and/or seeds would be immensely helpful to overcome local barriers of resistance.

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

We have a lot of community momentum and passionate champions, but COVID-19 has been a humongous hurdle for us because it has kept City staff from being able to fully focus on this initiative as they wrestle with higher-priority crises. We strongly believe that we will make more positive and tangible gains in 2022 as we start to move past this health and economic crisis.

Selected Action Items

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?

Arkansas City Area Chamber of Commerce, Beautification and Tree Advisory Board, City of Arkansas City, Planning Commission, Public Services Department

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.

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The Comprehensive Plan for 2021-2030 is currently under development and we are about halfway through that process currently with multiple City boards. Monarch conservation will be listed as a priority goal somewhere within that plan based on the recommendation of the Beautification and Tree Advisory Board to the Planning Commission. We currently anticipate wrapping up the draft of this new Plan by late spring 2022 and commencing the adoption process.

Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native nectar producing plants at city properties.

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

03-04-21 Minutes.pdf

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

Arkansas City Area Chamber of Commerce, Beautification and Tree Advisory Board, City of Arkansas City, Public Services Department

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.

City staff would like to convert a vacant 6.7-acre property north of Poplar Walking Trail and east of J Street into monarch habitat. There is also a proposal by several community volunteers and Beautification and Tree Advisory Board members to to "adopt" a defunct fountain area in our most popular park, Wilson Park, and convert it into flowerbeds for native and nectar-producing pollinator plants. Both projects are expected to commence in spring 2022.

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:

April 6, 2021

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

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Mayor's Monarch Pledge Day / National Wildlife Week

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

National Wildlife Week 2021.pdf

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.

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

03-04-21 Minutes.pdf

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

3 (Arkansas City Area Chamber of Commerce, Beautification and Tree Advisory Board, City of Arkansas City)

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

City staff would like to convert a vacant 6.7-acre property north of Poplar Walking Trail and east of J Street into monarch habitat. It is owned by Cowley County and leased to the City, which is responsible for maintenance. This is a good location because it keeps milkweed plants, which can be toxic to some people and animals, away from pedestrians on the trail, but still in the general vicinity of the recreation area. There is water available at the location. The Street and Stormwater Division mows it now. Educational signage is a possibility there in the future.

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.

3 (Arkansas City Area Chamber of Commerce, Chaplin Nature Center, City of Arkansas City)

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

We began preliminary discussions with Chaplin Nature Center about ways we can support each others' efforts. The nature center currently sponsors a butterfly counting event and

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several other conservation initiatives. We anticipate the nature center being an active partner in our Pollinator Project coalition in 2022.

Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

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

IMG_0232.JPG

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

IMG_0233.JPG

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

Arkansas City Area Arts Council, Arkansas City Area Chamber of Commerce, V.J. Wilkins Foundation, local artists

How many individuals were engaged in this effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 50).

10

Please describe the community art project that was implemented in your community and how it contributed to cultural awareness and recognition (e.g., number of art installations, type of art).

The current plan is to paint a mural in a community space that will be a companion piece to an existing mural on the south side (please see attached photos), which depicts dragonflies, sunflowers and other native plants along with scenes from Arkansas City's history dating back to the Etzanoa settlement in the early 1600s. This new mural will depict monarch butterflies in a prominent location. We planned to complete it this year but construction delays and COVID-19 forced us to reschedule the painting until spring of 2022. This work is supported by a $36,000 grant.

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)

75 seed packets

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

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20

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

Arkansas City Area Chamber of Commerce, City of Arkansas City, Orscheln Farm & Home Store, Senior Citizens Center

Host or support a monarch neighborhood challenge to engage neighborhoods and homeowners' associations within the community to increase awareness, support community unity around a common mission, and/or create habitat for the monarch butterfly.

How many estimated individuals participated in your challenge? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 100).

0

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

Arkansas City Area Chamber of Commerce, Beautification and Tree Advisory Board, City of Arkansas City

When did this challenge take place?

N/A

What is the total acreage of habitat created? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 2 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.

1

Please describe your challenge and the results.

We were not able to complete this goal in 2021 and will try to organize something in 2022 instead.

Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.

Where is the monarch habitat located? (Please provide an address, if possible)

920 E. Poplar Ave.

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

Arkansas City Area Chamber of Commerce, Arkansas City Public Library, Beautification and Tree Advisory Board, Chaplin Nature Center, City of Arkansas City, Cowley College Media Club, Public Services Department, RISE Cowley, USD 470

What is the total acreage of land that has been converted? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 2 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.

6

How many lots were converted to monarch habitat? Please limit your answer to only the number of lots in the answer field below (e.g., 3)

1

Please describe when the lots were converted to monarch habitat and the planned maintenance schedule.

The current plan is to convert this large vacant space to milkweed and other native monarch habitat sometime in early 2022, weather permitting. It is highly visible from both the Poplar Walking Trail area to the south, a highly popular recreation area, and the U.S. 77 bypass to the east. Maintenance will be by City of Arkansas City staff and volunteers.

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