City of Arvada

Arvada, CO

Mayor Mark Williams

Pledge Summary

Arvada is a city home to approximately 120,000 people along the Colorado front range of the Rocky Mountains. In 2017, Mayor Marc Williams and the City of Arvada took the pledge to protect and preserve monarch habitats and other pollinators. Arvada is still committed to saving the monarch butterfly and other pollinators with the Mayor's Monarch Pledge and looks forward to engaging residents in future monarch conservation efforts.

Action Items Committed for 2021

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.
- 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).
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Mark Williams	2021	3/31/2021	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.).

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412

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.)

305 youth 107 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.

The City spread seeds along waterways in Arvada Open Spaces outside of mow zones and away from busy trails. Residential participants also took milkweed seeds to plant within Arvada at the free seed swap, but that total acreage is unknown. We also worked with Arvada West High School as they created 10 raised garden beds for pollinators.

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

As we launched our first engagement survey to capture where pollinator gardens are in Arvada, we can see areas that are highly engaged and areas of focus for future projects. Offering pollinator seeds for free, offering Arvada residents a discount for Resource Central Garden-In-A-Box perennial options, and offering free or discounted pollinator programs for title-1 schools allow us to lower some barriers to engage with marginalized communities. Going forward, we can begin to utilize data and feedback from this year to target messaging to get more marginalized communities aware of opportunities for free or discounted option to begin gardening for pollinators, or how they can support pollinators with just their time as a volunteer or by sharing pollinator information with their neighbors.

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

We wanted to build on our efforts from our 2017 pledge and assist in supporting sustainable park design and maintenance, as well as increasing awareness of pollinators within our residential community. This year we focused more heavily on conservation research with monitoring projects and to incorporate real-world projects into our other environmental programs. We also laid the ground work for more active-involvement with the public in our engagement survey, seed collection and seed swap. All of these efforts were supported by our City leadership and Council, and we continue to get appreciative feedback from local residents and teachers that share their pride in the City's efforts.

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

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

2021 brought many changes to the Nature Center, including new staff and new priorities as the City's environmental educational facility. With these new people came new ideas and passions that allowed us to complete our goals and lay the groundwork to go even further with next year's efforts. Resources from National Parks and Recreation Association for our pollinator bio blitz, Monarch Larva Monitoring Projects data and stories to share with volunteers, National Wildlife Federation pledge actions and wildlife habitat certification, Resource Central perennial and pollinator garden discounts for Arvada residents, and the City of Arvada parks maintenance teams were all integral to our monarch efforts this year. We'd love to see more support in volunteer recruitment as well as grants to offer more support for 100% free programs to title one school for pollinator programs outside of Arvada. We also would like to partner with local CSA farms to partner in pollinator education with our local snap/food stamp/CSA members.

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

The Majestic View Nature Center partnered with the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project to collect conservation data on Monarch eggs & larva. Staff and volunteers dedicated over 100 hours to collecting data for a national database. The Center also certified the demonstration garden as a wildlife habitat through the National Wildlife Federation and created a public engagement survey to begin collecting pollinator data across the City at https://speakup.arvada.org/pollinator-project with the hope to reopen this survey annually. For the first year, we reached 171 significant visitors with 33 of them pinning a pollinator garden on the City's map or leaving their pollinator story. All of our efforts, events, and maintenance items are also listed on our website at https://majesticviewnaturecenter.arvada.org/monarch .

Selected Action Items

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.

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

We gave away seeds, and there were too many to count (literally hundreds of seeds) from 8 species of native or pollinator-friendly plants: annual larkspur, signet marigold, false indigo, prairie coneflower, purple coneflower, showy milkweed, swamp milkweed, and fountain grass.

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

26

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

We worked with over 20 volunteers who helped collect seeds from our garden as well as bring in seeds from their own, we created our own labels and had a drop-in style event at the Nature Center. We also shared seeds with internal staff city-wide through our interdepartmental delivery team.

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

51

What species were collected or propagated?

Showy Milkweed & Swamp Milkweed (along with other native or pollinator-friendly seeds from the demonstration garden).

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

We partnered with our own volunteers, the 4 C's church 4 Cares Day volunteer team, and the City's open space/parks teams to collect seeds. We then partnered with Open Space teams to determine ideal locations for newly propagated monarch habitats in open space areas across the City. We utilized data and feedback from volunteers in different monarch monitoring organizations like the monarch larva monitoring project, the integrated monarch monitoring projects, and Journey North to find the best locations for milkweed propagation.

Please describe the milkweed seed collection and propagation effort that you hosted.

The seeds were collected as they became available and were packaged and offered at our free seed swap. Volunteers and participants brought in their own seeds as well to share with the community, leading to a wide selection of seeds that people could select to create their own seed mix. Planting instructions for each seed type were also included. In addition to the 26 drop-in participants, these packets were also offered to City employees and shared internally to encourage City employee participation, however only 3 employees requested seeds. The Nature Center and volunteers also collected several hundred milkweed seeds (about 1 gallon's worth without fluff) and spread them across 6 sites in the City’s native open spaces, away from mow paths and along waterways. We also spread milkweed seeds left over from our seed swap to increase the current milkweed patches in the Nature Center's garden and open space surrounding the Nature Center.

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.

large.jpg

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

Parks Pollinator-Seasonal Worker.JPG

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

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

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

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

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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)

7030 Garrison St Arvada is the Majestic View Nature Center's demonstration garden with 25,000 square feet of native or regionally appropriate plants. It's near the physical center the City and often labeled as the “hidden gem of Arvada” for our biodiverse open space and scenic views. We shared the cultural and ecological significance of Monarchs at different events and programs through stories about the monarch migration, their cultural importance for Dia de Muertos and why pollinators like monarchs are necessary for our way of life-even in Arvada.

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

We partnered with the Arvada festivals team to promote our garden at various City-wide events. To support the monarch conservation research in our demonstration garden we partnered with Journey North and Liz Goehring--a regional monitoring trainer and monarch advocate/collaborator with Monarch Larva Monitoring Project and the Integrated Monarch Monitoring Project. In addition, we worked with the National Wildlife Federation to become a certified wildlife habitat demonstration garden as we worked with our park maintenance teams and our garden volunteers to ensure sustainable garden practices.

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 =

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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.

.57

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)

We hosted a monarch warrior workshop as well as an online engagement tool to find pollinator gardens throughout Arvada. We also provided pollinator and monarch interpretive programs and activities for school groups and public events, such as our Becoming Butterflies programs for elementary aged kids. In fall of 2021, we also worked with Arvada West High School to provide information for their pollinator unit where they developed 10 raised garden beds ideal for Arvada pollinators on school property. All of these groups we've worked with in some capacity in the past.

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)

6

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

Arvada West High school & Duncan YMCA

What resources, if any, are you providing to educators?

Aside from programs, we entered our data into the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project portal for real-world data for educators to use in project-based learning units.

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).

80 students and 4 educators

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

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As the Majestic View Nature Center is the City's environmental educational facility, we meet weekly with park design and parks maintenance teams and have partnered on a number of pollinator efforts. We also worked with Monarch Larva Monitoring Project & Journey North, National Parks and Recreation Association & iNaturalist, Arvada Festivals Commission, and the Arvada Visitor Center.

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.

1

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

The City parks maintenance and Nature Center Garden volunteers works on the garden monthly to ensure it's sucess.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

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

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

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

5

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

We maintain a pollinator interpretive sign in the Nature Center demonstration garden that explores the pollination process and has hands-on elements to learn about different pollinators. In addition to our interpretive sign, four milkweed/Monarch indicator signs are located in milkweed patches throughout the garden. We also ordered a new interpretive sign earlier this year. While all park equipment has been extremely delayed or backordered, when the sign arrives it will also go into the demonstration garden to discuss monarchs, how we

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work to keep the garden a certified habitat, and information about our garden sponsor Colorado Garden Foundation.

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.

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

As the Majestic View Nature Center is the City's environmental educational facility, we meet weekly with park design and parks maintenance teams and have partnered on a number of pollinator efforts. We encourage City teams to leave milkweed where possible, bring it to the Nature Center during peak larva weeks, and have worked with them to determine additional sites we could spread seeds. The City of Arvada also is practicing a low-mow or no-mow initiative to increase the areas of native grasses that do not get mowed or are minimally mowed to maintain safe trails or maintenance access.

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.

This was initiated in 2017 and 2021 was a refresher year for our maintenance teams to be reminded about milkweed preservation. We also shared current research indicating when might be the optimal time to mow for monarchs if mowing is necessary, as well as new studies pointing out that younger milkweed shoots might be preferential to monarch, so some places might benefit from an early mow before the monarch larva season. The current maintenance standards are available on the City's website: https://arvada.org/source/Parks/new/Revised%202021%20Maintenance%20Standards.docx.pdf

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