City of Rapid City

Rapid City, SD

Mayor Steve Allender

Pledge Summary

Rapid City is a fast-growing community located in western South Dakota with a population of 78,000. The city is located at the base of the beautiful Black Hills, about 30 minutes from Mount Rushmore, and has an extensive greenway and parks system and many community gardens. This "City of Presidents" values its natural surroundings and understands the importance of maintaining high levels of environmental quality, from bees to trees, as demonstrated by its Bee City USA and Tree City USA designations. Mayor Allender, with the support of the Rapid City Parks & Recreation Department and Standing Committee on Sustainability, has committed to saving the monarch butterfly and other pollinators with their signing of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge and looks forward to engaging residents in building more pollinator habitat throughout the city.

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.
- 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.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

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

- Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.
- Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u779:v1.14.0.49966]

- 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
Mayor Steve Allender	2022	3/10/2022	Signatories
Mayor Steve Allender	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.).

200

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.)

100 youth and 100 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.

0.01

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.

At a community center in a long-standing educational garden created and maintained by the Rapid City Garden Club

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

Our community outreach efforts have so far been confined to a handful of public events as well as pollinator awareness media coverage related to our Bee City USA efforts. We have not yet made intentional efforts to engage marginalized communities.

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

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u779:v1.14.0.49966]

Many of our community members are committed to protecting our natural resources. The Black Hills region is a special ecosystem and a beautiful place to live or visit. Importantly, the Black Hills are sacred to the Lakota people (having been called “the heart of everything that is”) as well as other tribes which make up the Nation of the Seven Council Fires / Oceti Ŝakowiŋ / Great Sioux Nation. Protecting pollinators goes hand in hand with protecting native plants and a well-functioning ecosystem. You can't save one and not save the other. Additionally, we had already achieved Bee City USA affiliation so the actions we pursue with the Mayors' Monarch Pledge have a complementary aim.

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 have mostly used Xerces Society materials, including information presented in webinars and newsletters, as resources. Webinars and network-wide calls for MMP have also been helpful in learning what other communities are doing to advocate for the monarch. We plan to access the Resource Center more in the next year as those materials also seem educational.

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

Our Pollinator Week celebration event and a Garden Club Bee Garden dedication event went well. We hope to make the Pollinator Week event annual and to expand on pollinator and monarch specific education in Rapid City.

Selected Action Items

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.

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)

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u779:v1.14.0.49966]

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.

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.

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?

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.

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:

June 17, 2022

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

Pollinator Week

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u779:v1.14.0.49966]

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Pollinator Week Proclamation 2022.pdf

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.

20220907_091014.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)

City Hall located at 300 Sixth St, Rapid City SD 57701

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

The Standing Committee on Sustainability led this effort by coordinating with City staff and the Mayor to secure the planting location, ensuring irrigation was functional, and planting the demonstration garden in 2021. The Sustainability Committee continued maintaining the garden in 2022.

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.

0.01

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

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

Dark Sky Week Banner April 2022.jpg

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

International Dark-Sky Association – South Dakota Chapter and the Standing Committee on Sustainability

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u779:v1.14.0.49966]

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.

The SD Chapter of the IDA is continuing their efforts to limit light pollution in our community, including hosting an annual Dark Sky event educating the public with a banner hung in downtown Rapid City (see attached picture), discussions with city leaders, and working with the Rapid City Street Department on new historically-appropriate, energy efficient, dark-sky friendly street light fixtures for the West Boulevard neighborhood. Adoption of a lighting ordinance is going to require significant community support and political persuasion so this is a long-term goal that will continue to be worked on.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

20220929_143018.jpg

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

20220929_143127.jpg

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

6

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

At the butterfly habitat garden shown in the attached photos, we display two signs noting its habitat certifications (NWF Wildlife Habitat Certification and Monarch Waystation Certification), a generic sign which labels the garden as a native wildflower planting, and two identical educational signs which depict the life cycle of a butterfly (and specifically shows an adult monarch) and how specific plants, like milkweed, are integral to the life cycles of certain butterfly species. We also display a Bee City USA affiliate sign along a busy street where it passes a popular City-maintained flower garden.

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.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u779:v1.14.0.49966]

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

This year, the Parks and Recreation Department participated in a mowing reduction program (inspired by No Mow May) with the approval of our Beautification Committee, Urban Wildlife Committee, and Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

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

The Parks Division maintenance staff chose a handful of park areas and greenway areas along Rapid Creek which are regularly mowed but typically host few to zero recreational uses which benefit from mowing. We felt that this plan was a win-win situation as we could disturb less pollinator/wildlife habitat while also reducing the workload for some of the maintenance staff who are already stretched thin in the spring and summer months. In 2023, the Parks and Recreation Department will likely implement this program again and may reach out to other City Departments, organizations, or citizens to encourage them to do the same.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u779:v1.14.0.49966]