Lanark County

County of Lanark, ON

Warden Steve Fournier

Pledge Summary

Lanark County is a rural community west of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Lanark County Warden Steve Fournier committed to preserving habitat for the Monarch butterfly and other pollinators in 2024 by signing the Mayors' Monarch Pledge. Lanark County has taken the Mayors' Monarch Pledge since 2019 and continues to promote and restore pollinator habitat on rights-of-ways, county land, and within the community.

Action Items Committed for 2024

Communications and Convening

- 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.

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.
- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- 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).
- Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

Systems Change

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- Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Warden Toby Randell	2025	3/28/2025	Leadership Circle
Warden Steve Fournier	2024	3/28/2024	Leadership Circle
Warden Peter McLaren	2023	3/1/2023	Leadership Circle
Warden John Fenik	2022	3/25/2022	Leadership Circle
Warden Christa Lowry	2021	4/8/2021	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.)

180

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.

.38

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.

Private property and marginal farmland. Continuing to maintain pollinator habitat created in previous years on rights-of-way.

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

We host free native pollinator seed giveaways to residents of Lanark County. Our two Butterflyway Rangers' pollinator patches are also located alongside an accessible community trail.

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

Our main motivation for taking the Mayors' Monarch Pledge is to incorporate pollinator habitat in our long-term vegetation management goals. Creating pollinator habitat is also listed as a nature-based climate solution in Lanark County's Climate Action Plan.

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 use various resources to support our pollinator habitat restoration projects, including, but not limited to the Rights-of-Way as Pollinator Habitat Working Group's pollinator habitat scorecard to assess pollinator habitat on roadsides; Xerces' Organic Site Preparation for Wildflower Establishment guide; and the Canadian Wildlife Federation's Managing Rights-of-Way for Pollinator: A Practical Guide for Managers. Lanark County is currently in the process of developing a Pollinator Habitat Restoration Strategy, which will include guidelines, checklists, and recommendations for creating successful pollinator habitat in rights-of-way.

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

Since 2016, there has been a 90% reduction in herbicide use, with no boom spray occurring since 2019. As a result, we have increased the amount of right-of-way that is managed manually by staff. This year, 68% or 381 km of roadsides were controlled by hand.

Selected Action Items

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).

We use social media and our website to promote pollinator friendly practices and share information to residents. We have created print resources outlining our roadside restoration practices to distribute at community events. We also regularly distribute bags of our native seed mix and seeding instructions at community events, including local festivals, farmers markets, and tree seedling giveaways.

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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.

3 - Lanark County Public Works department, the Canadian Wildlife Federation, ALUS Mississippi-Rideau

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

We work with the Canadian Wildlife Federation to promote their Grow it! Don't mow it! campaign to encourage residents to mow less. We collaborate with the Canadian Wildlife Federation to share best practices regarding pollinator habitat restoration and invasive species management within our rights-of-way. As part of our Integrated Vegetation Management Plan, we continue the changes made in 2016 to adjust the timing, frequency, and width of mowing along all County roads. We work with ALUS Mississippi-Rideau to provide them with funding, seed, and recommendations to advance their pollinator habitat restoration projects on marginal farmland.

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.

NA

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

NA

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)

A total of 7.6 kg of native wildflower was given away at the following events: Tree Seedling Giveaway: 208 seed packets= 2.7 kg of seed; Harvest Festival: 83 seed packets = 1.1 kg of seed; ALUS Mississippi-Rideau projects: 3.8 kg of seed

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

300

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

Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, Lanark County Councilors, Lanark County staff, Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority

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)

Lanark County has 2 demonstration gardens and 2 Butterflyway Rangers gardens located alongside the accessible Tay River Pathway at 99 Christie Lake Road, Perth ON, Canada. The pathway is located adjacent to multiple open fields with an abundance of common milkweed. We also have 2 larger-scale restoration projects in the fields adjacent to the Tay River Pathway that were created in 2018.

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

The David Suzuki Butterfly Way Rangers, the Canadian Wildlife Federation.

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.

.01

Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.

Where are the medians, roadsides and public rights-of-way? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible, or describe the location)

Lanark County did not create any new active pollinator habitat on public rights-of-way in 2024. Existing pollinator habitat was monitored and maintained throughout the growing season (i.e., monitored and removed invasive species). Staff completed passive pollinator habitat restoration on 381 km of County rights-of-way by seeding pollinator seed after removing wild parsnip by hand.

How many milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

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0

What is the total acreage of median and public right-of-way that has been planted with milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

753 acres of passive restoration

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

Active pollinator habitat restoration patches are monitored and maintained throughout the summer months. Hand removal and/or herbicide are used to control invasive/noxious weeds as needed.

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)

Staff had a booth at Beckwith Township's Agricultural Awareness Day to elementary school students on the importance of pollinators and pollinator habitat in Lanark County.

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)

1

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

Beckwith Public School

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

Teachers were provided with seeds, seeding instructions, and printed activities/colouring sheets for students.

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).

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180 students, 20 educators

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

Beckwith Township

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.

0

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

NA

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).

0

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

NA

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

NA

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.

1600

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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.

Lanark County has a roadside control program for wild parsnip, which includes spot spraying a selective herbicide and hand removals by staff and volunteers. Since 2016 we've reduced our herbicide usage by 90% and increased our hand control efforts to cover nearly 68% of all roadsides. Spot targeted spraying and hand control allow other wildflowers in the roadsides to grow, while removing the invasive species. During hand control measures, staff are provided native wildflower seed to fill in the gaps created by wild parsnip removal. Along County roads, staff also control invasive Phragmites, dog strangling vine, and Japanese knotweed following their best management practices as outlined by the Ontario Invasive Plant Council. Staff also controlled wild parsnip and wild chervil along the portions of the Tay Havelock Trail and the Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail that pass through Lanark County.

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?

Lanark County staff, Lanark County Council, Canadian Wildlife Federation

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 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.

NA

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

Since 2016, there has been a 90% reduction in herbicide use, with no boom spray occurring since 2019. As a result, we have increased the amount of right-of-way that is managed manually by staff. This year, 68% or 381 km of roadsides were controlled by hand. Lanark County is introducing a landscape prioritization tool which will help us increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our herbicide use practices by strategically prioritizing wild parsnip control based on 1. The goal for vegetation management and 2. Priority landscapes. Reducing herbicide quantities has to be balanced with meeting the requirements of the Weed Control Act.

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