# The Regional Municipality of York

York Region (No Specified City), ON

Regional Chair for the Regional Municipality of York Eric Jolliffe

## Pledge Summary

The Regional Municipality of York stretches north from Toronto to Lake Simcoe and includes many hectares of protected Greenbelt. York Region’s diversity is evident in our nine local municipalities, geography, economic development and population. York Region is committed to strong, caring, safe communities by working together to serve our thriving communities, today and tomorrow. York Region is committed to providing healthy green spaces that benefit birds, pollinators, and other wildlife in the face of pressures from growth and climate change. Caring for and enhancing all green spaces across York Region - from backyards to forests and everything in between - is important to build healthy communities that support residents’ physical and mental well-being. York Region's Greening Strategy has a goal to enhance and rehabilitate the natural environment on public and private lands to support and promote pollinator habitat. The Mayor's Monarch Pledge is one way for the Region to demonstrate it's commitment to support and promote pollinator habitat.

## Action Items Committed for 2025

### 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.)

### Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

## Past Pledge Archive

| Mayor Name | Program Year | Pledge Date | Achievement |
|---|---|---|---|
| Regional Chair for the Regional Municipality of York Eric Jolliffe | 2025 | 3/31/2025 | Signatories |
| Regional Chair for The Regional Municipality of York Eric Jolliffe | 2024 | 3/11/2024 | Signatories |
| Chairman Wayne Emmerson | 2023 | 3/13/2023 | Signatories |

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| Director of Environmental Promotion and Protection Laura McDowell | 2022 | 2/24/2022 | Signatories |
| Director of Environmental Promotion and Protection Laura McDowell | 2021 | 4/9/2021 | 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.).**

423796

**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.)**

200000

**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.**

3.6

**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.**

York Regional Forest, public and private properties

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

Recipients of York Region's GAP Fund, part of Pledge 2, provided ample opportunities for marginalized communities to engage with conservation, restoration, and other stewardship activities throughout the Region.

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

The Mayor's Monarch Pledge helped York Region to build a healthy community that supports physical and mental well-being. The Pledge allowed York Region to enhance and rehabilitate the natural environment on public and private land to support and promote pollinator habitat.

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**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?**

Social media has been exceptionally useful in outreach. It allows the Region and other Municipal partners to connect with residents that have more barriers that prevent event attendance, such as the elderly, disabled folks, and children. In the future, more events with Municipal partners would allow York Region to target specific community demographics more effectively and allow the Region to provide more equitable experiences.

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

A large source of York Region's impact comes from post-event community involvement. Residents take seedlings/pollinators home and plant them, creating habitats within local residences. Additionally, the support and high interest from partners, such as local libraries and municipal governments, allowed for even more outreach into the York Region community.

# Selected Action Items

## 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.**

3.5

**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.**

Project 1: Wildflower Weeding Bill Fisch Forest Stewardship and Education Centre wildflower area was manually weeded 3 times over the growing season to reduce unwanted non-native and invasive plants and encourage the establishment and spread of desirable native wildflowers and grasses. Herbicide was used to control dog-strangling vine and manual weeding utilized to remove interspersed invasive species. Project 2: Green Action Partnership (GAP) Fund Project areas were prepared for community planting by pulling sapling Buckthorn by hand and stumping larger Buckthorn with chainsaws and putting a “Buckthorn baggie” (thick, black plastic bag) over stumps. This task was completed by almost every project group, due to the widespread growth of invasive Buckthorn. Areas were then replaced with native trees, shrubs, and pollinators by community volunteers to promote biodiversity.

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

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

7700

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

6490

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

Forests Canada, Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum, King Township, King Township Public Library, Georgina Public Library, Town of Georgina, Markham Library, City of Markham, City of Richmond Hill, Newmarket Public Library, Town of Newmarket

## 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).**

Project: Greening Newsletter Staff Lead: Corena Cane Residents Reached: 544 Project: Social media posts Staff Lead: Corena Cane Residents Reached: 416,538

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