City of Lincoln

Lincoln, NE

Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird

Pledge Summary

Monarch pledge The City of Lincoln is located in the heart of America and is the capital city of the state of Nebraska as well as the county seat of Lancaster County. As one of the top 10 college towns in the country, Lincoln covers 96.194 square miles with a population of close to 290,000 and is the second largest city in Nebraska. Lincoln has an impressive community wide parks and recreation system that includes 128 parks, 85 playgrounds, 134 miles of trails, 10 pools, 5 recreation centers, and 5 public golf courses. Amenities like these are vital for our community's health, safety, quality of life, and economic prosperity. Lincoln is committed the preservation of precious ecosystems and native habitats that protect the monarch butterfly and other pollinators.

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 community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Systems Change

- Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).
- 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.
- 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 Leirion Gaylor Baird	2026	3/16/2026	
Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird	2025	4/1/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird	2023	3/17/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird	2022	5/3/2022	Leadership Circle
Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird	2021	4/9/2021	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

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u168:v1.14.0.49966]

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.)

300 youth, 200 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.

170.2

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.

Parks, public gardens, greenways and open spaces

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

viewing videos and reviewing the activities of others.

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

This program meshes well with our 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?

viewing videos and reviewing the activities of others.

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

We focus on habitat development for a full range of tallgrass prairie plants, animals, fungi and microbes. We believe that anything we do to help support the Monarch butterfly also supports the tallgrass prairie biome.

Selected Action Items

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)

This event was not held in 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:

June 20-26, 2022

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

Pollinator Week

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

IMG_8818.JPG

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

IMG_8817.jpg

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Pollinator signed.pdf

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u168:v1.14.0.49966]

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Pollinator signed.pdf

Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.

Please describe the groups you engaged with and how you engaged with these groups below.

Nebraska Statewide Arboretum community learning "brown-bag lunch" presentations. Parks and Recreation Landscape architect presented to about 40 people on the benefits of using native plants in landscaping and naturalized areas. "Garden Gab" group which meets once a week to discuss gardening topics as well as work as volunteers on public gardens. Parks and Recreation staff presented several times to about 80 people total on the topic of native plants and pollinator plantings.

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.

Lincoln Transportation and Utilities Lincoln Urban Development Dept. Lincoln Parks and Recreation Dept.

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

This contact is in the beginning stages and there is much work left to do in order to achieve this goal.

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.

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

Prairie Corridor - Honvlez - Fall 2022 (1).xlsx

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

Honvlez seedling planting.jpg

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

Nebraska Master Naturalists, Lower Platte South Natural Resources District, Lincoln Parks and Recreation Department, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Prairie Plains Resource Institute

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

2022 was the 5th year of a multi-year effort to diversify restored tall grass prairie properties to encourage nectar resources in early spring. The high diversity tallgrass prairie seed mix used on restoration properties usually has over 200 species represented, however, early spring bloomers are typically not as well represented because of typically smaller, lower plants whose seed is not easily collected. In order to increase early production of nectar resources, seedlings have been hand raised from local ecotypes propagated by Prairie Plains Resource Institute. These seedlings are then planted on restored prairies and mapped for ease of care and monitoring. Over 1,000 seedlings were added to a native seeding in about the center of the Prairie Corridor, known as Honvlez Prairie. Previous planting have been completed south on Honvlez on Bobcat Prairie, west on Denton Prairie, and north on Two Creeks Prairie and Martin Prairie in previous years. The goal is to create a spring time nectar resource stretching along the length of the Prairie Corridor from Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center to Pioneers Park Nature Center. NE Master Naturalists, Lower Platte South NRD, and Parks and Recreation provided planting labor, Prairie Plains propagated the seedlings and NE Game and Parks provided funding for the purchase.

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

40

What species were collected or propagated?

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u168:v1.14.0.49966]

Common Milkweed, Swamp Milkweed, Showy Milkweed, Whorled Milkweed, Antelope Milkweed along with many other native species

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

Friends of Pioneers Park Nature Center, Nebraska Master Naturalists

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

Parks and Recreation staff regularly collect seed during the season. Public events were held in October.

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.

IMG_8818.JPG

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

IMG_8817.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)

(The following is the most recently planted pollinator demonstration garden. other gardens are located in prominent locations in the park system and have been reported in previous Monarch Pledge reports.) 3761 Normal Blvd, Lincoln, NE. This site is on a prominent intersection where our Jr. Golf Course club house is located, as well as two heavily used basketball courts. The city has had in its possession for some time a fountain which was donated by the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1914 and which was recently relocated to this prominent corner. A pollinator garden was planted around this historic fountain in June 2022 by local Master Gardeners and Daughters of the American Revolution in celebration of Nebraska's prairie heritage and in support of Nebraska's native pollinators. This garden was dedicated as part of the 2022 Pollinator Week celebration and was the site of the reading of the Pollinator Week Declaration by Mayor Gaylor-Baird.

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

Daughters of the American Revolution, Nebraska Master Gardeners, Lincoln Parks and Recreation Department

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.

.2

Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.

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

2020 2021 butterfly surveys.csv

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

2020ButterflySamplingProtocol.docx

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

LincolnParksAndRec2020.xlsx

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

Incarnato Monarch Research Summary (1).pdf

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).

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u168:v1.14.0.49966]

150

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

Nebraska Master Naturalists, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

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

Two primary citizen scientist programs were supported this year. First, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission has been sponsoring butterfly surveys for the past 3 years on Parks and Recreation properties. Results from the 2020 and 2021 surveys are attached (2022 results are not yet available) http://outdoornebraska.gov/butterflysurvey/#:~:text=The%20survey%20is%20a%20200,20%2D30%20minutes%20to%20complete The second is a research project being conducted on several urban Prairie in the Parks areas by a University of Nebraska graduate student (description of research attached). These results will be available at the end of the project in 2024.

Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

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

Red Cedar pics.docx

What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

150+ acres

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.

Removal of Eastern Red Cedar, an invasive (though native) species in great plains prairies, has been a focus for 2022. Contractual labor, volunteer labor and staff labor has been used on prairie properties and riparian areas to remove cedars from 10 acres of prairie ground. A forestry attachment for a skid steer was purchased with funding from Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Lower Platte South NRD, the Saline Wetlands Partnership, and Lincoln Parks and Recreation which will be used to remove cedars and other woody vegetation in the future. As cedars are removed, the underlying ground is allowed to rest and is assessed for presence of native vegetation. Areas that do not appear to have native plants present are reseeded to tallgrass prairie mix. Brome pastures are also common in eastern Nebraska. This cool season, non-native grass is commonly planted on ground that is bare due to construction or which was formerly used as row crop land. Approximately 125 acres of Bobcat Prairie were chemically treated to remove brome, tilled using a vertical disk tiller, and reseeded to high diversity, tallgrass prairie in 2022. In addition, many acres of thistle, Phragmites grass, St. John's wort, garlic mustard, sirecea lespedeza and leafy spurge (all noxious weeds in Nebraska) were chemically and/or mechanically treated.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

Prairie Signs.pptx

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

45

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

Signs are located adjacent to Prairie in the Parks plantings. These planting are scattered over about 22 parks. Attachment contains sign information

Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).

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

none

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u168:v1.14.0.49966]

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.

There are no varieties of milkweed listed as noxious weeds in Nebraska

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?

A working committee of environmental, development, and community representatives called the Mayor's Environmental Task Force

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 need to incorporate natives as part of public plantings has been identified as a priority in the Climate Action Plan. Next steps are to review current seed mixes for use of natives. Majority of landscape for the City is planted and maintained by Parks and Recreation, and natives are used in the majority of those plantings. However, some properties are managed by other departments and contact with those departments must be initiated. The City owns tracts of land that are managed by a farm management company. There is a commitment that no-till and cover cropping will be part of all contracts starting in 2023. This spring 96 acres at our well fields was planted with these cover crops. Cover crops are primarily annual grasses, but spring flowering camelina is included in the mix. While not a native, it is a nectar producer which blooms prior to planting of row crops. In addition, 10 acres at that site were planted to a native prairie mix which includes butterfly milkweed and showy milkweed, as well as short native grasses and about 40 other nectar producing plants. Parks and Recreation continues to convert low-mow areas from cool season non-native monocultures to medium diversity tallgrass prairie plantings, referred to as Prairie in the Parks. in 2022 approximately 15 acres were converted.

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?

The Mayor's Environmental Task Force and City, County, and State staff were the primary groups engaged in the development of the Climate Action Plan. The Mayor's Environmental Task Force (METF) is made up of representatives from many community environmental interest groups, environmental industries, and City staff representatives.

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.

https://www.lincoln.ne.gov/files/sharedassets/public/projects-programs-amp-initiatives/resilient-lincoln/documents/climateactionplan.pdf

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u168:v1.14.0.49966]