City of San Antonio

San Antonio, TX

Mayor Ron Nirenberg

Pledge Summary

The City of San Antonio, Texas is the 7th largest city in the United States. Uniquely situated along the monarch butterfly migration routes, San Antonio has proudly been part of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge since 2015. In 2016, San Antonio was declared the first Monarch Champion City by the National Wildlife Federation after becoming the first city in America to adopt all Champion City action items. With support from the Alamo Area Monarch Collaborative and other key stakeholders, the City of San Antonio is committed to saving the monarch butterfly by establishing more monarch-friendly habitat across the city and through education and outreach efforts promoting the importance of this incredible pollinator. Together with our local stakeholders and regional partners, San Antonio remains dedicated to monarch and pollinator conservation.

Action Items Committed for 2023

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.
- 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 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.
- Engage with Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.
- Engage with developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.
- Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.

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- Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

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.
- Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.
- 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).
- Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation’s Community Wildlife Habitat program).
- Host or support a monarch neighborhood challenge to engage neighborhoods and homeowners' associations within the community to increase awareness, support community unity around a common mission, and/or create habitat for the monarch butterfly.
- Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.
- Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes monarch and pollinator conservation, as well as cultural awareness and recognition.
- 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.
- 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 Ron Nirenberg	2025	2/17/2025	Monarch Champions
Mayor Ron Nirenberg	2024	2/2/2024	Monarch Champions

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Mayor Ron Nirenberg	2023	2/8/2023	Monarch Champions
Mayor Ron Nirenberg	2022	1/28/2022	Monarch Champions
Mayor Ron Nirenberg	2021	4/15/2021	Monarch Champions

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.).

20000

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.)

8000 youth and 12000 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.

10

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, trail systems, trailheads, community gardens, municipal properties, private residences, businesses, schools and other academic institutions

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

The City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department's Natural Areas and horticultural teams engaged in broader outreach in 2023 than ever before, both by adopting out native milkweed and other pollinator-friendly plants, propagating milkweed and other nectar producing plants in-house, and through expanded outreach to engage and educate the general public in traditionally marginalized and low-income areas.

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

San Antonio is a major waystation on the migratory path of the Monarch butterfly. Raising awareness and increasing habitat for the Monarch and other pollinators is critical to their survival.

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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?

Our local Alamo Area Monarch Collaborative is a collection of local nature-based and conservation minded organizations who share information and ideas with each other during monthly meetings. The resources provided to the collaborative by all of the partner organizations and agencies is invaluable and critical to our success. Having on-the-ground representatives from NWF to play a more active role in this local collaborative would prove even more beneficial and allow us to capture even more data.

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

San Antonio remains committed to the Mayor's Monarch Pledge, both as a municipal corporation and as a community as a whole. We will continue to promote Monarch awareness and education and will continue to do what we can to protect this vital species.

Selected Action Items

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:

October 7, 2023

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

Mayor's Monarch Pledge Day - 2023

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

2023 Proclamation - San Antonio.jpg

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.

COSA Parks and Recreation Department, Cibolo Nature Center, San Antonio River Authority, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, San Antonio Water Systems (SAWS)

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

Mowing practices for the establishment and maintenance of milkweed and/or native nectar producing and pollinator friendly plants have been implemented in several City of San Antonio Parks, including Phil Hardberger Park, Friedrich Wilderness Park, Brackenridge Park, Mahncke Park, and Crownridge Canyon Natural Area, as well as along areas of the Howard W. Peak Linear Greenway trails system. Additionally, no-mow areas have been designated by other local organizations at Confluence Park, Government Canyon State Natural Area, and the Cibolo Nature Center. No-mow areas in these and other park locations have been established and are monitored during certain seasons to allow for plant growth for butterfly and pollinator migration. The SAWS Garden Style website is designed in part to help local residents identify native nectar producing plants, and assist them with planting advice for us in residential yards and gardens. The SAWS Garden Style website can be viewed here: https://www.gardenstylesanantonio.com/garden-tips-blog/category/plants/.

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.

Alamo Area Master Naturalists (AAMN), Bexar County Master Gardeners, Bexar Audubon Society, San Antonio Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas, San Antonio Botanical Garden, San Antonio River Authority, San Antonio River Foundation, San Antonio Water Systems, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Texas Agrilife Extension Program, San Antonio Parks and Recreation Dept., Project ACORN.

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

In 2023, COSA Parks and Recreation renewed their ongoing agreement with the Alamo Area Master Naturalists (AAMN) organization to support the establishment and maintenance of a native plant and wildflower demonstration garden at Phil Hardberger Park. TPWD continues to help toward this goal as well, engaging with local AAMN leaders to focus on monarch and pollinator friendly plants. COSA Parks and Recreation continues to partner closely with the San Antonio Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas (NPSOT) to hold regular NPSOT meetings at Phil Hardberger Park. NPSOT, in turn, contributes to the native plant and wildflower demonstration garden, as well as the butterfly garden and other areas within the park. COSA Parks and Recreation and Bexar Audubon continue to be strong supporters of San Antonio's status as a BIRD CITY through TPWD. This state-issued designation, adopted via resolution by the City of San Antonio on December 3, 2020, has resulted in regional conservation efforts that also protect monarch and other pollinator friendly habitat. COSA Parks and Recreation staff partners with gardening leaders from AAMN, Bexar County Master Gardeners and NPSOT to support monarch pollinator conservation through presentations to the Garden Club conference in San Antonio, which typically consists of speaking to dozens of local garden club members

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and representatives about the importance of pollinator gardens. Attendees to these presentations often receive complimentary milkweed or other pollinator friendly plants.

Engage with developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and associated opportunities to create monarch habitat.

In 2023, the new Stanley Spigel trailhead opened along the French Creek Greenway section of the Howard W. Peak Linear Greenway trail system, and featured over 100 native pollinator friendly plants, including native milkweed. This new trailhead was designed with input from COSA Parks and Recreation staff to reflect the need for more native plant species to be incorporated into local project designs. Addtionally, COSA Parks and Recreation staff continue to work closely with the San Antonio River Authority to ensure that monarch butterfly and other pollinator-friendly plant species are included in the design process for future trailhead projects as part of the Howard W. Peak Linear Greenway Trail System. Both organizations continue to work closely with developers, planners, landscape architects, etc. to create ways to include more monarch habitat and low-impact development design in and along the trails and specifically at new trailheads, to promote native pollinator-friendly plants for vegetated on-site stormwater best management practices.

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)

Over 20,000 trees and native plants were given away by the City of San Antonio and its partner organizations in 2023.

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

20000

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

City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation, San Antonio Zoo, Blooming with Birdie, Texas Butterfly Ranch, Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept., San Antonio Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas, San Antonio River Authority, Alamo Area Master Naturalists, San Antonio Botanical Garden

Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

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

COSA Parks and Recreation Department, COSA Department of Arts and Culture, San Antonio Mayor's office, San Antonio City Council, artist Leticia Huerta

How many individuals were engaged in this effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 50).

100

Please describe the community art project that was implemented in your community and how it contributed to cultural awareness and recognition (e.g., number of art installations, type of art).

2023 saw the expansion of the City's "Bloom" public art sculpture at two park locations in San Antonio. These radiant, oversized flowers representing native flora including Antelope Horn Milkweed, red Cedar Sage and others were installed at Blossom Park and Southside Lions Park. The "Bloom" concept was designed by local San Antonio artist Leticia Huerta to call attention to the importance and beauty of native wildflowers in the region. A collaborative effort by COSA Parks and Recreation and the COSA Department of Arts and Culture has allowed the City to erect "Bloom" sculptures at multiple locations around town to showcase Huerta's beautiful work. More information about this public art initiative can be found online at the City's Arts and Culture website: https://events.getcreativesanantonio.com/public-art/.

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

2500

What species were collected or propagated?

Native milkweed species and milkweed seeds

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

City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation, Native Plants Society of Texas, Blooming with Birdie

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

Throughout 2023, the City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department propagated and distributed over 2,500 native milkweed plants and seed packets to various citizens, organizations and other local groups. Additionally, COSA Parks and Recreation horticulture

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and Natural Areas staff have begun to collect and propagate native pollinator plants and seeds, including milkweed, with the hopes of propagating and eventually planting and establishing these native plant species in and around San Antonio parks and open spaces.

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)

The City of San Antonio maintains several flower beds at City Hall, which was renovated in 2021, that include milkweed and other native nectar producing plants, among other things; the San Antonio River Authority and the River Foundation established the North American Friendship Garden in 2021 at Confluence Park and continue to maintain that space today; the COSA Parks and Recreation Natural Areas team maintain 5 pollinator demonstration gardens at prominent public parks to promote native monarch and pollinator friendly habitat; and in 2022 The Pearl mixed-use development in the heart of San Antonio established new monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration gardens outside of several of their buildings at 306 Pearl Parkway, San Antonio, TX, 78215.

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

City of San Antonio, Texas Parks and Wildlife, San Antonio River Authority, San Antonio River Foundation, The Pearl

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.

1

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)

Trails and trailheads located along roadsides and within public rights-of-way and utility easements throughout San Antonio's Howard W. Peak Linear Greenway trail systems. Additionally, the San Antonio River Authority plants and maintains milkweed plants and other native nectar-producing plants along trails and within public park areas along the Mission Reach Ecosystem Restoration Project area.

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

300

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.

Over 10 miles of new trails

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

Over 10 miles of trails and new trailheads were either established in 2023 or under construction as of December 2023 in various locations along the Howard W. Peak Linear Greenway trail systems. For more information, please visit the COSA Parks and Recreation website here: https://www.sanantonio.gov/ParksAndRec/Parks-Facilities/Trails/Greenway-Trails

Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.

Where is the monarch habitat located? (Please provide an address, if possible)

Stanley Spigel Trailhead, 8123 Guilbeau Rd, San Antonio, TX 78254

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

COSA Parks and Recreation Department

What is the total acreage of land that has been converted? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 2 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

How many lots were converted to monarch habitat? Please limit your answer to only the number of lots in the answer field below (e.g., 3)

1

Please describe when the lots were converted to monarch habitat and the planned maintenance schedule.

A vacant lot, approximately 2 acres in size, was converted into a new park trailhead for the Howard W. Peak Linear Greenway Trails system along French Creek near Nani Falcone Park. Previously part of a large vacant lot, once slated for development of an apartment

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complex, the area now is filled with native trees and pollinator-friendly habitat, including native milkweed plants. Parks staff maintain the area and also manage a series of green stormwater infrastructure features, such as bioswales, on site as well.

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.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) works with Texas Master Naturalist volunteers from the Alamo Area Chapter to offer guidance & assist during workdays when needed to enhance & maintain the PHP wildscape demo garden. TPWD also conducted a follow-up site visit to the Toyota Visitor Center's Wildscape Demonstration Garden. TPWD additionally presented to two (2) Native Plant Society groups on creating native habitat for a variety of wildlife which also included pollinator information (which benefits Monarchs too).

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).

Blooming with Birdie, a San Antonio science-based interactive mobile education and outreach organization designed to promote Monarchs and other pollinators, in collaboration with the City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department, the Brackenridge Park Conservancy, and other key stakeholders, engaged in social media outreach and newsletters throughout 2023. These outreach efforts were designed to encourage residents to learn about the importance of monarchs and pollinators, and, by extension, to then plant more monarch and pollinator-friendly vegetation at home and in the community. More information, including previous articles and posts, can be found at their website:https://www.bloomingwithbirdie.com/. Additionally, staff from City of San Antonio (COSA) Parks and Recreation Dept. engaged in multiple efforts to raise awareness in the greater San Antonio area about the importance of monarch and pollinator friendly gardens, conducting a series of educational programs in our Natural Area parks to help young scholars and their parents better understand the importance of pollinator friendly habitats. A sampling of those programs can be seen by visiting the Phil Hardberger Park Conservancy calendar of events via this link: https://www.philhardbergerpark.org/calendar. Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) continued to provide their series of local "Urban Wildlife/Wildscaping" programs to San Antonio urban audiences, which included information on how residents can support monarch/pollinators using native plants to create habitat benefiting all wildlife. In 2021, the TPWD San Antonio urban office created a video in titled "How to Help Monarch Butterflies" which, as of 2023, has 2,393 views on the TPWD YouTube Channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=92HAtwycWgA. TPWD also provided technical

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guidance to 11 landowners in 2023 on the benefits of enhancing their properties with habitat for wildlife, and offered a landowner wildlife tax valuation workshop in 2023, providing valuable information on the benefits of wildlife habitat to 90 landowners.

Engage with Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.

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

COSA Parks and Recreation, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Alamo Area Master Naturalists, Phil Hardberger Park Conservancy, San Antonio River Authority, others

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

All the groups and organizations listed above assisted with San Antonio's City Nature Challenge to invite members of the community, neighborhood organizations, HOAs, local businesses, and schools and universities throughout San Antonio to join in a hyper localized effort to document native plant and wildlife species online to help gain insight to the presence of the species of greatest conservation need and other natural resources in order to help guide future best management practices.

Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.

Please describe the process to create the strategy , the strategy goals and content, and/or results of implementation. Please also identify who was engaged in this process, what partnerships were established, and how you engaged these groups. Provide a link, if possible.

The COSA Parks and Recreation Department, in coordination with the San Antonio Public Library, the National League of Cities, and the Children in Nature Network, hosted a multi-city cohort workshop in San Antonio October 3-5, 2023 to promote the Nature Smart Libraries (NSL) program as part of the broader-reaching Cities Connecting Children to Nature initiative. One of the goals of the NSL program is to identify ways that municipalities, through Parks, library systems, and other stakeholder organizations, can work together to promote nature-based education and outreach.

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).

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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)

Pollinator Garden Establishment efforts

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)

3

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

McAndrew Elementary School, Los Reyes Elementary School, NISD Project ACORN

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

Cibolo Center for Conservation and other members of the Alamo Area Monarch Collaborative provided installation guidance and support

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).

Over 500 students and 30 educators

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

Cibolo Center for Conservation, Alamo Area Monarch Collaborative, Project ACORN

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?

Students, teachers, parents and school groundskeepers have assumed responsibility for maintaining the newly installed pollinator gardens at all three school locations.

Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation’s Community Wildlife Habitat program).

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

City of San Antonio, Bexar Audubon Society, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Alamo Area Forest Partnership

What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? (Please include a link to the program, if possible)

In 2021, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department designated San Antonio as a Bird City Texas Community (https://tpwd.texas.gov/wildlife/birding/bird-city-texas). Also, for the last seven (7) years, San Antonio has maintained Tree City USA status through the Arbor Day Foundation (https://www.arborday.org/programs/treecityusa/#recognizedSection). Additionally, in 2023, San Antonio became the first city in Texas to successfully achieve Tree City of the World designation (https://treecitiesoftheworld.org/directory.cfm).

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?

COSA Parks and Recreation, San Antonio River Authority, San Antonio River Foundation, Alamo Area Master Naturalists (AAMN), Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Cibolo Nature Center, Green Spaces Alliance of South Texas, Project ACORN, EcoCentro

How many plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

1000

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Throughout San Antonio in 2023, local organizations such as the City's Parks and Recreation Department, San Antonio River Foundation, AAMN, Green Spaces Alliance, and TPWD, planted and maintained community gardens for the promotion and protection of monarch and pollinator habitat. As in past years, local school groups also took steps in 2023 to engage their student bodies and to educate students on the importance of native milkweed and other nectar-producing plants. New monarch and pollinator gardens were added at McAndrew and Los Reyes Elementary schools, both of which are now maintained by students, staff, and family volunteers. Additionally, the vacant plot of land behind the William R. Sinkin EcoCentro campus is currently being converted into a garden setting to host native milkweed and other nectar producing plants in the future.

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

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(Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 150).

5000

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

COSA Parks and Recreation, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Alamo Area Master Naturalists (AAMN), and others

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

In 2023, COSA Parks and Recreation, TPWD, AAMN, and others promoted the annual City Nature Challenge in Texas and San Antonio(to the public, universities, Master Naturalist volunteers, and businesses), where cities around the world compete to see who can make the most observations (Citizen Science) of nature (native plants & wildlife), find the most species, and engage the most people during the challenge. The main goals of the CNC are: a) recognizing species of greatest conservation need (SGCN), b) monitoring changes in the range of native species, and c) possibly identifying new species. The use of iNaturalist allows valuable data to also highlight the natural resources that are being found in each city, providing a baseline survey & an annual snapshot of some of the valuable habitat available. Local partners continue to participate in our planning meetings, engage their members & the public through social media, and some host an event at their sites during the 4-day Challenge held at the end of April. In San Antonio's 12-county metroplex area, we had a total of 19,967 observations (3,000+ more than last year) by 858 observers resulting in 2,564 different species being posted. San Antonio ranked in 3rd Place in Texas, surpassing the City of Austin for the first time! This gives insight to conditions in our cities which can help make management decisions that will benefit wildlife, including pollinators.

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.

Over 100 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.

The City of San Antonio partners with volunteers and local stakeholder organizations in a continuous effort to remove and control invasive herbaceous and woody species in City Parks and Natural Areas. This year, City Natural Areas staff focused efforts in three main parkland properties - Phil Hardberger Park, Medina River Natural Area, and Friedrich Wilderness Park - for invasive species removal. Restored areas are seeded and planted with native pollinator species to restore habitat. In 2023, over 100 acres or woody and

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herbaceous invasive species were treated in Natural Area parks and other locations, removing species such as Chinaberry, ligustrum, Chinese Tallow, giant mustard, and others. The San Antonio River Authority (SARA) and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) continued their efforts toward invasive species mitigation and management in and around San Antonio, along the Mission Reach section of the San Antonio River, and at Government Canyon State Natural Area. Both TPWD and SARA have employed prescribed burn methodologies to help control invasive vegetation and to foster native plant growth in the region. Additionally, the local Alamo Area Master Naturalist chapter continues to operate its "Salsa Squad Invasive Tree and Plant Removal" Team which focuses on active removal of invasive vegetation in San Antonio. Much of the Salsa Squad's efforts in 2023 were conducted in collaboration with Green Spaces Alliance along a 117-acre tract of land along the Medina River in southern San Antonio.

Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes monarch and pollinator conservation, as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

How many estimated individuals attended the event? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field ((Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only), e.g. 500)

5000

What was the date of your festival?

October 7, 2023

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

Blooming with Birdie, City of San Antonio, Alamo Area Monarch Collaborative, Brackenridge Park Conservancy, San Antonio Zoo, Native Plant Society of Texas - SA Chapter, Texas Butterfly Ranch, others.

Please describe the details of your monarch butterfly festival and how you ensured the event was accessible by all residents in the community (e.g., events, length, notable successes, outreach, location).

Blooming with Birdie and the City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department hosted the annual Monarch Butterfly & Pollinator Festival event on October 7, 2023 in Brackenridge Park near the San Antonio Zoo. The Native Plant Society of Texas supported the event by providing an educational booth focused on local native plants. The City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Dept. supported the Monarch Festival by hosting the event and handing out approximately 2,000 milkweed and nectar producing plants to festival goers, and by offering a nearby free tree giveaway distributing 800 native, pollinator-friendly trees to the public. In addition, Parks and Recreation Education Coordinators from the department's Natural Areas team hosted a table providing education and activity to the visiting public. Additional support was provided by the Brackenridge Park Conservancy, the Witte Museum, EcoRise, Gardening Volunteers of South Texas, Rainbow Gardens, the

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Bexar Audubon Society, and others. Blooming with Birdie documented the festival and a video snapshot of the event can be viewed via this link: https://www.bloomingwithbirdie.com/monarchfest. Additionally, TPWD and other Alamo Area Monarch Collaborative partners promoted monarch awareness throughout the month of October 2023 with various activities, seminars and events.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

10

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

Permanent educational signage depicting the monarch life cycle and migration facts is located at Eisenhower Park and at two San Antonio River Authority office facilities in downtown San Antonio and in projects including the San Pedro Creek Culture Park and Mission Reach Ecosystem Restoration Project. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has created and shared plant signage placed in public gardens, as has Green Spaces Alliance. The signs highlight plant features & the wildlife attracted to them. These plant signs have been used at Native Plant Demonstration Gardens at Phil Hardberger Park and the Toyota Plant Visitor Center. Additional plant signs have been created by both Parks and Recreation staff and Alamo Area Master Naturalist volunteers for native plant gardens at Phil Hardberger Park, Friedrich Wilderness Park and Medina River Natural Area. This year, the Friends of McAllister Park, a city park in San Antonio, restored two areas of overgrown invasive Johnson grass and converted them into Monarch waystations filled with Monarch and other pollinator-friendly plant species. Signage was planned for those new areas as well.

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?

City of San Antonio

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.

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Monarch conservation is included in and emphasized in the following City of San Antonio plans: 2016 City of San Antonio SA Tomorrow Sustainability Plan (https://satomorrow.com/); the 2019 SA Climate Ready Action Plan (https://www.sasustainability.com/action-plan); and the 2019-2029 SA Parks System Plan (https://www.sanantonio.gov/ParksAndRec/News-Events/SAParksSystemPlan).

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?

City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department, City of San Antonio Public Works Department

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.

In May 2023, Classen-Steubing Ranch Park, a 204-acre Natural Area park on the city's north side, opened to the public. Much of the original landscaping was maintained, in order to preserve the natural feel of the park, but in the developed areas, a focus was made to add native milkweed and other native nectar producing plant species for Monarchs and other pollinators. Additionally, in November 2023, the new Stanley Spigel Trailhead on French Creek, along the Howard W. Peak Linear Greenway Trail systems, opened to the public to critical acclaim. That trailhead, designed with input from Parks staff, features over 100 new milkweed and other native nectar producing plants.

Host or support a monarch neighborhood challenge to engage neighborhoods and homeowners' associations within the community to increase awareness, support community unity around a common mission, and/or create habitat for the monarch butterfly.

How many estimated individuals participated in your challenge? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 100).

25

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

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Alamo Area Monarch Collaborative, EcoCentro , San Antonio Colleges, Alamo Area Master Naturalists, Alamo Area Master Gardeners

When did this challenge take place?

Ongoing

What is the total acreage of habitat created? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 2 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.

.25

Please describe your challenge and the results.

EcoCentro engages local community groups by hosting workshops on native milkweed propagation and planting. They share social media posts about the benefits of pollinators, and have demonstration gardens onsite at their facility to help show the public how to plant and maintain pollinator gardens. Currently, they are working with the stakeholders listed above to convert a .25 acre vacant lot behind their office building, which backs up to a residential neighborhood, into a garden space for urban crops as well as pollinator habitat.

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