City of Moorhead

Moorhead, MN

Mayor Shelly Carlson

Pledge Summary

Moorhead is a city in Northwestern Minnesota with a population of approximately 45,000. Moorhead has engaged in numerous initiatives over the past several years to preserve the monarch habitat including the passage of a natural lawn ordinance, planting demonstration gardens at different city owned buildings and parks, revising the mosquito spraying approval process, adding signage to pollinator gardens, and removing invasive species at city parks. Mayor Carlson and the City of Moorhead are committed to Mayors' Monarch Pledge for a fifth year to continue preserving the monarch 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.)
- 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.
- Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Shelly Carlson	2026	3/9/2026	
Mayor Shelly Carlson	2025	3/21/2025	Signatories
Mayor Shelly Carlson	2024	3/26/2024	Signatories
Mayor Shelly Carlson	2023	3/30/2023	Signatories
City of Moorhead Mayor Shelly Carlson	2022	2/8/2022	Signatories
Mayor Shelly Carlson	2021	4/26/2021	Leadership Circle

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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.).

43

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.)

4

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.

Private yards, City Parks and Open Space, City boulevards, and along the Red River Corridor.

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

Social media postings, Natural Lawn handouts, media releases, and creating new pollinator planting areas that are accessible to the public.

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

There is recognition within our community of the importance of pollinators and how we can take steps, individually and together, to support them. This was evident in comments received during public engagement for the Onward Moorhead! Comprehensive Plan. Furthermore, in a community survey completed in the fall of 2022, the respondents listed "planting flowers/pollinator plants and natural lawn options" as a strategy they were most interested in pursuing as a community. Food production (gardens, keeping of chickens) and food forests also scored high. As a result of the efforts being taken, Moorhead residents are taking steps to install pollinator gardens and contribute to local food production.

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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?

N/A

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

The City of Moorhead is working on completing the implementation of a project funded by a Climate Action Grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to convert approximately 10 acres of turf grass to pollinator landscape along the Red River Corridor.

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.)

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

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Please describe the methods of public communication below (e.g., printed materials, social media, print media).

Social media postings for Earth Week, Mayors' Monarch Pledge notice, and a Natural Lawn Handout all highlighted the importance of planting pollinator gardens while communicating the current efforts the City of Moorhead has taken.

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.

Concordia College, Minnesota Native Landscapes, River Keepers, Moorhead Public Works, Moorhead Parks and Recreation , Moorhead Community Development , Minnesota State University Moorhead, Brookdale Baptist Church, Salem Evangelical Free Church, and Grateful Community Garden.

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

We have been continually working with the Moorhead Public Works department to find ways to increase pollinator habitat in Moorhead. Organizations like Minnesota Native Landscapes and River Keepers have assisted with the maintenance and upkeep of pollinator areas. River Keepers also assists with gathering volunteers to participate in planting events. Organizations/groups such as Salem Evangelical Free Church, Brookdale Baptist Church, Minnesota State University Moorhead, and Grateful Community Garden received funding to create or enhance a community garden and provide outreach to garden volunteers. Multiple City departments have been involved with site preparation, maintenance, and installation of pollinator areas.

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)

Demonstration garden areas include two city buildings (700 15th Ave N and 1300 15th Ave N), micro planting sites along Center Avenue, an open city lot (502 24th Ave S), and sites throughout the Red River corridor, including 10 acres of new pollinator planting sites.

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

City staff, in coordination with Minnesota Native Landscapes, have been maintaining the sites.

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.

10.24

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.

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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).

27

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

N/A

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

The City of Moorhead actively supported the Journey North initiative by encouraging residents to participate in tracking monarch butterfly related siting. To promote community involvement, the City utilized social media platforms to inform residents about the opportunity to contribute to the citizen science effort.

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