City of Salem

Salem, VA

Mayor Renée Ferris Turk

Pledge Summary

Salem, Virginia is a city in Southwest Virginia with a population of approximately 25,000. The city is nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains near the Blue Ridge Parkway. Salem is home to Roanoke College and hosts many athletic events and tournaments at the Moyer Sports Complex. Salem is home to many community gardens. Mayor Turk of Salem, Virginia, has committed to saving the Monarch butterfly and other pollinators with Salem's signing of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge and looks forward to engaging residents in expanding pollinator habitats throughout the city.

Action Items Committed for 2025

Communications and Convening

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

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.
- 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).
- 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.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Renée Ferris Turk	2026	4/23/2026	Signatories

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Mayor Renée Ferris Turk	2025	2/19/2025	Signatories
Mayor Renée Ferris Turk	2024	5/23/2024	Signatories
Mayor Renée Ferris Turk	2023	3/3/2023	Signatories
Mayor Renée Ferris Turk	2022	3/23/2022	
Mayor, City of Salem (VA) Renee TURK	2021	4/29/2021	

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.).

200

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.)

20

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.

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.

schools, roadsides, community gardens, shared public spaces, common areas, parks, golf course

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

Spaces in areas that benefit all communities are being utilized.

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

The Mayor took a personal interest in this cause.

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

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help expand equitable engagement in community processes and access to high-quality, usable nature?

The Streets Deparment and City Horticulturist.

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

The City Horticulturist is very creative and has spent much time in many areas of the City embracing initiatives to work toward butterfly conservation.

Selected Action Items

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.

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

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

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

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).

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).

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).

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

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

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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.

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.

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?

City Horticulturist and Streets and Maintenance Department

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

15000

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

The City Horticulturist has done a lot of research and worked to establish new pollinator gardens in all areas of the City. He has worked with the local schools as well. The City has a stand of milkweed at the Farmer's Market.

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)

New demonstration garden located at Longwood Park (601 E Main St.). This area has a looped paved walkway that surrounds it providing easy access and appreciation of the newly planted native species and insects that forage. A former grassy area that was simply mowed, it now hosts over forty native forbs and grasses including three species of milkweed. We have installed signs with QR codes that feature the monarch as the primary forager, provide an overview of the area, and list all the species of plants. In addition, there are a number of new plantings throughout the Downtown as a result of Downtown Renovation projects.

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

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We partnered with Keep VA Beautiful as a grant-donation partner.

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.

.3

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:

August 6, 2025

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

Mayors' Monarch Pledge Day

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Mayors Monarch Pledge 2025.pdf

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