

City of Aurora

Aurora, CO

Mayor Michael Coffman

Pledge Summary

More than 386,000 residents choose to live in Aurora, making it the third largest city in Colorado and the 54th largest in the United States. The city covers more than 160 square miles, and is located within three counties: Arapahoe, Adams, and Douglas. Aurora boasts over 8,000 acres of open space, 119 miles of trail, 103 parks, 3 nature centers, and 2 reservoirs.

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

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.
- 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.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Mike Coffman	2026	3/30/2026	
Mayor Mike Coffman	2025	3/16/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Mike Coffman	2024	3/27/2024	Signatories
Mayor Michael Coffman	2023	2/16/2023	Signatories

Mayor Mike Coffman	2022	3/29/2022	Signatories
City Manager & Aurora City Council Member, Ward 1 Jim Twombly & Crystal Murillo	2021	4/29/2021	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 (e.g., 50).

1741

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." (Only allow numerical values.)

580 youth and 1161 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).

20

Where is your habitat being created? This may include residences (yards, containers, balconies, etc.), schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, culturally-significant locations, shared public spaces and common areas or parks.

Natural areas

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

Generation Wild Northeast Metro Coalition programs continue to be a force for engaging with marginalized communities to encourage the development of personal connections to nature including Monarchs and other pollinators. Having Mayoral and city leadership support through initiatives such as the Mayor's Monarch Pledge adds credibility and importance to these programs.

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

The office of the Mayor expressed interest in continuing to engage with the Mayor's Monarch Pledge this year.

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?

Support through financial means would be beneficial.

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

Conservation efforts are continuing to move forward positively.

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:

June 12th, 2023

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

Aurora Pollinator Week

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

[Aurora Pollinator Week Proclamation 2023.pdf](#)

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.

Great Outdoors Colorado initiated a state wide campaign focused on getting underserved youth into nature. As part of this initiative, the city of Aurora joined a coalition of neighboring government organizations and non-profit organizations to engage with underserved communities. The results have been outstanding and Great Outdoors Colorado has continued to support and fund the initiative. <https://www.generationwildnemoc.org/about-us>

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)

Morrison Nature Center, 16002 E. Smith Rd. Aurora, CO 80011. Morrison Nature Center is located in north Aurora which is culturally diverse with a significant representation of Hispanic communities. Also, initial site preparation efforts have begun at another site (Plains Conservation Center), to install a native plant garden outside the Visitor Center.

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

City of Aurora, Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces and Sand Creek Regional Greenway

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.

0.17

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 (e.g., 150).

91

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

Butterfly Pavilion, Monarch Watch, and Colorado Butterfly Monitoring Network

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

We partnered with educational organizations and community science projects to monitor butterfly populations in Aurora. Volunteers observe and record butterflies in open spaces and parks multiple times per season, gathering essential data that land managers can use when making conservation decisions. The Monarch tagging program helps answer questions about the origins of monarchs that reach Mexico, the timing and pace of the migration, mortality during the migration, and changes in geographic distribution. It also shows that the probability of reaching Mexico is related to geographic location, size of the butterfly, and the date (particularly as this relates to the migration window for a given

location). <https://butterflies.org/research-and-serve/butterfly-monitoring/>
<https://monarchwatch.org/>

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?

3150

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.

Staff and volunteers utilized integrated pest management techniques to eradicate, contain, and/or suppress invasive species based on each individual species priority ranking by the state department of agriculture. Raising awareness amongst the public, implementing reseeding efforts, and using mechanical control methods are among the numerous ways invasives were tackled.

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 (e.g., 500)

45

What was the date of your festival?

June 24th, 2023

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

Butterfly Pavilion, Sand Creek Greenway, Generation Wild

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).

A half-mile walk along a trail with several booths along the way. Participants learned about Monarchs and pollinators at the booth stops with hands on activities and games. The date and times of the festival were selected to maximize participation. The walk was short and accessible. The festival was free. Outreach was performed using all available channels

(electronic, print, word of mouth). This was the inaugural year of the event and it is believed that with continued effort and promotion attendance will grow.