City of Phoenix

Phoenix, AZ

Mayor Kate Gallego

Pledge Summary

Phoenix is the fifth largest city in the country, is located in the beautiful Sonoran Desert, and is on the western monarch population's migration route. Phoenicians are committed to the vision of becoming the most sustainable desert city on the planet and have a strong ethos of habitat conservation, wise water use, and native biodiversity. Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego recommits via the Mayor's Monarch Pledge to raise awareness and galvanize efforts to expand crucial habitat and food sources for monarch butterflies. The city looks forward to working with residents and stakeholders to increase prevalence of native plants throughout the city to support pollinators.

Action Items Committed for 2022

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 developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.
- Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.
- Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

Systems Change

- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.
- 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.

Past Pledge Archive

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Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Kate Gallego	2026	12/17/2025	
Mayor Kate Gallego	2025	12/16/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Kate Gallego	2024	12/15/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor Kate Gallego	2023	12/7/2022	Signatories
Mayor Kate Gallego	2022	12/13/2021	Signatories
Mayor Kate Gallego	2021	4/30/2021	Signatories

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.).

183059

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.)

933 youth and 182,126 unconfirmed age or 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.

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, desert preserves, waste transfer station, library

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

The Mayor's pledge helps facilitate expanded city engagement with external partners, including the development of materials in Spanish. The City has been able to utilize National Wildlife Federation support in providing expert Spanish-language media interviews. We have also utilized the pledge to partner with Indigenous artists at an event focused on the monarch butterfly life cycle through immersive art experiences and have been reaching out to a wide range of community partners to convene a working group focused on expanding the reach and effectiveness of the monarch pledge in Phoenix.

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

The City of Phoenix is committed to being a sustainable desert city. The Mayor's pledge supports our ethos of habitat conservation, wise water use, and support of native biodiversity.

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?

We have appreciated access to NWF staff, who have been willing to provide expert Spanish-language media interviews. Native Sonoran Desert milkweed plant and seed availability is one of the primary limiting factors at this time. Individual homeowner grants to install monarch habitat with stormwater harvesting features would help those who couldn't otherwise afford the plants or the water to keep them alive.

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

In its second pledge year, the City of Phoenix expanded its outreach into the community and across city departments and has initiated conversations with the development community. We are working towards convening a working group of community partners that can help expand the reach of the monarch pledge even further in 2023. We have seen departments voluntarily and enthusiastically initiate more projects than were encompassed in the City's 5-year monarch plan, allowing for greater growth in the program in 2022 than expected. The planted habitat is placed to capture synergy between other public outreach efforts and the monarch pledge. For example, the 27th Ave Transfer Station habitat planted in 2022 will become part of the public tours that will start when the new recycling facility under construction is complete, providing an avenue to share the monarch information to a broad audience. The City also participates in a native milkweed and monarch butterfly study led by Desert Botanical Garden and has been able to utilize the Calvin Goode/Council Chamber garden planted in 2021 to collect data. Within 3 months after that garden was planted, a monarch caterpillar was observed utilizing the native desert milkweed that had been planted. We look forward to the continued growth and reach of the monarch pledge efforts over the coming years as we seek to bring awareness and habitat to the monarch butterfly and other pollinators.

Selected Action Items

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?

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

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.

If this action is In Progress, please describe your progress and a target date when you plan to complete action.

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.

Monarch Butterfly Fact Card-Final.pdf

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

Monarch Butterfly Fact Card-spanish-Final.pdf

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

Continued outreach via social media and tabling events throughout the year with materials in both English and Spanish. Monarch booths were hosted at Tres Rios Nature Festival, Mountain Trail Middle School Earth Day Event, and Earth Day event at the Arizona Capitol. Community partner (Southwest Monarch Study) provided a monarch booth at the Urban Wildlife Conservation Day event at Rio Salado in October 2022. Community partner Keep Phoenix Beautiful distributed milkweed seed packets to residents as part of two "I Recycle" events at city waste transfer stations. City departments hosted focused social media push during Pollinator Week. City departments celebrated the annually recurring "Planting for Monarchs Month" for Phoenix in September (set by the Mayor's proclamation in 2021). This is timed to be immediately before the Fall planting season in Phoenix. Outreach included daily social media posts, the educational videos shared on social media, network television news interview, and Spanish radio interview. Outreach focused on encouraging people to plant native milkweed and native nectar plants. A specific Sonoran Desert monarch seed mix was developed and provided at outreach events to encourage follow up planting action. Estimated reach of these combined efforts is 181,061 individuals. Link to Spanish radio interview (Rebeca Quinonez-Pinon, National Wildlife Federation): https://www.facebook.com/Onda1190AM107.5FM/videos/1022060615142472

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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.

City staff presented at the Development Advisory Board in August 2022, providing information on the monarch butterfly, the pledge, and the desire to increase habitat for this species. City staff received recommendations from the Board on actions the city could take to expand private planting of monarch habitat. City staff also delivered the Keynote address at the American Planning Association, Arizona Chapter conference and included information on the monarch butterfly and pledge actions. Over 330 developers, planners, landscape architects, and other professionals were engaged through these efforts.

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

5

What species were collected or propagated?

Desert milkweed (Asclepias subulata)

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

Park Steward volunteers

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

The commercial availability of milkweed plants and seeds native to the Sonoran Desert is limited, but use of native milkweed species is important to support biodiversity and wise use of limited water resources. As a result, the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department started a native milkweed nursery in 2022. Desert milkweed seeds are collected from the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area Monarch Waystation and propagated at the new nursery at South Mountain Park (one of the city's desert preserves). Between 25 and 100 milkweed plants are being propagated at any one time in the nursery. Park Stewards, local volunteers who support Parks Department initiatives, help run and maintain the nursery. Plants are used to support monarch plantings across city departments, including a November 2022 milkweed planting at the Ocotillo Library.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

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reduced size_Phoenix Monarch Interpretive Sign_18x24.pdf

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

2

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

One monarch waystation sign is displayed at Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area Monarch Waystation and one is being installed in December at the Calvin Goode/Council Chambers Monarch Waystation. An interpretive sign has been finalized and is in production and will be placed at the Calvin Goode/Council Chambers Monarch Waystation. A copy of this interpretive sign has been attached.

Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

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

N/A

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.

While mowing and prairie habitat is not applicable to city practices that affect monarch butterfly habitat, the City is taking action to help support native milkweed and nectar plants and reduce the impacts of landscaping practices common to Phoenix on that habitat. Specifically, the City of Phoenix is updating the landscape maintenance contract for city properties to require sustainable landscape maintenance practices in monarch butterfly habitat. These practices include avoiding pesticide use in these areas and only trimming plants when flowers are not present. Language has been amended and the contract is in the final signature stages. This is anticipated to be complete by the end of 2022.

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?

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City of Phoenix Arts & Culture partnered with Cahokia PHX (an Indigenous artist collaborative), and Pachanga Collective (a dance artist collective)

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).

0

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).

Partners are hosting a monarch butterfly arts and culture show on December 17, 2022 so no attendance information is available yet. I can email the number after the event. More than 10 Indigenous artists will be participating. The event is focused on creating awareness around the monarch butterfly's life cycle and species peril by engaging the audience in an immersive art experience (visual art, poems, storytelling, music, and dance), elevating the butterfly's connection and importance to indigenous peoples and the human experience of transformation, rebirth, migration, and strength. The event will happen concurrently with an Indigenous Holiday Pop-Up Market with 60+ vendors. The City will also host a table providing resources and information on actions to help the monarch butterfly.

Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.

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

Tres Rios Planting_Apr 2022.jpg

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

27th Ave Transfer Station_June 2022.jpg

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

Mayor Gallego_nectar plant at Rio Salado Oct 2022.JPG

Where are the medians, roadsides and public rights-of-way? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible, or describe the location)

Monarch habitat was planted at the following publicly owned locations: 27th Ave Waste Transfer Station, 3060 S 27th Ave., Phoenix AZ Tres Rios Wetlands, 33.388360, -112.266008 Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area, 2875 S 7th St., 2439 S Central Ave. and 7th Ave/Salt River, Phoenix AZ South Mountain Park, 10409 S Central Ave., Phoenix AZ

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Ocotillo Library, 102 W Southern Ave., Phoenix AZ The following community groups were involved with the efforts at Rio Salado: Chispa Z, Keep Phoenix Beautiful, AZ Sierra Club Water Sentinels, Arizona Sustainability Alliance, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Audubon Southwest, Corazon Latino, Arizona State University Rio Reimagined, Southwest Monarch Study, Liquidity Services, NFL Green, Verizon, Pepsico, Arizona Cardinals. Desert Botanical Garden assisted with the planting at Tres Rios.

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

774

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.

2

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

At the habitat restoration and desert preserve areas (Rio Salado, Tres Rios, South Mountain), maintenance is minimal and limited to that required for public safety and to keep paths open. Native milkweed and nectar plants are allowed to grow in their natural form and are not trimmed unless needed for the health and longevity of the plant. At the Ocotillo Library and 27th Ave Waste Transfer Station, landscaping falls under the new contract that is being finalized in 2022, requiring that monarch habitat be maintained using Sustainable Landscape Management practices.

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