City of Dana Point

Dana Point, CA

Mayor Matthew Pagano

Pledge Summary

The City of Dana Point is dedicated to reviving the Monarch Butterfly populationthrough a community-driven initiative focused on creating and strengthening pollinator habitats. Recognizing the vital role Monarchs play in our ecosystem, the City has embarked on efforts to restore their wintering habitats and establish new spaces for them to thrive. With the help of local residents and interested visitors, Dana Point has been transforming public spaces into butterfly-friendly environments by planting California native plants that provide essential food and shelter for Monarchs during their migration. Through volunteer events and educational outreach, Dana Point residents are actively involved in fostering a healthier, more sustainable environment for Monarchs and other pollinators. This collaborative effort highlights the power of community action in protecting local wildlife and preserving the natural beauty of Dana Point.

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 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.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.
- 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).
- 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.

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- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Matthew Pagano	2025	1/23/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Jamey Federico	2024	3/30/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Mike Frost	2023	1/17/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor Joe Muller	2022	3/4/2022	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.).

196

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.)

66

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.

0.25

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

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

Our Monarch Butterfly Habitat program utilizes inclusive outreach, community workshops, and accessible resources to engage marginalized communities within and outside of Dana Point, CA. The resources through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge program has allowed for our involvement in Monarch Butterfly Habitat building to expand into R.H. Dana Elementary, a Title I school.

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

Our Monarch Butterfly Habitat program is on track as a 10 year program to build 10 successful monarch butterfly and pollinator native plant habitats within our Parks system. Our community continues to work on the Mayors' Monarch pledge through dedication of volunteer and environmental stewardship, project ownership, education and awareness, and collaboration and community building.

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?

Plant palettes and native plant guides have been the most helpful resources thus far. Providing translation services or community vetted language translations for printed materials would be a helpful resource to help expand equitable engagement.

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

Our 2025 Monarch Butterfly Habitat Helper workdays included 5 habitat workdays, new to this year was the addition of our Monarch Butterfly Habitat Ambassador program that ran every Friday at specific parks for a determined amount of time. This allowed for participants to commit to different parks and establish ownership over select habitat sites.

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.)

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

Printed materials are available at each Habitat Workday as well as the Nature Interpretive Center (butterfly data sheet, annual flyer, take-home plant list). The City posts regular social media posts throughout the season. Permanent and temporary signage is posted at each habitat.

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.

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Two departments within the City of Dana Point, Parks and Public Works.

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

The Parks department has modified mowing practices for areas buffering our monarch butterfly habitats. The Public Works department has collaborated on outreach events, funded milkweed giveaway programs, and participated in habitat plantings.

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.

Nature Interpretive Center, California Native Plant Society - Orange County chapter, Tree of Life Nursery, Dana Point Nursery

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

The Nature Interpretive Center is the hub for the Cities Monarch Butterfly Habitat program. CNPS-OC and the City of Dana Point hosts native-plant giveaways at the Nature Interpretive Center for the continuation of the A Buckwheat in Every Garden - Buckwheat Brings Butterflies campaign. Tree of Life Nursery and Dana Point Nursery provides advisement and native plants for events.

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

6

What species were collected or propagated?

Narrowleaf milkweed

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

Saddleback College

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

Ongoing partnership with propagation courses at Saddleback College. Collaboration with the college greenhouse for interns, greenhouse space, and resources.

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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?

Monarch Watch

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

Habitats are registered as Monarch Waystations and serve to track habitat growth throughout the country through www.monarchwatch.org

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

32

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

Nearby APES high school students, SJHHS and DHHS

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

iNaturalist city bioblitz

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?

Tree of Life Nursery, Xerces Grant

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

500

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Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Monarch Butterfly Habitat Helpers and Ambassadors continually plant native nectar plants and native narrowleaf milkweed at each event day.

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.

1

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.

Throughout all 5 habitats, hand pulling of non-native and invasive species continues throughout habitat workdays and routine maintenance.

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).

(1) permanent sign at Sea Terrace Community Park. (4) Temporary signs are at each habitat workday and throughout each park on and off season. (4) Monarch Way Station Signs at Sea Terrace, Creekside, Sea Canyon, and Lantern Bay. (1) Xerces pollinator habitat sign as part of Xerces grant.

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