Village of Ridgefield Park

Ridgefield Park, NJ

Mayor John Anlian

Pledge Summary

The Village of Ridgefield Park has a population of 13,000+ residents. The Hackensack River touches our borders. On June 3, 2023 local officials, members from the Bergen County Board of Commissioners and residents of the Village celebrated the unveiling and grand opening of the Nature Preserve which is the culmination of 50 years of planning. The space is constructed with an ADA interpretive trail and boardwalk throughout. Increasing interest in the space along with nature walks regularly offered by the Environmental Commission has shown that our residents wish to expand their knowledge in sustainable plantings they can do for monarch and pollinator conservation.

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.
- 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.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Launch or maintain an outdoor education program(s) (e.g., at schools, after-school programs, community centers and groups) that builds awareness and creates habitat by engaging students, educators, and the community in planting native milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Systems Change

- Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.

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Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Adam MacNeill	2026	2/3/2026	
Mayor Adam MacNeill	2025	3/10/2025	Signatories
Mayor Adam MacNeill	2024	2/20/2024	Signatories
Mayor John Anlian	2023	3/9/2023	Signatories
Mayor John Anlian	2022	3/8/2022	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.).

100

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.)

75 youth and 25 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.

0.01

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.

community gardens, municipal building space, public pool, recycling center entrance high school

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

By promoting activities through the Village newsletter and social media. We reach out, invite and encourage all those in our village.

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

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The challenge of finding opportunities for sustainable plantings in unexpected places.

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?

Ideas from volunteers and municipal commissioners have been insightful for future direction.

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

Increasing the amount of milkweed and nectar habitat in our municipal planting spaces. Also offering milkweed seeds at Earth Day and other events.

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:

March 9, 2023

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

Mayor's Monarch Pledge Day

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

2023 Proclamation.pdf

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.

Sustainable RP Events in 2024-r2.docx

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

mmp community outreach article pg 1.pdf

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

mmp community outreach article pg 2.pdf

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

The Village Newsletter is printed and sent to approximately 5000 households and is available on the website https://www.ridgefieldpark.org/home/news/village-newsletter-september-2023. Facebook and instagram are used as needed. The school district controls distribution of materials to students and families so we adhere to the rules of the virtual backpack. Project information is shared in monthly meetings usually laced on the agenda with the Environmental Commission and Sustainable Ridgefield Park. The Board of Commissioners is updated regularly. See attached article, "Ridgefield Park's Monarchs Need You!" which appeared in the March 2023 edition.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

Fellowship.jpg

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20230722_111301.jpg

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

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

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

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

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

20230614_171001.jpg

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

20230614_171220.jpg

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

12

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

The two signs are The Journey of the Monarch in North America and Meet the Pollinators. There are six locations each having two signs. The uploaded image illustrates signage in a garden location.

Launch or maintain an outdoor education program(s) (e.g., at schools, after-school programs, community centers and groups) that builds awareness and creates habitat by engaging students, educators, and the community in planting native milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).

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May planting 2.jpg

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nature walk 2.jpg

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nature walk.jpg

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

Stacy Fernandez 2.jpg

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

Daily Work Log for Stacy's internship.pdf

What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? If you are involved with another National Wildlife Federation program, please mention that below. (Please include a link to the program, if possible)

With the grand opening of the Nature Preserve regular informative talks and walks occur at that location educating visitors about the advantage of planting native species in municipal locations and in residential spaces. A particular event that took place was on Saturday May 6, 2023 the Ridgefield Park Nature Preserve held a spring planning event. Members of the Department of Public Works, along with over 25 Volunteers (interested citizens, student members of the Key Club, and others) planted a variety of native trees and plants in the preserve. The main focus of this event was to work on the loop, at the E. Grand Ave entrance. There was also work done in the Southern Planting bed at the start of Warrington Meadow. Species included Seaside Goldenrod, Foxglove Beard Tongue, and Bee Balm in the upper planting bed. These plants are known as pollinators, which attract Bees and Butterflys to feed on, then to distribute pollen for surrounding plants. At the entrance loop, trees from Red Maple, White Ash, Tupelo, and Persimmon were added. Small plants like Northern Bay Berry, Virgina Sweetspire, Groundel Bush and Spice Bush were also planted. Not only were plants selected because of their native origins, but they will act a deer repellent and to hold the ground soil stable in raining conditions. Volunteers were shown the preferred way of transplanting the plants to insure the maximum chance for survival by Landscape Architect Mr. Richard Pillar. The Volunteers were moved into groups, given gloves and tools, before walking to the areas that needed to be worked on. Plants in the entrance loop were moved to their place earlier in the morning. It was then left to the Volunteers to dig the appropriate hole for each species, gently removed them for their container, and securely place the plant into the ground.

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How many schools, community groups, leaders, or centers were engaged in this effort? How many of these collaborations and partnerships are "new"? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

8

Please list the names of the schools you are working with.

Ridgefield Park Junior Senior High School

What resources, if any, are you providing to educators?

0

How many students and educators would you estimate are being reached? Please limit your answer to only number of adults and youths engaged in the answer field (e.g., 200 students and 20 educators).

Email from the high school reaches 1200 students

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

Mayor, DPW, Ridgefield Park Nature Preserve, Ridgefield Park Environmental Association, Key Club, Landscape Architect, Girl Scouts, Stacy Fernandez

How many acres of monarch and pollinator habitat have been planted through this effort? 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.

0.03

What is the maintenance schedule to ensure planted habitat is maintained?

Stacy Fernandez an environmental science major from Stockton State College joined the Nature Preserve Project as an intern. and managed the maintenance schedule. It included but was not limited to planting native trees and shrubs, removing invasive plants, monitoring trails, tracking wildlife, coordinating volunteers, and leading nature walks throughout the summer months (June through mid-August). In addition she did preliminary work on developing educational material which provided the basis for newsletter and social media material. A clean up was scheduled for October but was canceled due to weather and the next clean up(s) will be held on December 2nd (weather permitting)

Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.

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DPW Entrance 2.jpg

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Fellowship.jpg

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John B Davis Pool.jpg

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

McGowan.jpg

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

Municipal Building 1.jpg

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

Municipal Building 2.jpg

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

RP High School.jpg

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

We partnered with a member of our Commissioner group along with the Environmental Commission and Sustainable Ridgefield Park members.

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

Complete

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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.

8/2023. This is an informal practice and does not involve a policy or documented practice.

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.

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RP High School.jpg

How many community organizations and groups participated? Please list them below.

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We partnered with a member of our Board of Commissioners along with the Environmental Commission and Sustainable Ridgefield Park members, Girl Scouts, Key Club, a high school group focused on community volunteerism.

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

Face to face meetings with these groups secures the volunteers we need for all the planting programs and maintenance of the planted spaces. None of our planted locations require mowing. In addition they are notified using email or text about all new activity. It is done as needed and not on a regular calendar schedule.

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