City of Pharr

Pharr, TX

Mayor Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez

Pledge Summary

With a population of 80,000 residents, the City of Pharr is located in the Rio Grande Valley. This region of Texas is significant to the central migratory flyway of the monarch butterfly, and city leadership recognizes its importance in ensuring that our community is educated about this.

Action Items Committed for 2024

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.
- Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.
- 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.
- 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

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.
- 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.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.
- 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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Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez	2026	12/17/2025	
Mayor Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez	2025	12/5/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez	2024	12/18/2023	Signatories
Mayor Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez	2023	12/9/2022	Leadership Circle
Mayor Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez	2022	2/14/2022	Signatories
Mayor Dr. Ambrosio Hernandez	2021	1/19/2021	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.).

1365

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.)

860

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.

15.4

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.

This habitat has been established in several locations throughout the city of Pharr, including Pharr/Vanguard Nature Park, Jones Box Park, the City of Pharr Public Library, and the Pharr Public Works area. Our employees and dedicated volunteers actively help when creating the habitat.

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

The Lower Rio Grande Valley has a high population of marginalized groups, particularly low-income households and those of color. We use the Mayor's Monarch Pledge to engage children in these communities through after-school programs and in-school outreach

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initiatives. This approach allows them to share what they have learned with their families at home and expand their knowledge as well.

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

The City of Pharr is located in a region that plays a vital role for migratory monarch butterflies during both their fall and spring migration cycles. The city's leadership acknowledges this importance and actively supports efforts to provide habitat for pollinators, as well as educating its citizens about their vital role in the ecosystem.

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?

Resources that have been particularly helpful include educational worksheets and information available on various monarch conservation websites, such as Monarch.org, the Native Plant Society of Texas, and the National Wildlife Federation website. However, having more Spanish-oriented information and worksheets would greatly assist us in reaching our goals, especially in our predominantly Hispanic, Spanish-speaking communities. These materials have simplified our outreach efforts with both students and adults.

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

Pharr's population is growing, resulting in habitat loss caused by economic development. We are constantly looking for solutions that can be implemented to mitigate its effects on our wildlife, especially pollinators.

Selected Action Items

Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.

Please describe the groups you engaged with and how you engaged with these groups below.

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.

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Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.

How many plants were sold and/or given away at your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

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

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

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

What species were collected or propagated?

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

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

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).

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

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

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)

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

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.

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

Girl Scouts.jpg

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

Volunteers.jpg

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

usfws-30th-annual-rio-reforestation.png

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

Texas Master Naturalists, Texas Master Gardeners, Keep Pharr Beautiful Committee, UTRGV students, STC students, school districts from across the valley, HEB Trees for Texans, American Forests, Defenders of Wildlife, Friends of the Wildlife Corridor, Girl Scouts of America, Boy Scouts of America

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

In partnership with American Forest and the City of Pharr, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service hosted the 30th Annual Rio Reforestation event, where more than 1,200 dedicated volunteers planted over 15,000 native seedlings on 15 acres. These plantings will provide essential habitats for native wildlife, migratory birds, and monarch butterflies. The City of Pharr played a crucial role in supporting the event's logistics by providing operational resources like tents, media coverage, and staff to assist with coordination, making this community effort a resounding success.

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

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

Paint the Park Flyer 2024.png

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

Keep Pharr Beautiful Committee, City of Pharr Parks and Rec, Public Health Department, Public Works

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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).

60

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).

The City of Pharr hosted its 2nd annual “Paint the Park for Earth Day” event at Pharr/Vanguard Nature Park (1025 S. Richmond Dr., Pharr, TX). Designed to inspire community engagement and enjoyment of the outdoors, this unique event invited residents to register for a free spot to paint a parking space, with supplies provided at no cost. The 2024 theme, “Planet vs. Plastics,” aimed to raise awareness of plastic reduction and recycling. Local city officials from various departments judged the artwork, awarding cash prizes to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners in both youth and adult categories. Click the link below for a recap video of this vibrant community event: https://youtu.be/Xmuprn6WygU?si=YSyODhPTJigS-TL3

Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.

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

JBP 3.jpg

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

PML 1.jpg

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

PW 5.jpg

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)

With the support of a National Wildlife Federation grant, our city successfully established three pollinator gardens at two city buildings and one city park. One of these gardens is located at the Jones Box Park Splash Pad (1201 W. Rosa Ln, Pharr, TX, 78577), which is heavily used for various sporting events, community gatherings, and especially during the summer for its family-friendly water features. By utilizing some of the space near the

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parking lot area of this park, we have created a pollinator demonstration garden that is fully accessible to the public at no cost. Two additional pollinator gardens have been established at our Pharr Memorial Library, located at 121 E. Cherokee Ave, Pharr, TX, 78577. This library is situated in the downtown area, making it an ideal location for people to walk through and utilize, as it is open to the public year-round. The last garden is located beside the Pharr Public Works Building at 1015 E. Ferguson Ave., Pharr, TX, 78577, near a busy city road where passersby can admire it as they drive by.

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

The maintenance team from the City of Parks and Recreation helped prepare the sites for planting at all locations. Through volunteer outreach via our social media channels, most of the gardens were completed during three different planting days held in late August and September. Volunteers planted a total of 350 pollinator-friendly native plants at Jones Box Park, 110 at Pharr Memorial Library, and 50 at Pharr Public Works.

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.

0.4

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:

11/18/24

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

Mayors' Monarch Pledge Day

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

2024 MMP Proclamation Photo.jpg

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

2024 MMP Proclamation.pdf

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

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community in planting native milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).

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

Newspaper Native Plant Pot.jpg

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

Newspaper Pot Outreach.jpg

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

Newspaper Pots .jpg

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)

The Pharr Parks & Recreation team manages an After School Program across 12 schools within the PSJA school district throughout the spring and fall semesters. This year, they collaborated with the city of Pharr Urban Ecologist to develop a special program for the spring semester, aimed at teaching students the importance of native plants. Through presentations and hands-on activities, students learned how to start native seeds using handmade newspaper pots filled with native seed mixes. This initiative not only introduced students to environmental stewardship but also fostered a deeper connection to local ecology and sustainable practices.

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)

12

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

Allen & William Arnold Elementary, Aida C. Escobar Elementary, Berta Palacios Elementary, Cesar Chavez Elementary, Carmen Anaya Elementary, Daniel Ramirez Elementary, Dr. William Long Elementary, Geraldine Palmer Elementary, Graciela Garcia Elementary, Henry Ford Elementary, Kelly-Pharr Elementary, Raul Longoria Elementary.

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

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N/A

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).

465

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

N/A

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

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

N/A

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