Village of Bull Valley

Bull Valley, IL

Village President Emily Berendt

Pledge Summary

The Village of Bull Valley is a small village of 1128 residents, centrally located in McHenry County. A glacial topography, abundant hardwood trees along rural-style roads, and large open spaces with a country feel are characteristics of the Village and evidence of the Village's collective commitment to natural resource protection. The Mayor's Monarch Pledge is a perfect opportunity to expand that commitment to include native pollinators and the native plants they need to thrive.

Action Items Committed for 2024

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Systems Change

- Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city’s Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.
- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
President EMILY BERENDT	2025	2/17/2025	Signatories
Village President Emily Berendt	2024	2/14/2024	Signatories
Village President Emily Berendt	2023	1/12/2023	Signatories
Village President Emily Berendt	2022	3/31/2022	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.).

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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.)

0

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

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.

residential yards, roadsides and public parks

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

Within the Village, opportunities to engage marginalized communities are non-existent. Bull Valey is a very homogeneous community. Opportunities may present themselves to engage groups outside the Bull Valley boundaries when the newest Bull Vally Park opens to the public.

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

Community commitment to resource preservation and acquisition of new parkland presented opportunity.

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 accessed many of the publications available on this site. To expand engagement in the community in our fourth year we should probably reach out to church or school groups reach a more diverse population.

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

Awareness of the Mayors Monarch Pledge and plight of the Monarchs is increasing in the Village overall. At the recent annual dinner meeting of the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County, the Village was a proud recipient of the organization's Local Government Award for its Outdoor Lighting (Dark Sky) ordinance, its work on the Mayors Monarch

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Pledge, and its role in the acquisition of the Thompson Road Farm Nature Preserve. This was covered in two local papers and the Defenders newsletter.

Selected Action Items

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).

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)

Thousands of seeds were exchanged. Rather than try to get all the participating Monarch Gardeners together at on spot, the Village hosted an open seed exchange. Participants delivered packaged and labelled envelopes or small packets of home-grown seeds to the Village President's office and were able to exchange the number of packets they brought for the same number of packets someone else brought. The table was loaded with envelopes and packets through the month of October and dwindled down to just a few by at the time of this report. All leftover seed was donated to a member who is restoring a horse pasture to a prairie. eds.

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

20

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

Reached out to directly to the group of residents participating in the Pledge.

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?

Village Planning and Zoning Commission

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

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in progress

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

Draft update to zoning code standards will add that restoration of native landscapes including pollinator habitats is expressly permitted and encouraged and will not be penalized or prohibited as long as not encroaching on neighboring yards or public ways. This will go to public hearing in January 2025 and to the Board of Trustees for approval two weeks later.

Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city’s Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

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

Village Planning and Zoning Commission

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.

The Village Comprehensive Development and Preservation Plan is under review. Acquisition of more park acreage by the Village has created a need to revise the Parks section of the plan. A new sub-section on the Monarch Butterfly and the Mayor's Monarch Pledge will be inserted into the Section on Parks encouraging inclusion of pollinator gardens, specifically plants that attract Monarchs. One of the Village parks has already incorporated Monarch pollinators in its restoration of a 4-acre oak savannah described in the Village's 2022 Pledge Report. The Plan is scheduled to be available for public comment and set for public hearing in April or May 2025 and be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval by June.

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