Village of Bull Valley

Bull Valley, IL

President EMILY BERENDT

Pledge Summary

Action Items Committed for 2025

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.

Communications and Convening

- Engage with developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch 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.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

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 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.

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

Bull Valley is a conservation community. The Mayor's Monarch Pledge fits well with our character and philosophy as a Village.

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?

Don't know.

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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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.

In December the Village was unexpectedly presented an outreach opportunity. the steward for one of the Village Parks reached out to a two girl scout troops to assist in reseeding some 1.5-2 acres that had been cleared in the prior months of burdock, orchard grass, buckthorn etc. 24 Scouts and leaders assembled on December 6, 2025 and were taught about pollinator species with an emphasis on Monarch Habitat. They were shown how to properly disperse seed under the supervision of the Park Steward.

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

The Bull Valley Parks are open to all.

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.)

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

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The Village efforts have helped raise awareness in other groups in the area. The Bull Valley Garden Club initiated a project called the Prairie Promise with a grant from the Garden Clubs of America. The coordinated a planting day with 46 volunteers from six local organizations to plant 1100 native plants at the Thompson Road Preserve.

Selected Action Items

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.

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.

Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

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

Girl Scouts Help at Still Farm_Redacted.pdf

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

image001 (6).png

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

Button.jpg

What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

1.5-2

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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.

This is a continuation of a restoration project that was featured in the Village's 2022 Pledge. Monarch and other pollinator specific species of native plants were seeded after that first clearing. The biggest challenge in 2025 was the appearance of large dense sections of orchard grass which was originally planted to provide pasture for the dairy cows that were kept there previously. A consultant was hired who recommended an herbicide targeted to orchard grass. Also in 2025 overgrown vegetation under the Oaks and Hickories adjacent to the original three acres was mowed and will be herbicided to remove burdock and other invasives and aggressive plants like garlic mustard, multiflora rose, giant ragweed, and bittersweet. It will be planted after a burn with sedges and selected pollinators. The estimated acreage cleared under the trees is approximately 1.5 to 2 acres. The open area around the tree “islands” is still being hayed by a local farmer. Stewards Michael Gallery and Donna Hriljac reached out to local Girl Scouts from the Chippewa Service Unit of Crystal Lake and on December 6, 2025, twenty-four young people, leaders and parents assembled in the cold at the park for a brief talk on seed stratification and winter seeding techniques. The scouts were divided into teams and assigned pre-marked sections where they spread more Monarch/pollinator seed before heading back to the parking lot for hot apple cider and snacks. Each scout received a Monarch button pin memento and thank-you card.

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

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

This project was started during last year's pledge and has been delayed again. The addition is in draft form for passage with a comprehensive plan update. Anticipated passage is June or July 2026.

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

in progress

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

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

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

In addition to residents, we offered seed to Boone Dutch Creeks Watershed Alliance and the stewards of the Still Farm Restoration.

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

Dear Monarch Gardeners 2025.pdf

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

Res Ltr 8-27-25.pdf

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

Res ltr 10-13-25.pdf

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

Res ltr 10-25-25.pdf

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

0

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

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

complete

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

Zoning section proteting natural gardening.pdf

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.

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A new section 5-4-8(e) was added in March to the Village Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 5 on Uses. It specifically encourages and proteects the development of pollinator habitats.

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

none

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