City of Coconut Creek

Coconut Creek, FL

Mayor Sandy Welch

Pledge Summary

Coconut Creek, the “Butterfly Capital of the World”, is a well-planned city with a unique environmental consciousness nestled between Miami and Palm Beach. Home to Butterfly World, the largest butterfly park in the world, and as the first community in the State of FL to be certified as a Community Wildlife Habitat, the city has shared the vision of "Living Green" for decades. We are participating in this nationwide effort to advance monarch butterfly conservation by urging homeowners to plant butterfly gardens, install more native plants, and create wildlife habitats. And, to reward our residents for doing their part and for exercising their 'green thumbs', we give away a small, free, solar fountain to all Coconut Creek residents who certify their property as a wildlife habitat. We believe together, we can make a positive impact on our community and help the environment.

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 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 Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

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

Systems Change

- Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

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Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Sandy Welch	2025	2/28/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Sandy Welch	2024	3/6/2024	Signatories
Mayor Joshua Rydell	2022	4/26/2022	

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.).

624

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.)

120

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.

.20

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.

single-family residences (including patio gardens & balconies), schools, and businesses

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

We have created accessible opportunities for community participation with our Free Tree Giveaway event, in which butterfly-attracting plants, are given away in addition to free trees (which support butterfly habitat.) Additionally, to ensure accessibility, we provide free resources of information and will visit properties and schools, at no charge, to assist residents/students with implementing habitat creation/ butterfly gardens. We offer training to any resident who wishes to become a conservation ambassador, so that they may become leaders in this movement.

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

Our community's commitment to the Mayors' Monarch Pledge is driven by a deep recognition of the Monarch butterfly's significant decline and the broader environmental challenges this decline signifies. The city of Coconut Creek has adopted a stance as the "Butterfly Capital of the World" and promotes the protection and increase of these valuable indicator species to foster sustainability in our community.

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?

Access to information from the NWF website is very useful, and gaining new insight by participating in the regular meetings/webinars is particularly helpful.

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

We plan to continue to foster engagement and provide a platform for residents to actively participate in conservation efforts at every level in our city, from the City Commission, to the City Manager's office to our Sustainable Development department and our Parks and Public Works personnel. We are recommitted to educate and inspire, and strive to lead by example.

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:

December 4, 2024

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

Mayor's Monarch Pledge Day

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Coconut Creek proclamation 2024.pdf

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

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

spruce up at city hall garden.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)

Coconut Creek City Hall, 4800 W Copans Road, Coconut Creek, FL

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

With the support of the city commission, the public works department faciliated the installation of a butterfly garden area at City Hall. We have utilitzed community volunteers, from time to time, in the refurbishment of parts of the garden.

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.

0.15

Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

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

Outdoor lighting code.docx

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

We consulted with the International Dark Sky Association. https://darksky.org/

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

Complete

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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Completed on July 23, 2015 - We continue to enforce the ordinance to reduce light pollution in order to benefit urban wildlife.

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?

We participate in the Naturescape Broward program locally and we have been certified as a Community Wildlife Habitat since 2005.

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

The Butterfly festival and the free distribution of wildlife-attracting (including nectar and larval host plants) at the annual Free Tree Giveaway.

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.

Parks & Recreation Dept., Sustainable Development Dept., and Public Works Dept. Also met with the maintenance managers of the FL Dept. of Transportation.

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

1. Parks & Recreation: We collaborated with Parks staff and maintenance teams to assess current mowing schedules and identify areas suitable for reduced mowing. Together, we prioritized areas where native plant growth could enhance pollinator habitats while maintaining aesthetic and recreational value. 2. Public Works Staff: We coordinated with public works teams and our outside contractors to ensure mowing adjustments aligned with infrastructure needs, such as visibility, drainage, and roadside maintenance. We developed shared guidelines for areas where reduced mowing would be appropriate. 3. Sustainability Departments: Part of the development process engaged by our planners is to seek "conspicuous displays of green technology" in new development projects. This can be projects like creating butterfly gardens with educational signage and/or integrating native plantings to attract wildlife. 4. Community Input: In 2024, our Mayor at the time, Sandy Welch, along with City Commissioner Jackie Railey, manned a table at the city's annual tree giveaway event, where they spoke to residents directly to tell them what we are doing and what they can do to help increase the population of the monarch butterfly. Photos are located here: https://www.flickr.com/photos/coconutcreekgov/albums/72177720316542438/ By fostering cross-departmental collaboration and leveraging community engagement, we successfully identified opportunities to implement sustainable mowing practices and

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promote native plantings, enhancing ecological resilience and supporting pollinator populations.

Engage with Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.

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

Beyond the outreach that takes place at our annual Arbor Day event, we engaged with several local homeowners associations and their lawn maintenance companies to discuss the merits of reducing and/or eliminating pesticides, installing butterfly gardens, and planting more native species. Communities include Tamarind Village, Coco Lakes HOA, Wynmoor, Crescent Creek, and Country Woods. The city creatively resolved a tree violation by stipulating that the homeowner of a four-acre property, as part of their settlement, agree to certify their property as a Wildlife Habitat with NWF.

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

There seems to be some small improvements, but changes are slow to develop and efforts are continuing to provide education and encouragement.

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