City of San Marcos

San Marcos, TX

Mayor Jane Hughson

Pledge Summary

San Marcos is a city in central Texas with a population of roughly 90,988. Located midway between Austin and San Antonio, San Marcos is a quickly growing community that is situated along a major migration route for many species including monarch butterflies. Our city has a direct impact on monarch populations as they move across this region each year. Mayor Hughson of San Marcos, TX has committed to saving the monarch butterfly and other pollinators with their signing of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge and looks forward to contributing to the enhancement and conservation of pollinator habitat throughout the city.

Action Items Committed for 2025

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 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.
- 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.
- Engage with Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.
- Engage with developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.
- Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.
- Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

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- 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.
- Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.
- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- 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).
- 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).
- Host or support a monarch neighborhood challenge to engage neighborhoods and homeowners' associations within the community to increase awareness, support community unity around a common mission, and/or create habitat for the monarch butterfly.
- Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.
- Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes monarch and pollinator conservation, as well as cultural awareness and recognition.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Systems Change

- Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).
- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.
- Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.
- Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native nectar producing plants at city properties.
- Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.
- Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.
- Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

Past Pledge Archive

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Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
City of San Marcos Mayor Jane Hughson	2026	4/29/2026	
Mayor Jane Hughson	2025	4/24/2025	Monarch Champions
Mayor of City of San Marcos Texas Jane Hughson	2024	3/22/2024	Monarch Champions
Mayor of City of San Marcos Texas Jane Hughson	2023	3/30/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor of City of San Marcos Texas Jane Hughson	2022	4/28/2022	Leadership Circle

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.).

2510

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.)

500

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.

2

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.

Schools, community gardens, natural areas, shared public spaces, community centers, roadsides, culturally significant locations (El Centro), residential yards, parks, and neighborhood initiatives.

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

The City engaged with non-profit partners who serve marginalized communities through plant donations and educational programs. These groups include: El Centro Cultural

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Hispano de San Marcos, Youth Service Bureau (Junior Master Gardeners), and A Rocha USA Central Texas.

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

We recognize that monarch conservation is integral to healthy habitats for wildlife in general. Monarchs are culturally significant in Mexico, USA, and Canada and lend themselves towards community engagement and unites the community. This initiative serves as guidance for decision making in support of monarch conservation including art initiatives, parks management, city planting pallet, dark sky lighting, and more.

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?

Educational PowerPoint/PDF's, monarch identification, migration pathway maps, Spanish language resources, and the certification program have been most helpful. More possibilities for collaboration of public events in underserved community parks for help expand equitable engagement in the community. Grants for native plant landscapes for underserved residents would be beneficial as well.

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

We have seen an increased interest in monarch and pollinator conservation from our community based on positive community feedback, general inquiries, increased attendance of our events, record plant sales, program requests, local news outlet coverage, and pollinator garden installation requests. In addition to pollinator and milkweed plants, the city has a robust tree planting program. Three hundred trees were planted throughout parks and natural areas, partnerships with schools, and right of ways. Trees provide valuable roosting habitat for monarchs. During the city's annual tree giveaway, 1,200 native trees were given out (two per household) as well as educational information on how to care for and plant. The city became a Certified Bird City Texas through Audubon Texas and TPWD and a Bee City through the Xerces Society in 2025. These initiatives further protect habitat for all wildlife in San Marcos. San Marcos Discovery Center staff attended the third class needed to become a Certified Monarch Steward under NWF.

Selected Action Items

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?

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

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.

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

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:

10/8/2025

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

Monarch Butterfly Month Proclamation

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Monarch Butterfly Month Proclamation 2025.jpg

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.

moncons_talking_points_spanish.pdf

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

Monarch_Community_Science pdf.pdf

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

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The CoSM has a Certified Habitat Stewardship Program that encourages residents to implement sustainable practices, improve wildlife habitat, and retain stormwater on site resulting in further conservation and establishment of pollinator and monarch habitat. https://www.sanmarcostx.gov/faq.aspx?TID=72 Social media posts, educational information at various programs, events, and camps. Interpretive signage on display at multiple community garden locations. Community science printed materials handed out at events and made available at the Discovery Center. Monthly themed Wild Wednesday program that focused on pollinator and monarchs. This program is a self-guided interpretive activity that includes information, crafts, and other activities geared towards kids. Leading up to the annual Monarch Festival, we had social media posts that encouraged planting native plants and milkweed for monarch habitat. During the festival/plant sale, we displayed posters about milkweed and monarchs, gave away 700 native milkweed plants, had an information table about how to garden for monarchs, displayed posters about monarch identification and migration. At the Discovery Center, we have a permanent interpretive signage displaying monarch importance, migration, population decline, and how to learn more from monarch joint venture. Display informational flyers at the Discovery Center encouraging the public to become monarch community scientists. English and Spanish brochure called 'The Magic of the Monarch Butterfly' available at the Discovery Center and tabling events. Promote monarch conservation at public outreach events. Participated in the monarch-focused Earth Stewardship Community Fair hosted by the Mermaid Society. The Discovery Center gave information about monarch conservation and held a seeding activity for tropical sage.

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

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

Junior Master Gardener Certification.pdf

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

Community Garden Groups Donated Plant List.docx

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

Hernandez Elementary Garden Club.pdf

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

The CoSM donated native milkweed and pollinator plants to Hernandez Elementary School as part of their afterschool garden club. Provided tools, mulch, and guidance during planting of pollinator beds. SMGA/Team Flora do native seed collection and broadcasting efforts throughout all city natural areas. TxState Sustainability Squad volunteers have been an ongoing partner with these efforts. The CoSM partners with the Hays County Master

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Naturalists to maintain and expand native milkweed and pollinator gardens on city properties. City Resource Recovery staff in partnership with Youth Services Bureau led a five-week Junior Master Gardener program to students to complete their Junior Master Naturalist certification. The students gained practical real-world knowledge about garden science, growing fresh vegetables, composting, pollination, and life skills. This program inspires youth to be of service to others through service learning and leadership. The kids learned through helping each other and working together with their peers. Guest speakers attended most of the sessions, so attendees got to hear from real-life professionals in the field. A few kids also noted that they began at-home projects that involved planting. The Youth Services Bureau has a garden in the back and while we weren't tending to the garden directly, we talked about how they can naturally use their leaves as compost and a "plant blanket". At the end, the kids received a certificate for their achievement. This targets a diverse demographic to participate and learn about monarch conservation efforts. San Marcos Discovery Center donated native plants to Hays Homeschool Garden Club, Price Center & Gardens, and Hernandez Elementary School.

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.

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

Monarch Festival 2025.pdf

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

Hernandez Elementary Garden Club.pdf

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

Discovery Center Plants Donated 2025.pdf

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

Hays County Master Gardeners, Hays County Master Naturalists, Hill Country Chapter of the Native Plant Society, San Marcos River Foundation, El Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos, Texas State Sustainability Squad, Texas State Entomology Club, and San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance.

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

Participated in and provided monarch conservation information and activities for our 2025 Fall Monarch Fest and Spring Sustainability Fair including examples and lists of monarch

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nectar plants, native milkweed plants, community science programs, why tropical milkweed can be harmful to monarchs, native plant grants available to landowners, how to identify monarchs, how to determine gender of monarchs, crafts pertaining to the monarch lifecycle, free native milkweed plants, etc. Hays County Master Naturalists volunteer weekly assisting with native pollinator-friendly plant propagation and pollinator garden and monarch waystation maintenance. Hill Country Native Plant Society of Texas regularly promotes the Discovery Center at tabling events as a location to obtain native and pollinator-friendly plants. Additionally, they provide information about monarch conservation and NPSoT monarch related grants. San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance works with the Discovery Center weekly gathering native seeds for propagation and restoration efforts as well as partnering in monthly restoration efforts within local natural areas. Donated native plants and milkweed and planted with students, teachers, and volunteers at Hernandez Elementary School. Met with El Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos and Keep San Marcos Beautiful to create a pollinator garden plan to be planted in spring 2026.

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.

Murals & Art Installations.pdf

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

Price Center & Gardens, Mobility Hub, Mainstreet, Destination Services, and San Marcos Arts Commission.

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).

300

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).

Several art installations were created at numerous locations promoting pollinator conservation, native wildlife, monarchs, and cultural awareness. Locations include Mobility Hub and inside and outside of the Price Center & Gardens.

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

Action 4.doc

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

Discovery Center, Parks & Recreation, Resource Recovery, Keep San Marcos Beautiful, San Marcos River Foundation, San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance, Mainstreet Dept. (Downtown), Code Compliance, SM Police Dept., Engineering (Habitat Conservation Program), and Certified Habitat Stewardship Program.

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

The City has drastically updated mowing schedule, locations, and frequency and improved practices under new supervision resulting in a decrease of the overall acreage mowed and improved practices aligned with monarch habitat conservation. Mowing has been reduced down to 2-4 cycles per year. We have planted demonstration pollinator and nectar, monarch friendly, and native prairie gardens, as well as expanded existing gardens. These include Downtown Beds, Public Library, Discovery Center, The Depot, Police Dept. Courtyard, Code Compliance Building, and Rain Gardens. The CoSM has implemented no-mow zones across many public parks to encourage native recruitment and conserve wildlife habitat, including monarch and pollinators. These areas are along the San Marcos River riparian zones, over 2,500 acres of city natural areas, the depot pocket prairie, among many others. Keep San Marcos Beautiful, San Marcos River Foundation, and San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance hosted a Healthy Creeks Talk Series. A panel of experts answered public questions. Talk Series were hosted on Sept 24th 6-7:30pm at the Activity Center Multipurpose Room (general public) and Oct 1st at Dunbar Rec Center 6-7:30pm (Dunbar Neighborhood only). The goal is to address concerns from the public about the city not mowing as frequently, then targeting specific neighborhoods with creeks. The Discovery Center had a table at these events to share information about Bird City Texas and Mayors' Monarch Champion City initiatives and information about snakes. The CoSM has also continued a Certified Habitat Stewardship Program that encourages residents to implement sustainable practices, improve wildlife habitat, and retain stormwater on site resulting in further conservation and establishment of pollinator and monarch habitat. More info: https://www.sanmarcostx.gov/3467/Certified-Habitat-Stewardship-Program

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.

City of San Marcos residents, Dunbar Neighborhood Residents, and La Cima Neighborhood.

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

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Responded to La Cima neighborhood to offer assistance with promoting native plants/creating a planting list similar to the one created for Kissing Tree in 2024. When presenting to Master Gardener groups, Discovery Center staff offers assistance to work with HOAs when regulations are resistant to native plantings. Provided a one-page information sheet to CoSM Code Enforcement on the benefits of tall grass. The CoSM has also continued a Certified Habitat Stewardship Program that encourages residents to implement sustainable practices, improve wildlife habitat, and retain stormwater on site resulting in further conservation and establishment of pollinator and monarch habitat. More info: https://www.sanmarcostx.gov/3467/Certified-Habitat-Stewardship-Program Keep San Marcos Beautiful, San Marcos River Foundation, and San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance hosted a Healthy Creeks Talk Series. A panel of experts answered public questions. Talk Series were hosted on Sept 24th 6-7:30pm at the Activity Center Multipurpose Room (general public) and Oct 1st at Dunbar Rec Center 6-7:30pm (Dunbar Neighborhood only). The goal is to address concerns from the public about the city not mowing as frequently, then targeting specific neighborhoods with creeks. The Discovery Center had a table at these events to share information about Bird City Texas and Mayors' Monarch Champion City initiatives and information about snakes.

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

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

City Landscapes.pdf

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and associated opportunities to create monarch habitat.

San Marcos Discovery Center (SMDC) staff advised Mainstreet City Dept. (directs downtown landscaping) regarding the plant pallet for large scale landscape renovations of downtown beds. We encouraged the use of monarch nectar plants whose blooms coincide with spring and fall migrations including Turk's cap, Gregg's mistflower, Texas lantana, frog fruit, among others. From our recommendation, tropical milkweed has been removed from the landscape. Downtown landscape beds are highly visible making it a great opportunity to showcase monarch friendly landscapes. SMDC staff work closely with Community Enhancement Division and Stormwater LID crew to install monarch friendly plants throughout the city.

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

Monarch Festival 2025.pdf

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

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850

What species were collected or propagated?

Asclepias oenotheroides, Asclepias linearis, Asclepias tuberosa, Asclepias asperula, Cynanchum laeve, and Matelea reticulata.

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

San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance, Discovery Center, and Hays County Master Naturalists.

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

Collected antelope horns milkweed seed to propagate, however these seeds were unsuccessful. Collected Matelea reticulata, Asclepias oenotheroides, Asclepias linearis, Asclepias tuberosa, and Cynanchum laeve. Purchased Asclepias tuberosa and asperula for giveaway and plant sale.

Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.

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

Vacant Lots - HWY 123_IH 35.pdf

Where is the monarch habitat located? (Please provide an address, if possible)

Intersection of IH 35 and HWY 123 (AKA S. Guadalupe St.) 29.86991 N, 97.93919 W

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

TxDoT, Community Enhancements, Engineering/CIP, Horticulture Team

What is the total acreage of land that has been converted? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 2 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.

.75

How many lots were converted to monarch habitat? Please limit your answer to only the number of lots in the answer field below (e.g., 3)

3

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Please describe when the lots were converted to monarch habitat and the planned maintenance schedule.

The lots were converted to monarch habitat in the fall of 2025 and planned maintenance will be performed by the City Horticulture Team and volunteers.

Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.

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

City Landscapes.pdf

Where are the medians, roadsides and public rights-of-way? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible, or describe the location)

Planting locations include CM Allen Medians (29.884731, -97.937310), HWY 80 Welcome Bed (29.882241, -97.920830), Downtown landscapes (29.884709, -97.938372), and Aquarena Springs (28.89109 N, 97.92854 W).

How many milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

335

What is the total acreage of median and public right-of-way that has been planted with milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

1

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

City Horticulturalist staff, LID crew, and volunteers regularly maintain these planted areas by weeding, mulching, and performing cut backs as needed. Reuse water drip lines are regularly checked and repaired as areas are highly visible to the public, so maintenance is a high priority.

Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.

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

Brochure.pdf

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

Magic Monarch Butterfly English and Spanish.pdf

Please describe the process to create the strategy , the strategy goals and content, and/or results of implementation. Please also identify who was engaged in this process, what partnerships were established, and how you engaged these groups. Provide a link, if possible.

San Marcos Discovery Center created an English/Spanish brochure about monarch conservation for use at outreach events and programs and is available in a rack card at the Discovery Center. We use several Spanish language NWF posters about monarch identification during outreach events. The City is obtaining conservation land from a local developer to construct a trail connection (HunDun Trail) to create access to Purgatory Creek natural area and eventually the San Marcos River from Dunbar neighborhood (underserved community). Efforts completed in 2025 include the removal of invasive species for the trail alignment that will be funded by a TPWD grant. Through community driven public meetings, the City is planning for the construction of a trail system connecting the west and east sides of town under IH35 to Blanco Gardens neighborhood (underserved community). This will provide connections to river parks, downtown, and community services via an ADA shared use pathway. Keep San Marcos Beautiful, San Marcos River Foundation, and San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance hosted a Healthy Creeks Talk Series. A panel of experts answered public questions. Talk Series were hosted on Sept 24th 6-7:30pm at the Activity Center Multipurpose Room (general public) and Oct 1st at Dunbar Rec Center 6-7:30pm (Dunbar - an underserved neighborhood). The goal is to address concerns from the public about the city not mowing as frequently, then targeting specific neighborhoods with creeks. The Discovery Center had a table at these events to share information about Bird City Texas and Mayors' Monarch Champion City initiatives and information about snakes.

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).

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

Junior Master Gardener Certification.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)

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Pollinator Beds for the Community. As a service to our local schools and community centers, the Discovery Center offers pollinator and milkweed plants at no cost. Discovery Center staff are involved from design to assisting with installation and guidance after planting. Donated milkweed plants in fall 2025 to Hernandez Elementary School. Planted alongside after-school garden club students twice to further enhance monarch habitat created in partnership over the last four years. Performed monarch tagging demonstration with students on both occasions. Teachers use this garden space as an outdoor classroom that also contains a little learning library where students can explore and learn independently. Monarch educational signage was installed in the gardens. Donated nectar plants and trees to Lamar school campus and assisted with design and installation with students. Conducted a 'Power of Plants' program at El Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos summer camp in which participants learned ethnobotanical powers of plants as well as how they interact with wildlife. Students learned propagation from cuttings, seeds, and root division. They each took home approximately six plants including autumn sage, tropical sage, and Gregg's mistflower. Conducted program about City Wildlife Initiatives for Kiwanis Club including Monarch Champion City, Bird City Texas, and Bee City including how to support these initiatives. Attended Earth Day at the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment to promote our new Bird City Texas designation. Conducted a seeding activity in which participants seeded tropical sage starts to take home. Attended City of San Marcos State of the City event to provide information about initiatives and our mission to create sustainable wildlife habitat. City Resource Recovery staff in partnership with Youth Services Bureau led a five-week Junior Master Gardener program to students to complete their Junior Master Naturalist certification. The students gained practical real-world knowledge about garden science, growing fresh vegetables, composting, pollination, and life skills. This program inspires youth to be of service to others through service learning and leadership. The kids learned through helping each other and working together with their peers. Guest speakers attended most of the sessions, so attendees got to hear from real-life professionals in the field. A few kids also noted that they began at-home projects that involved planting. The Youth Services Bureau has a garden in the back and while we weren't tending to the garden directly, we talked about how they can naturally use their leaves as compost and a "plant blanket". At the end, the kids received a certificate for their achievement. This targets a diverse demographic to participate and learn about monarch conservation efforts.

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)

6

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

Hernandez Elementary, Lamar school campus, Texas State University.

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

Shared information about Monarch Joint Venture signage and activities from MJV and NWF. Guidance, garden design, plants, seeds, tools, mulch, and oversight during planting event. Monarch educational programs as well as educational items for loan.

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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).

200 students and 4 educators.

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

Youth Services Bureau, SMCISD, Carol Fernandez, Graham Daly, and Julie Hollar.

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.

0.2

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

All school locations have garden clubs or designated caretakers that perform regular maintenance with their students. Mulch was provided at Hernandez Elementary to aid in maintenance. Discovery Center staff check in regularly to offer support and guidance to ensure long-term success of gardens.

Host or support a monarch neighborhood challenge to engage neighborhoods and homeowners' associations within the community to increase awareness, support community unity around a common mission, and/or create habitat for the monarch butterfly.

How many estimated individuals participated in your challenge? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 100).

9

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

City of San Marcos and Texas State University - Horticulture Dept.

When did this challenge take place?

Ongoing

What is the total acreage of habitat created? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 2 acres). For reference, 1 acre =

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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.

0.6

Please describe your challenge and the results.

The CoSM has launched a Certified Habitat Stewardship Program that encourages residents to implement sustainable practices, improve wildlife habitat, and retain stormwater on site resulting in further conservation and establishment of pollinator and monarch habitat. More info here: https://www.sanmarcostx.gov/3467/Certified-HabitatStewardship-Program. Results include several sites officially certified with more in process.

Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes 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.

Monarch Festival 2025.pdf

How many estimated individuals attended the event? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field ((Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only), e.g. 500)

860

What was the date of your festival?

10/11/2025

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

San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance, San Marcos River Foundation, El Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos, Texas Outdoor Family, Texas State Entomology Club, Hays County Master Naturalists, Texas State Sustainability Squad, Resource Recovery, Keep San Marcos Beautiful.

Please describe the details of your monarch butterfly festival and how you ensured the event was accessible by all residents in the community (e.g., events, length, notable successes, outreach, location).

The event is free to the public and was extensively advertised using a variety of methods to reach all residents including banners, flyers, email, school district notifications, and social media posts. The event is held on a Saturday from 9am - 2pm when most people are

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available to attend along with our Native Plant Sale. Event is handicap accessible. Included Spanish language printed materials/posters centered on monarch conservation. This event included a milkweed plant giveaway, information on monarchs and native milkweeds, the dangers of tropical milkweed, a tagging game with information on tagging and other community science programs, a propagation table with seeding and cuttings available for people to take home, educational monarch crafts, a monarch obstacle course that featured obstacles monarchs face along their journey as well as things that help them, posters on how to id monarchs and their mimics, how to tell male from female, different generations of monarchs, migratory path of the super generation, what native nectar plants are preferred, photo ops, and more. Location is centrally located in San Marcos within walking distance of several lower income neighborhoods and is conveniently located along IH35 frontage road.

Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).

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

City of San Marcos

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.

Milkweed has never been included in the list of noxious plants in city weed/landscaping ordinances.

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

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

No mow zones and prairie conservation.pdf

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

City of San Marcos Parks and Recreations Dept., Resource Recovery/Keep San Marcos Beautiful, Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Program

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.

The CoSM has reduced anywhere from 2-4 cycles of mowing per year. The CoSM has implemented no-mow zones across many public parks to encourage native recruitment and conserve wildlife habitat, including monarch and pollinators. These areas include along the San Marcos River riparian zones, over 2,500 acres of city natural areas, and many other areas. New fencing was added in 2025 along the river at Ramon Lucio Park to prevent access and allow the riparian buffer zone to regrow. The CoSM has also launched a Certified Habitat Stewardship Program that encourages residents to implement sustainable practices, improve wildlife habitat, and retain stormwater on site resulting in further conservation and establishment of pollinator and monarch habitat. A Healthy Creeks initiative was launched in 2025 to hold public meetings around the city to discuss no and low mow areas and address future plans for more such areas, and to answer concerns residents may have regarding these zones.

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

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

City of San Marcos

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.

Design manual originally completed 3/16/21, with the newest version effective 1.21.25 (https://user-3vpeqil.cld.bz/ORD-2025-01-Design-Manual-Effective-2025-1-21/193/). The Land Development Code is in the process of being updated. See current updates here: https://smtx.konveio.com/land-development-code-update.

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

N/A

Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native

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nectar producing plants at city properties.

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

City departments/divisions include Engineering/CIP, Code Compliance, SMPD, Parks & Rec, Discovery Center, Keep San Marcos Beautiful, Resource Recovery, Urban Forestry, Stormwater - Low Impact Development. Various volunteer organizations including Hays County Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, Texas State Organizations - Horticulture Dept.

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

All city planting projects are carefully reviewed to ensure high percentage of native species used. Most city landscape and tree planting projects are installed and maintained in-house, so species selection is tailored to support monarch/pollinator and bird habitat. Departments often reach out to the Discovery Center for native plant donations to plant around their own buildings. This year that included Code Compliance and the San Marcos Police Department. https://user-3vpeqil.cld.bz/ORD-2025-01-Design-Manual-Effective-2025-1-21/181/

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.

This action was originally completed in March 2021. The design manual and plan was updated with no change to this section in Jan. 2025.

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

Complete

Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.

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

City Landscapes.pdf

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

The City of San Marcos has partnered with the Hays County Master Naturalists, Hays County Master Gardeners, SMCISD Crossroads Program, SMCISD schools, Texas State University student interns, and volunteers from the general public. City programs involved

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include Discovery Center, Keep San Marcos Beautiful, Low Impact Development Program, Horticulturalist, and Resource Recovery.

How many plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

1365

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

The following monarch friendly community gardens were maintained: HWY 80 Welcome to San Marcos bed, City Hall, San Marcos Public Library Rain Gardens, CM Allen Rain Gardens, The Depot Pocket Prairie, Downtown landscape beds, Craddock Medians, various themed gardens at the San Marcos Discovery Center, among many others.

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.

Reduce Light Pollution.pdf

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

Lights Out For Bird Safety Proclamation.pdf

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

City of San Marcos, DarkSky International

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.

04/17/2018. San Marcos Land Development Code (https://user-3vpeqil.cld.bz/ORD-2025-01-Development-Code-Effective-January-25-2025/394/) includes standards "established to ensure that citizens and visitors to the city are able to continue to enjoy the night sky, natural environment, and traditional character of the community". These standards are based on the model lighting ordinance developed by the International Dark Sky Association (now known as Dark Sky International). The City of San Marcos committed to turn off or dim all non-essential lights on municipal buildings from 11pm to 6am during critical

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migration periods spring and fall. This message is imparted to employees through proclamations as well as through the City Manager's reports during migration periods (sent to all employees). New trail connection for multiuse trail will pass through the Wildlife Annex park. Dark sky lighting will be used in this trail connection, as it is an important dark sky area for bats, birds and other wildlife.

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

N/A

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).

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

monarch waystation.jpg

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

Hernandez Elementary Monarch Waystation.pdf

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

Texas Resolution Bird City Texas.pdf

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

Bee City Resolution.pdf

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

National Wildlife Federation, Audubon Texas, Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept., Texas State University, San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance, San Marcos River Foundation, El Centro, Hays County Master Naturalists, Native Plant Society of Texas, Community Enhancement Division, American Bird Conservancy, Hays County Friends of the Night Sky, Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan, Price Center & Gardens, Destination Services and Convention Visitor Bureau.

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

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The butterfly garden at the Discovery Center is maintained as a certified and registered monarch waystation. Hernandez Elementary School maintained their monarch waystation certification. The City of San Marcos became a Bird City Texas officially in Jan 2025. This certification will last three years, and we will apply for recertification. The City maintained the Scenic City certification. The City became a certified Bee City this year.

Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

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

The San Marcos Discovery Center (SM Parks and Rec Nature Center) has not used herbicides/pesticides other than high concentration vinegar treatments (used to control weeds) since 2024. We have reduced pesticide applications in and around our building, and have eliminated these treatments completely in sensitive areas. The Discovery Center Manager, Eric Weeks, does an annual training with Parks and Recreation staff about safe handling and usage of pesticides, herbicides, and chemicals. During these trainings he also promotes the use of IPM and how it relates to Monarch Champion City and Bird City Texas.

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.

We have reduced usage of pesticides and herbicides, but plan to work with other city departments to work towards further reductions/eliminations of usage of these chemicals and to adhere to IPM methods.

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

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

Native Plant Sale.pdf

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

19700

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

2050

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

Native Plant Society of Texas, Texas State Biology Dept., Eyes of the San Marcos River, Conservation Division, Hays County Master Naturalists, Resource Rangers, Texas State Entomology Club, El Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos, San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance, San Marcos River Foundation, Meadows Center for Water and the Environment, Keep San Marcos Beautiful, and Certified Habitat Stewardship Program, Texas State Wildlife Society, Sustainability Squad, and Texas Outdoor Family.

Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.

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

Monarch Festival 2025.pdf

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).

163

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

Texas State Wildlife Field Techniques lab, Hays County Master Naturalists, Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept., NRCS, City of San Marcos, Conservation Crew, Discovery Center staff, interns, and volunteers.

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

During the monarch festival, we had a booth with tagging demonstrations for attendees on how to identify a monarch, how and why we tag. Promoted the Texas Pollinator BioBlitz run by Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept. with a booth on how to participate and how to use iNaturalist. Attendees who made five observations received a free 4" plant of their choice. In the spring, we held the same challenge to promote the City Nature Challenge BioBlitz. Conducted a City of San Marcos employee challenge as part of the Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz. The top three winners received $100, $50, and $25 respectively towards free plants. In addition, we had information booths at onsite and tabling events that described other monarch community science programs such as Journey North, Monarch Watch, and Monarch Larval Monitoring Program. Texas State Wildlife Techniques lab conducted two class visits where they tagged monarchs at the Discovery Center gardens. Discovery Center staff and interns tagged 100 monarchs. Discovery Center staff attended the final workshop needed for Monarch Steward Certification with NWF - Introduction to Monarch Conservation.

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Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

signage.pdf

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

Hernandez Signage.jpg

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

2

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

Monarch general information sign on permanent display inside the Discovery Center. NWF Monarch Waystation sign at the butterfly garden. NWF Certified Wildlife Habitat sign at the entrance to grounds, San Marcos Habitat Stewardship Program sign (https://www.sanmarcostx.gov/3467/Certified-Habitat-Stewardship-Program) and Bird City Texas (https://tx.audubon.org/urbanconservation/bird-city-texas) sign at entrance gate to Discovery Center. Hernandez Elementary (our partner) also displays the NWF Certified Wildlife Habitat Sign as well as the San Marcos Habitat Stewardship Program sign. In addition, they installed 5 educational signs from Monarch Joint Venture this year (https://store.monarchjointventure.org/products/habitat-signs?variant=40189067067437).

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.

Invasive Species Removal Workday.jpg

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

4.5

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.

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San Marcos has a robust invasive plant removal program. The City of San Marcos has hosted a public (almost) monthly two-hour invasive species removal workday for several years in partnership with San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance, Hays County Master Naturalists, and Texas State Sustainability Squad. In the last year, focus continued on a new trail alignment between Hunter Rd. and Dunbar Park along Purgatory Creek. This project (HunDun) is considered complete for the moment. Once this location as finished, efforts moved to Bicentennial Park to reduce seed source adjacent to riparian zones along the San Marcos River. The signup can be found here: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E084BA8AE2CA7FC1-51155849- natural#/. These workdays are limited to 20 participants plus 2-3 city staff and regularly fill up. Discovery Center staff and the City of San Marcos Urban Forester remove invasive species in neighborhood parks throughout the year as they are identified. The City of San Marcos also has three dedicated staff members that are the Trail Crew for the Natural Areas. They work in cooperation with San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance and have a trail workday every Thursday. During their routine activities as well as during the Thursday workdays, if invasive plant species are encountered, they remove or mark them for removal, and Team Flora - another group under SMGA, also hold invasive removals. The HCP in San Marcos oversees numerous projects of invasive removal along riparian areas of the river and associated watersheds contracted through the city. The Hays County Master Naturalists hold a workday every fourth Saturday. The purpose of this project is to remove invasive plants, like Johnson grass from the grounds of the Meadows Center and periodically from Spring Lake. They also maintain the native plant demonstration beds.

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.

City Hall Monarch Garden.pdf

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)

Maintained a butterfly garden at the San Marcos Discovery Center at 430 Riverside Dr. San Marcos, TX, located along the monarch migratory pathway adjacent to IH35. Supplementary demonstration garden beds with native plants for pollinators and monarchs are also maintained onsite. Additional demonstration monarch friendly gardens are located and maintained at the Discovery Center, City Hall, San Marcos Public Library Rain Gardens, CM Allen Rain Gardens, The Depot Pocket Park, Craddock Medians, Downtown landscapes, among many others.

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

The City of San Marcos has partnered with the Hays County Master Naturalists, Hays County Master Gardeners, SMCISD Crossroads Program, SMCISD schools, Youth

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Services Bureau, Texas State University student interns, and volunteers from the general public. City programs involved include Discovery Center, Keep San Marcos Beautiful, Low Impact Development Program, Horticulturalist, and Resource Recovery

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.

1.5

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