# City of Salem

Salem, OR

Mayor Julie Hoy

## Pledge Summary

The City of Salem, located in the heart of the lush Willamette River Valley, is the state capital of Oregon, government seat of Marion County, and the state's third largest city. Salem's landscape is characterized by a mix of rich valley farmland and orchards, rolling hills, mixed forests, the Willamette River, many creeks and wetlands, numerous parks and natural areas, and a growing urban community. Salem first took the Mayors Monarch Pledge in 2017, joining other cities across the United States, Canada, and Mexico to take action to help save the monarch butterfly. We have renewed our pledge annually since then, and 2025 is no exception. Salem’s Mayor, Julie Hoy, is renewing the City's commitment to increasing monarch and pollinator habitat throughout the City of Salem and encouraging the public to do the same.

## 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.

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

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### Systems Change

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

## Past Pledge Archive

| Mayor Name | Program Year | Pledge Date | Achievement |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mayor Julie Hoy | 2026 | 3/24/2026 | |
| Mayor Julie Hoy | 2025 | 3/11/2025 | Leadership Circle |
| Mayor Chris Hoy | 2024 | 2/9/2024 | Leadership Circle |
| Mayor Chris Hoy | 2023 | 2/24/2023 | Leadership Circle |
| Mayor Chuck Bennett | 2022 | 1/18/2022 | Leadership Circle |
| Mayor Chuck Bennett | 2021 | 2/16/2021 | 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.).**

13157

**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.)**

857

**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.**

0.63

**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.**

arks, rights of way, stormwater facilities, community gardens, shared public spaces, and private residences. We have been focusing on natural areas and parks. Habitat was created by controlling blackberry and reed canarygrass at Gaia Natural Area with focused replanting and overseeding with native forbs, trees, shrubs, and perennials. Milkweed seeds collected from the Civic Center pollinator garden have been spread at Gaia, Waln, and Fairview Natural Areas as well as planters located in Riverfront Park.

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

We are working to increase pollinator habitat in low-income neighborhoods, including maintaining pollinator gardens in two parks in lower income neighborhoods (Brown Rd and Northgate Parks). We provide educational materials in both English and Spanish.

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

This program intersects with and supports several of the City's current initiatives focused on protecting environmental health and water quality, reducing reliance on fossil-fuel-based pesticides and mowing equipment, and increasing public awareness of the impacts of pesticide use. The Mayor's Monarch Pledge provides an effective platform for speaking to staff and the public about the importance of pesticide reduction, timing of maintenance activities, and planting of native trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants for habitat, climate resilience, and water quality improvements. It also presents community members (youth, especially) with actionable environmental stewardship opportunities that are accessible to implement and maintain.

**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've used information from your resource center and The Xerces Society for developing our own outreach materials (e.g. webpage and rack cards). It would also be helpful to have more resources/information about how to successfully convert an area from turf or invasive nonnative vegetation to pollinator habitat without the use of pesticides (or if herbicides are recommended, support for using them to help explain to vocal community members that are against pesticide use). Guidance materials that can be shared with staff and the public about how and when to conduct maintenance on pollinator habitat to reduce impacts to pollinators from cutting or selective herbicide treatment would also be useful.

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

During 2025 staff prepared large areas in City parks that were previously monocultures of invasive plants for habitat restoration by removing invasive species. The removal process has allowed the dormant native grasses and forbs to germinate and find favorable growing conditions. This includes preparation of a planting area that will be planted in January 2026. The areas prepared for pollinator and native habitat restoration encompasses more than 6 acres. We have continued to propagate showy milkweed (Asclepias speciosa) in our greenhouse. We planted milkweed grown in our nursery strategically in key areas of the City. We also harvested seed from the planters in our demonstration garden at City Hall for public giveaways and outreach events, seeding in pollinator habitat, green stormwater facilities, and natural areas, and to propagate in our greenhouse.

## Selected Action Items

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## 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:**

May 12, 2025

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

Mayor's Monarch Proclamation

**Upload a copy of your proclamation.**

2025 Monarch Pledge Certificate Final.pdf

## 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.)

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

Community outreach and communication efforts took place primarily via social media, Clean Streams e-newsletter, and in-person community outreach events. Some highlights include: * Three Facebook posts on City of Salem's Facebook Page on February 5, June 16, and October 14 with total of 56 reactions, 1 comment, and 18 shares. * Clean Streams e-newsletter article in the Stream Currents October newsletter that went out to a subscriber list of 452. * In person outreach events: - Homebuilders Association Yard Garden & Home Show, March 21-23 (total attendance = 4,000) – Marion County Earth Day, April 26 (total attendance = 600) – Englewood Forest Festival, August 11, (total attendance = 3,700) * Mayor's Monarch Pledge rack cards are available in English and Spanish, and both are taken to all outreach events. * Informational webpage on city website: https://www.cityofsalem.net/community/natural-environment-climate/environmental-planning-management/mayor-s-monarch-pledge *Monarch Butterfly educational presentations provided to students through the Youth Environmental Education Program (YEEP) – 36 presentations give to 14 schools and 857 students total; 6 of these schools and 467 of these students were at Title I schools.

## 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.**

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Salem’s Natural Infrastructure Specialists met with the Orchard Heights community garden group and Glenn Gibson Watershed Council in 2025 to discuss enhancing pollinator habitat around their community garden plots. This conversation is ongoing into 2026.

## 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.**

City stormwater quality staff

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

City stormwater quality staff add multiple flowering native species in all green stormwater infrastructure rehabilitations. We delay cutting back flowering species until all flowers are off the plants and seed has set. In areas where appropriate, spent flower stalks are left uncut to provide overwintering habitat for insects.

## 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.

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

9

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

The City held a landscaper workshop where they discussed adding a variety of native plants with different bloom times to provide forage for pollinating insects in landscape installations. Twenty-seven landscape contractors attend the workshop. Salem Audubon Society, Friends of Trees, Glenn and Gibson Watersheds Council, Englewood Elementary School, Northeast Neighborhood Association, Homebuilders Association of Marion and Polk Counties, Environmental Faith Network, City Nature Challenge, and Battle Creek Homeowner’s Association. - Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and their monarch butterfly conservation efforts. City Natural Resources Planning staff worked with partners to promote nature, including pollinators, during community outreach events. The Environmental Faith Network, Northeast Neighborhood Association, and Home Builders Association of Marion and Polk Counties took part in the Englewood Park Forest Festival. The Battle Creek HOA was engaged through a city program to provide small grants for community-led restoration work. City staff also worked with Marion Soil and Water Conservation District and Friends of Trees to collaboratively plan pollinator habitat enhancements in the city, identifying and planting a pollinator garden at Minto Brown Island

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Park in October of 2024, with maintenance throughout 2025 as well as identifying multiple sites for future collaborative planting efforts.

## 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)**

391 packets of native milkweed seeds were given away this year. Seed packets were given away at outreach events, including 177 at the Yard, Garden, & Home Show and 214 given away at Englewood Forest Festival and other community events.

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

7700

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

Homebuilders Association of Marion and Polk Counties, Englewood Forest Festival Committee

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

**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)**

The demonstration garden is located in front of Salem City Hall, 555 Liberty St SE, Salem, OR 97301

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

Due to many organizational and staff changes we did not partner with or engage any community organizations in maintaining the demonstration garden this year. The garden is currently closed to the public as the City Hall campus is closed due to seismic retrofitting construction work taking place over the next 18 months. Instead, the gardens were maintained by city staff.

**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.**

0.05

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

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

291.5

**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.**

Invasive species removal programs in 2025 included over 258 acres of habitat in Minto Brown Island Park, 27 acres in Minto Island Conservation Area, and 6.5 acres at smaller sites throughout the City.

## Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

0

**What species were collected or propagated?**

showy milkweed

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

City of Salem staff

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

City staff harvested and cleaned about 2 pounds of seed from the City Hall planters. Seed continues to be used to propagate plants in our greenhouse, to seed habitat areas, and to create seed packets for seed giveaways.

## 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?**

Internal effort with City staff

**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.**

In 2025, the City continued implementation of a new Integrated Pest Management Policy. This policy encourages reduction of reliance on pesticides and sets forth a process for practicing integrated pest management, develops an IPM Advisory Committee, creates an IPM Coordinator role, establishes minimum training requirements for pest management and pesticide application, and requires reporting of pesticide use. The stated purpose in the IPM Policy is to provide requirements and guidelines for implementing the most environmentally sound approaches for controlling pests while reducing or eliminating the volume and toxicity of chemical pest control treatments. One of the stated objectives is to protect and enhance pollinator habitat within Salem in alignment with the Mayor's Monarch Pledge. This policy will apply to all invasive species removal conducted by City staff or contractors moving forward to ensure that invasive species removal is balanced with habitat protection and re-establishment of healthy, self-supporting native habitats to the maximum degree practicable.

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