Watchung Borough

Watchung, NJ

Mayor Ronald Jubin, PhD

Pledge Summary

Watchung is a Borough with a population of ~6500 located in central New Jersey. We are home to both Best Lake and Watchung Lake which are surrounded by walking paths and natural areas. We have an active Green Team and Environmental Commission who focus on conservation projects such as tree preservation and establishing a riparian buffer to improve habitat and water quality. We are excited to expand on these efforts by focusing on Monarch conservation.

Action Items Committed for 2026

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.

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

Systems Change

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

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Mayor Ronald Jubin, PhD	2026	4/27/2026

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.).

200

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.)

50

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.

0.49

Where was the habitat created this year? Example locations may include residences, schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, shared public spaces, and more.

residential, parks and First Aid Squad

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

We are Giving away free Milkweed saplings at our Farmer's Market that. The market accepts SNAP from members of the public who are lower income.

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

A youth member of the Watchung Green Team was passionate about Monarch Conservation and she petitioned the Mayor who was supportive.

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?

The FAQ on the website

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

We had a neglected rain garden at our First Aid Squad that was full of weeds. We restored the rain garden with Milk weed and native plants which will help improve water quality and Monarch Habitat. It also brought out a host of community volunteers who learned about Monarch habitat during their participation.

Selected Action Items

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.

IMG_5778.jpeg

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

IMG_5777.jpeg

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

Watchung Green Team, Environmental commission, and Rescue Squad

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

12

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Restored a ruined rain garden outside of Watchung Rescue Squad by weeding, mulching, and planting native plant saplings to absorb rainwater and support monarch habitat effectively.

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

25

What species were collected or propagated?

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Swamp Milk weed

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

Environmental Commission, Green Team, elected officials and volunteer community members

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

Swamp milkweed was planted on a riparian buffer three years ago. Seeds were harvested and planted the following year in containers. When they reached a certain size, they were planted in open areas on the buffer. This is now an annual event, which is more economical than buying more milkweed each 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?

DPW, Env. Commission

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

The Boro does not use herbicides and does not have licensed pesticide applicator on staff. A lake management treats the two lake for algae in the summer months.

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 has been Boro policy for several years.

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

complete.

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:

5/21/26

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

2026 National Wildlife Federation's Mayors' Monarch Butterfly Pledge

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Proclamation - Monarch Butterflies.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.)

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



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

Publicized information on the mayor's monarch initiative and the benefits of planting milkweed via Watchung social media platforms and infographics distributed at the Watchung farmers' market.

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.

Coordinated/planned a restoration of a large flower garden behind our library with the Garden Club, Env. Commission and Green Team to be completed in 2027, following the completion of an ongoing library construction project. The garden will include milkweed and native perennials

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?

Environmental Commission and Green Team

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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.

In Progress

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.

NA

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

The Env. Commission has discussed the percentage of natives that should be incorporated into this policy. We are suggesting a minimum of 50% and will propose that the Boro incorporate this into an ordinance in early 2027.

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.

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

20

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

200

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

Green Team and Environmental Commission distributed packets of milkweed seeds with information and milkweed saplings at Watchung Farmers Market on July 14th and 21st.

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