# City of San Luis Obispo

San Luis Obispo, CA

Mayor Erica Stewart

## Pledge Summary

The City of San Luis Obispo is located on the Central Coast of California and is in the path of the Monarch migration. We have a documented roosting site in town that we are monitoring, are working with community groups to increase pollinator plants and habitat around town in support of this iconic species. Mayor Heidi Harmon and her staff are committed to supporting the Pledge and working on Monarch butterfly protection!

## Action Items Committed for 2021

### Communications and Convening

- 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 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.

### Program and Demonstration Gardens

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

### Systems Change

- 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.
- 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 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mayor Erica Stewart | 2026 | 2/4/2026 | |
| Mayor Erica A. Stewart | 2025 | 4/30/2025 | Signatories |
| Mayor Erica A Stewart | 2023 | 3/30/2023 | |
| Mayor Erica A. Stewart | 2022 | 2/14/2022 | Signatories |
| Mayor Erica Stewart | 2021 | 3/4/2021 | 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.).**

45

**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.)**

35 adults and 10 youth

**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.**

1

**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.**

City parks and HOA controlled lands

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

Looking for additional grant opportunities and willing properties/groups in these areas to expand more.

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

We have a documented over-wintering site in San Luis Obispo and have Monarchs flying around in many different areas in our town and with the plight, we are doing what we can to support these iconic species.

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**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?**

Funding, community champions and irrigation. For what have been beneficial and what we could use more of.

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

Collaboration with our Utilities Department and the California Conservation Corps for milkweed propagation,

## Selected Action Items

### 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.**

The City has been active in working with several community groups to get additional pollinator gardens established. Priolo Martin Park community members are the next group we have engaged to support Monarch butterflies and the neighbors have started planting milkweed seeds around the park.

### 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.**

We currently have over 5 community groups engaged with the pollinator garden campaign. A group along Prefumo Creek, one along mainstem San Luis Obispo Creek, along Laguna Lake (Priolo Martin Park) and we are actively working with a group of neighbors at the end of El Capitan in SLO as they live adjacent to a eucalyptus grove that always has Monarchs flying around. We are also looking at a new pollinator garden at a City property at the new Righetti Ranch development area.

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

The biggest exciting opportunity is working with our Utilities Department and the upgrade of the Water Resource Recovery Facility. As the construction continues, we are looking for landscape areas that can highlight pollinator gardens and offer educational opportunities for users along the adjacent trail and also looking to develop a milkweed plant giveaway

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once we have enough parent stock to further educate the community. We would look to hold the giveaways at our Farmers Market to continue to educate the community about this iconic species and about our efforts to help.

## 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.**

We have been working with a new community group on cleaning up Priolo Martin Park in advance of planting pollinator plants and are still active with 4 other groups around the City.

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

I have discussed with all of them about the need for careful maintenance and revised mowing regimes. More hand work is needed in and around the plants for maintenance and not just mowing the entire area because it is quicker.

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

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

The City is looking at revegetation in our downtown Mission Plaza area and have contracted with a local design/architect firm to assist with the project. We have been discussing the plant species best for planting and will be moving forward with the effort this winter since we are finally into winter. We have suffered bad drought conditions here in San Luis Obispo this year.

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

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

7

**What species were collected or propagated?**

Narrowleaf milkweed

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

City Utilities Department and the California Conservation Corps

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

One of the staff from the Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF) and I went out and collected seeds from a milkweed stand nearby and he took the seeds to clean and store them. They have build some propagation beds and we are looking at a bigger planting area on the property to develop more parent stock to be able to produce enough seeds for growing out milkweed plants that we can give away to the community at our Farmers Market. This effort will commence in 2022.

## 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.

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

We have been working with our Parks Division to work on implementation of this project as well as neighborhood groups.

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

Many of these efforts are in progress as developments continue to be completed, carving out specific areas where pollinator gardens will be installed and determining who will be overseeing the maintenance of the new gardens.

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

The Righetti Ranch development should have park lands complete in early 2022 and the Water Resource Recovery Facility will begin the landscaping probably in late 2022 but laying the groundwork and utilizing existing landscape areas to get underway is the plan of action right now.

## 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.**

Code 17.70.100.pdf

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

Worked with City Planners and consultants to develop the Night Sky Protection Ordinance

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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.**

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.**

This ordinance was approved in September 2018.

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

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

City of San Luis Obispo Guidance Document 2-2014.pdf

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

We worked with the Stormwater Team and our Parks division to advocate for the reduction of the use of pesticides and herbicides in City parks and around the City. We also worked with the Our Water Our World (OWOW) to work with local retailers to identify less toxic solutions to apply to control pests, etc.

**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.**

The date when this was completed in 2013/14 when we submitted the new Guidance Document for the Stormwater Program.

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