



United States Department of Agriculture

ADDENDUM G

Texas Monarch and Native Pollinator Conservation Plan

U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)



Goals

Establish, and or enhance desired and beneficial habitat for winter and spring migrations of the Monarch Butterfly in Texas.

National

Increase the Eastern population of the monarch butterfly to 225 million butterflies occupying an area of approximately 15 acres (six hectares) in the overwintering grounds in Mexico, through domestic/international actions and public-private partnerships by 2020.



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Restore or enhance 7 million acres of land for pollinators over the next five years through federal actions and public/private partnerships.

State: Texas

Restore and or enhance 180,000 acres of diverse pollinator habitat to provide high quality nectar during critical migration time periods (March 1 to Mid-April and Mid-September to November).

To meet the short term goals, Texas NRCS will promote conserving and enhancing diverse native plant communities, focusing on forbs, late blooming nectar plants, patch burning, and conservation management practices.

NRCS Partners

- Partners are currently conducting research and conservation efforts in association with NRCS efforts related to the decline in the Monarch Butterfly population.
- Texas Parks and Wildlife – Conservation programs related to monarch habitat needs.
- USFWS – financial obligations for conservation effort on monarch habitat requirements
- State of Texas Comptrollers – has obligated funding for monarch research
- Xerces Society – assisting NRCS as advisors with conservation efforts for the monarch
- University of Texas at San Antonio – conducting research on the habitat needs associated with the decline of the monarch. (funding provided by State Comptroller's Office)



Outreach Activities

- a. Landowner workshops about the monarchs and available conservation opportunities, i.e.:
 - Texas Parks and Wildlife Landowner Incentive Program
 - Wildlife Management Plans
 - NRCS Financial Assistance and Conservation Technical Assistance Programs
 - NRCS Plant Materials Center demonstration projects and workshops
 - Butterfly Garden Grants (through numerous nonprofits)
 - Texas PowWow Conferences
 - Promote Backyard Conservation through local NRCS field offices and Soil and Water Conservation Districts



- b. Nonprofits and educational institutions – provide funding through agreements to nonprofit organizations that already have a butterfly garden grant program in place. i.e.:
- The [Native Plant Society of Texas](#) has 32 chapters throughout the state including urban areas. Grants range from \$40-\$400; and, they provided 56 grants for a total of \$11,000 in April of 2015.
 - [Houston Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership](#)
 - [Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges](#)
 - [Texas Master Naturalist](#)
 - [Green Space Alliance of South Texas](#)
- c. Social Media – publicize apps like iNaturalist and others to encourage support of monarch butterfly conservation efforts. Develop a Monarch butterfly section on Texas NRCS website and connect monarch websites to it for easy access. For example:
- Monarch Watch
 - Monarch Larva Monitoring Project
 - Journey North



- d. Educational Pamphlet Development – conservation practices/photos, informational links.
- e. Collectively work with conservation partners to promote and develop habitat through conservation planning, implementation, and education/outreach activities.

Conservation Planning

- a) Develop a list of conservation practices with positive effects for Monarch Butterfly habitat (when and where they can be applied):
 - a. Core Practices:
 - i. Rangeland: (at least two practices to include UWHM)
 - Prescribed Grazing
 - Prescribed Burning
 - Range Planting
 - Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
 - ii. Cropland/Pastureland
 - Conservation Cover
 - Conservation Crop Rotation
 - Contour Buffer Strips
 - Field Borders
 - Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
 - * all other practices will be can be used as facilitating practices provide training to field staffs about Conservation Planning and Pollinator Habitat to benefit the Monarch Butterfly
- b) Review ecological site descriptions compared to National Resources Inventory (NRI) data.
- c) Utilize joint habitat assessment tool when finalized for Texas.





USDA-NRCS Financial Assistance Programs for Land Owners and Managers

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)/Wetlands Reserve Easement (WRE):

- Create and enhance wetland wildlife habitat on 10 WRP easements in 2015-2016
- Target contiguous WRP easements in the Corsicana Resource Team
- 500 acres of estimated impact in 2015-2016
- Planned practices and estimated cost will be completed by the WRP team and ECS technical staff by July 10, 2015
- New plans will include practices to meet the resource concerns and objectives of Monarchs and pollinator habitat.

Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)/Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP):

- Identify and consider opportunities to plan and implement habitat practices
- New plans will include practices to meet the resource concerns and objectives of Monarchs and pollinator habitat.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)/Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP):

- In the planning phases, focus on habitat improvement conservation practices to restore, improve and or enhance pollinator habitat addressing Monarch Butterfly needs
- Review payment schedule to ensure monarch/pollinator friendly practices are addressed.