



FACT SHEET

Monarch Butterfly Habitat Development Project (MBHP)

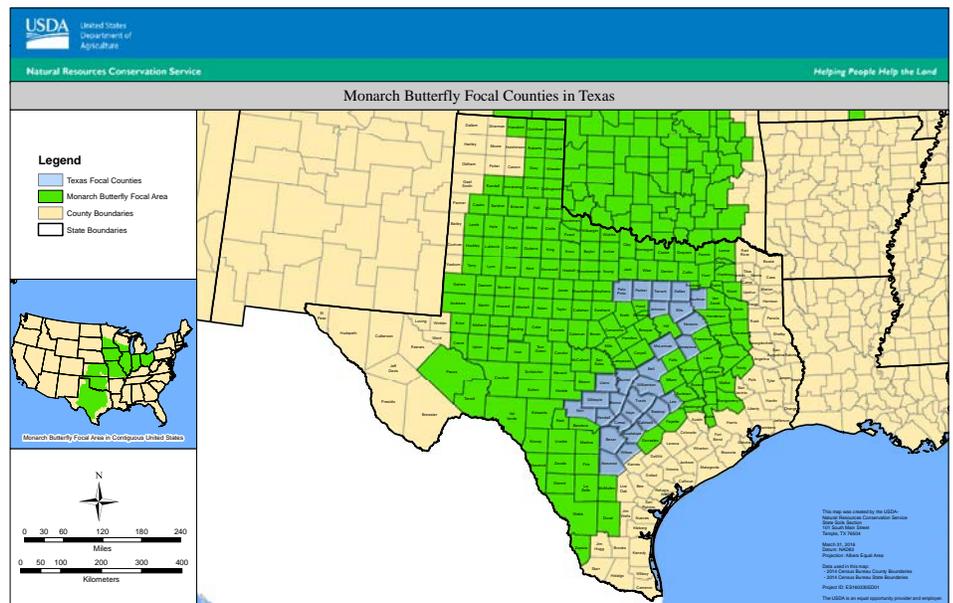
Texas: Overview

Monarch butterflies have experienced a significant decline in the past 20 years. Today, population totals hover around 34 million, down from 1 billion in 1995. In an effort to restore and enhance Monarch habitat in Texas, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is offering financial and technical assistance to help landowners and conservation partners develop butterfly-friendly improvements on private lands. Through a systems approach, NRCS will help landowners on the conservation and enhancement of diverse native plant communities and ecosystem management to encourage the production of important plant species required for brooding and nectar during migratory periods. Eligible landowners can receive technical and financial assistance for voluntarily installing conservation practices that develop pollinator and wildlife habitats essential to the Monarch.

Texas Priority Areas

Twenty-eight Texas counties have been selected as focal areas for Monarch butterfly habitat development because of their strategic location within the butterfly’s flight zone during spring and fall migrations. These counties also offer great potential for Monarch habitat improvements on private lands.

Counties include Palo Pinto, Parker, Tarrant, Dallas, Kaufman, Johnson, Ellis, Navarro, McLennan, Limestone, Bell, Burnet, Williamson, Llano, Lee, Gillespie, Blanco, Travis, Hayes, Bastrop, Caldwell, Guadalupe, Comal, Kendall, Bexar, Wilson, Kerr and Atascosa.



Conservation Funding and Practices

NRCS in Texas will work to implement conservation practices across 180,000 acres within the 28 focal counties to restore and/or enhance diverse pollinator habitat to provide high-quality nectar species during the critical migration time periods of March 1 to mid-May and mid-September to November. NRCS conservation professionals can provide technical assistance and planning tools to conduct Monarch habitat assessments on private lands to determine what conservation actions will provide the best results to improve Monarch habitat. Using funds from NRCS's [Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#), NRCS can provide financial assistance to eligible private landowners to voluntarily implement conservation practices that conserve and enhance diverse native plant communities, while focusing on land management that promotes native milkweeds, and early and late blooming nectar plants. Prescribed burning, conservation cover crops, and upland wildlife habitat management are a few examples of practices where federal investments can make a difference in improving Monarch habitat.



Partnerships

NRCS identified priority habitat areas with the help of local partnerships and state conservation and wildlife agencies. Some of these partners also offer financial assistance opportunities. Partners in this habitat restoration and enhancement effort include the [Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board](#), [Texas Parks and Wildlife Department](#), [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#), [State of Texas Comptroller](#), [Xerces Society](#), [University of Texas at San Antonio](#), Non-Governmental Organizations, as well as local Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Landowner and Public Benefits

When landowners improve habitat for Monarchs with NRCS conservation practices, they are also providing habitat for native bees, honey bees, and other pollinator and wildlife species. These efforts also can lead to other natural resource benefits, such as improved water quality, healthier soils and more productive working lands.

Improved habitat will increase Monarch sightings for millions of Americans to enjoy each year as the orange-and-black butterfly make their annual, multi-generational migration from central

Mexico to as far north as Canada. Conservation investments are good for all Americans because well-managed farms produce food and fiber, sustain rural economies, and provide food security to the Nation. All across the country, farmers, ranchers, and urban communities are voluntarily taking action and putting conservation on the ground to improve Monarch habitat on hundreds of thousands of acres.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information about NRCS or locating a local USDA Service Center visit www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov. More information on the Monarch butterfly can be found at www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/plantsanimals/pollinate/?cid=NRCSEPRD402207tx.nrcs.usda.gov



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Natural Resources Conservation Service

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