



**Supporting the
Monarch Butterfly**

January 29, 2015

Value of Monarchs and Pollinators

■ Indicator species

- Demonstrate a healthy environment and ecosystem
- Important element in the food chain

■ Globally, 87 of the leading 115 food crops evaluated by the federal government are dependent on animal pollinators, contributing 35 percent of global food production

- Pollinators contribute an estimated \$24 billion to the U.S. economy
- In 2009, the crop benefits from native insect pollination, including monarchs, were valued at more than \$9 billion, according to White House statistics



The Illinois Tollway's Role

- **Work with the Natural Resources Defense Council and state agencies on a habitat enhancement and restoration program to support monarch butterflies**
- **Focus on supplementing current seed mixes at select Tollway locations, interchanges and wetland mitigation sites with more milkweed variations**
- **Review approximately 20 contracts for new butterfly habitat within our system along I-90, I-88 and I-294**



Habitat Management

- **Habitat takes several years to establish**
- **Vegetation management expectations**
 - ❑ Reduced mowing in habitat enhancement and restoration areas
 - ❑ Mowing height and herbicide restrictions
- **Will monitor seeded habitat to confirm enhancement and restoration goals**



Tollway Wetland Mitigation Sites – Pollinator Habitat Areas

In order to provide refuge for monarchs and other pollinators, these sites will provide food for larva stage, refuge from predators and wind breaks for the long migration through northeastern Illinois.

Pine Dunes (Lake County):	315 acres
Orland Grassland South (Will County):	160 acres
<u>Springbrook Creek (DuPage County):</u>	<u>8 acres</u>
Total habitat by third year of project:	483 acres



Milkweed seed pod

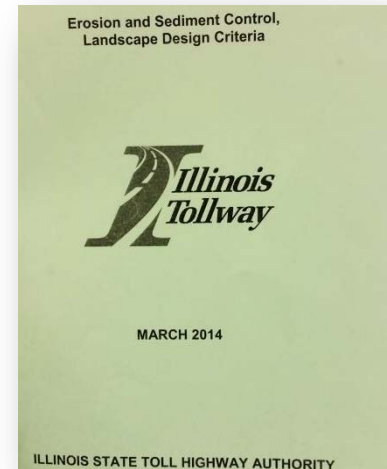


Wild bergamot



Seed Mixes

- Existing Tollway seed mixes that support monarch butterflies include:
 - ❑ Class 5 – “Forb Mix” for prairie areas (used to supplement seeding at infields or select areas)
 - ❑ Class 5A – “Large Flower Native Forb Mix” (used near adjacent natural areas and aesthetic enhancements)
 - ❑ Class 5B – “Wetland Forb and Conservation Mix” (used on stream banks, wet areas and detention basins)

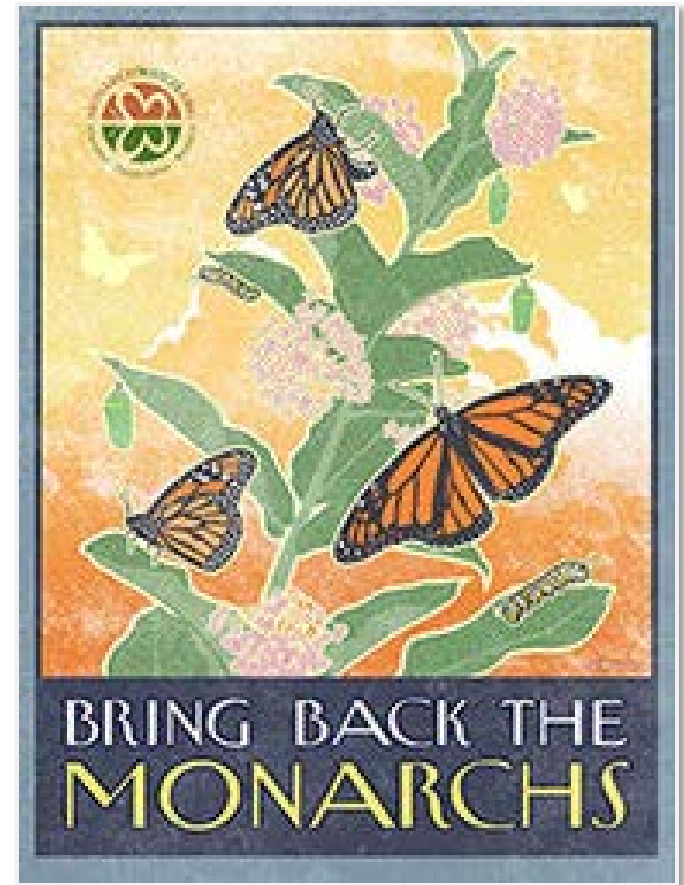


Butterfly weed (Class 5)



Next Steps

- Get Board input on concept
- Maintenance participation
- Coordinate with the Natural Resources Defense Council and state agencies
- Supplement species (i.e. milkweed) to potential contract areas identified on Tollway land





THANK YOU