



The Monarch Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA)

Infrastructure as Habitat



Energy and transportation lands, including roadways, powerlines, pipelines, and railways, span thousands of miles across North America. These lands can be managed to support pollinator habitat while still supporting important infrastructure.

Since 2015, the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC)-led **Rights-of-Way as Habitat Working Group** has brought together organizations from across the U.S. and Canada to promote habitat on these landscapes.

Why Energy and Transportation Lands?

Build Conservation Partnerships

Support Early-Successional Habitat

Reconnect Fragmented Natural Areas

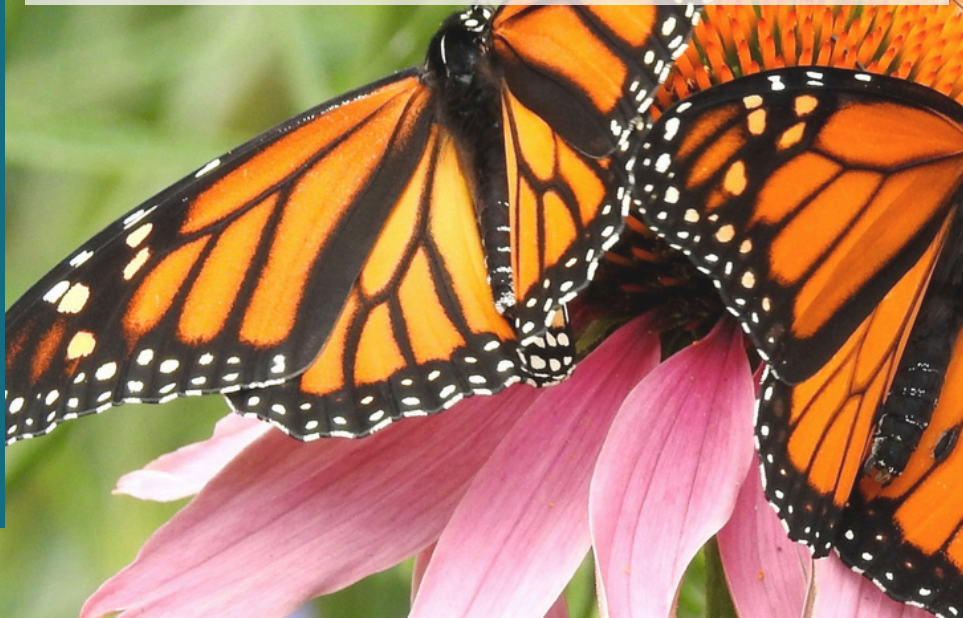
Create Potential Migratory Pathways

Monarchs Need Help

Monarch butterflies are an iconic species renowned for their extraordinary annual migration across North America. Since the 1990's, **monarch butterflies have experienced an estimated 80% total population decline** due to threats such as habitat loss, pesticide exposure, and climate change. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has proposed to list monarchs under the US Endangered Species Act.

The Monarch CCAA Program

The Monarch Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (Monarch CCAA) is the first nationwide agreement to promote **voluntary conservation** for the monarch butterfly. Through the Monarch CCAA, energy and transportation partners commit to managing for monarch butterfly habitat on their working lands in exchange for receiving regulatory assurances in the event that the monarch butterfly is listed under the Endangered Species Act.



Monarch CCAA Conservation Goals

By promoting voluntary conservation for monarchs on energy and transportation lands, the Monarch CCAA aims to contribute **300 million milkweed stems and 2.3 million acres of monarch habitat**. In 2024, the program **exceeded 1 million acres of habitat commitments** by partner organizations.



How do Monarch CCAA Partners Support Conservation?

NISOURCE MANAGED HABITAT



Habitat Monitoring

Monarch CCAA partners conduct annual habitat monitoring in areas where conservation measures are applied. Partners survey milkweed, the monarch butterfly's host plant, as well as floral plant coverage and other habitat features.

Conservation Measures

Monarch CCAA partners use beneficial vegetation management practices that restore pollinator habitat on working lands, such as:

Designating habitat set-asides or leaving areas idle from management

Planting and seeding milkweed and other flowering plants

Targeted herbicide treatment of noxious and invasive species

Prescribed burning of habitat areas

Limiting mowing with seasonal considerations for monarchs

Controlled grazing

Interested in Learning More?

Learn more about the Monarch CCAA at:
<https://rightofway.erc.uic.edu/national-monarch-ccaa/>

Please reach out to Megan Petraitis (mpetrait@uic.edu) with any questions.

