

# LA CRUZ HABITAT PROTECTION PROJECT, INC.



FORESTS **FOR**  
MONARCHS

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2017**



# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

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It is my pleasure to be writing my first director's statement at the helm of La Cruz Habitat Protection Project – Forests for Monarchs (LCHPP, FFM). Before getting into the many achievements of the organization, I thought I'd fill you in on my background and what brought me to LCHPP. While working in marketing in Vermont for a sustainable wood furniture company I was introduced to LCHPP and its work. It was with excitement and enthusiasm that I took the reins in July 2017 as Executive Director of LCHPP.

Native to New England, I've grown up seeing monarchs and many pollinators buzz around gardens and school yards. It wasn't until I started my work with LCHPP that I realized I hadn't seen a monarch butterfly in years. That got me thinking, how are we going to save pollinators, when we don't even notice one of the prettiest missing? That's why I'm passionate about the work of La Cruz. We are working to restore forestland crucial to the monarchs survival so that one day again soon another little girl can be out in her school yard cataloging all the many pollinators she sees and not making note of all the ones she doesn't see.

Since 1997 we've planted over 8.5 million trees. Many thanks to the individuals, businesses and foundations that partnered with us to restore this beautiful part of Mexico back to its original state.



**MEGAN FULTON**

Executive Director

# MISSION & OVERVIEW

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Forests for Monarchs (FFM), a program of La Cruz Habitat Protection Project, Inc., reforests land in and around the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve where millions of monarch butterflies spend each winter, and in the Highland Lakes Watershed area of Michoacán, Mexico.

Since the late 1990s, the monarch butterfly population has fallen dramatically. This dangerous decline has been linked to loss of winter habitat in the mountains of Michoacán, Mexico, due to unsustainable logging and clear-cutting; heavy use of pesticides and herbicides in the U.S. and Canada that kill milkweed, the plant crucial to the monarch's breeding survival; heavy use of neonicotinoids (neonics) that kill pollinators through poisoned nectar; as well as global climate change.

**Our goal is simple.** Help conserve the monarch butterfly winter habitat while aiding the surrounding communities in creating a sustainable livelihood, supported by good forest stewardship.



## Report Contents

- State of the Monarch
- Reforestation Efforts
- Announcements and Partners
- Finances

# STATE OF THE MONARCH

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2017 was a year of loss for the monarch population. The population count, which runs from October 2017 through March 2018 in Mexico, reported in at 2.48–2.91 hectares. That is a 14.77% decrease in the population size which was reported at approximately 4.01 hectares the previous year. Many factors can be at fault for this decline. The main contributors were a warmer than usual Fall in the Northeast and Midwest which delayed migration, winter storms in the spring months in the Biosphere reserve was to blame for wiping out nearly half of the population before they had a chance to journey north. The continued commercial use of herbicides and pesticides on farm crops and monarch's summer habitat, milkweed, are contributors as well. Herbicides and pesticides kill milkweed, the only plant monarchs lay eggs on and the caterpillars consume. While this decrease is not good news, the monarch migration population number has a certain level of fluctuation that is expected. To better understand the decline in the population, it's important to look at a larger span of time. Since the late 1990s, the monarch population that migrates to Mexico has declined 80–90%, which is why we work to restore forestland near the reserve. The forestland we restore alleviates pressure on what is left of the relict forests the monarchs roost within during the winter months.



# 2017 REFORESTATION EFFORTS

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In 2017 alone, we planted **250,000** trees in and around the monarch butterfly's winter habitat and Highland Lakes Watershed area

Each year we restore land in strategically high-need areas in and around the communities surrounding the Monarch Biosphere Reserve and the Highland Lakes Watershed area (Lakes Pátzcuaro and Zirahuén). In 2017 we expanded our efforts into Uruapan, an area not far from the lakes, but an area that has become the main hub of avocado farming in the state of Michoacán and a continued source of clear-cutting for farmland.

These areas overtime have seen clean water sources depleted and poor soil conditions hinder farming capabilities. By restoring this land back to forestland we see a return of water in streams and rivers and we see soil conditions improve. We work with communities and landowners to ensure the seedlings when planted have the best chance of survival, with an average 70 percent survival rate year over year. This in part is because we grow only native, non-GMO seeds, which are collected each year by volunteers and community members. The trees used to reforest land in 2017 were - *Pinus Pseudostrobus* ("smooth-bark Mexican pine") and *Pinus Montezumae* ("Montezuma pine").

Plots that have been clearcut - during the dry season, these green plots are completely barren



2017 PLANTING SITE IN URUAPAN, MEXICO BEFORE TREE SEEDLINGS PLANTED

# EFFORTS CONTINUED

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- 250,000 trees covered 229 hectares and 556 acres of land
- We had help planting from over 1,000 volunteers
- We partnered with two local schools to educate students about sustainability and forestry



# PARTNERS

In 2017 we established new partnerships with both large and small businesses all wanting to have a positive impact on the environment. These organizations understand the importance of combating clearcutting and climate change. They also share a love for the land we reforest. We want to thank our partners for their contributions.

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In 2017 we formed a partnership with the Mexican Hass Avocado Importers Association and Avocados from Mexico with a pledge to plant **one million trees** over the next five years.



After partnering in 2016 for a "Save the Monarch" Educational Tour throughout the Northeast, Vermont Woods Studios formalized their partnership with us. A sustainable wood furniture company, they donate funds for one tree per customer purchase and then some.

## câtemma

HOGAR ARTESANAL

Câtemma formed a partnership with us and our Founder, Jose Luis Alvarez in 2017. The Puebla-based artisanal designed and handmade kitchenware company donates nearly two percent of its revenue to our reforestation efforts.

# NEW TEAM & BOARD MEMBERS

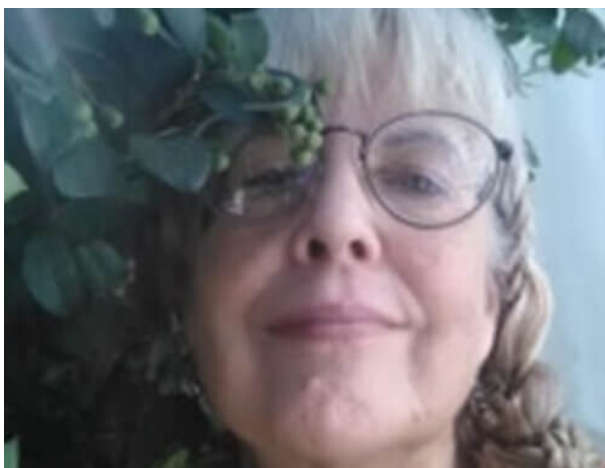
In 2017 we welcomed a new Executive Director and three new board members.



**Megan Fulton, Executive Director:** Taking the reins in July 2017, Megan Fulton is the Executive Director of La Cruz/Forests For Monarchs. Earning a Bachelor's with honors in Marketing Communications from Emerson College and she will also soon hold a MBA and Public Administration degree from Southern New Hampshire University. She comes to us with a Marketing and Administrative Non-Profit background.



**Peggy Farabaugh, Vice President:** Peggy Farabaugh's passion for wildlife conservation led her to found Vermont Woods Studios in 2005, an online furniture business focused on the sustainable sourcing of wood. Peggy holds a B. S. in chemistry from SUNY, a Master's Degree in training technology from the Rochester Institute of Technology, and a Master's Degree in environmental health and safety from Tulane. Peggy lives in Vernon, VT. She joined our Board in July 2017.



**Candace Bowden, Board Member:** Candace Bowden became an active environmentalist in the 1970s when she joined the Mothers for Peace Movement that involved itself with safety and environmental concerns during the construction of California's Diablo Canyon Nuclear Facility. She holds a B.S. from Eastern Oregon University with an emphasis on geology and is an accomplished writer. She lives part-time in Oregon, part-time in Michoacán, Mexico. Prior to joining our Board in July 2017, she worked on occasion with José Luis Alvarez and our reforestation efforts in Michoacán.

# NEW TEAM & BOARD MEMBERS



**Ben Miles, Board Member:** Ben Miles runs Shire Environmental in Danville, Kentucky. He has worked with River Fields in Louisville, Bluegrass Conservancy in Lexington, the Central Kentucky Wildlife Refuge and Boyle Landmark Trust in Danville, among other organizations. Prior to relocating in Kentucky, Ben was the Executive Director of the Shasta Land Trust in Redding, CA from 2008 until 2014. Ben holds a B.A. in philosophy from Sewanee and a Master's in environmental science from UT-Chattanooga. Ben joined our Board in July 2017.



# 2017 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

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## **Revenue**

Foundations & Corporations	\$100,000
Individuals	\$19,873
Grants & Other Non-Profits	\$25,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$144, 873</b>

## **Expenses**

Program Services	
ITree Seedling Production	
Tree Seedling Transportation/Distribution	
Monitoring/Technical Support	
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$109, 235</b>

## **Support Services**

Contract Services	\$18,842
Accounting	\$255
Travel & Meetings	\$3,419
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$22,516</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$131,751</b>

## **Expense Allocations**

Reforestation	
Contract Services	
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$110,532</b>

## **Administration**

Contract Services	\$18,842
Travel & Meetings	\$3,419
Accounting	\$255
Other Expenses	\$8,775
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$31,291</b>

## **Fundraising**

Contract Services	\$2,012
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$2,012</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$143,835</b>

For more financial information please see our 2017 990 Form provided on the website.