

# ANNUAL REPORT

## LA CRUZ HABITAT PROTECTION PROJECT



FORESTS **FOR**  
MONARCHS







*Seedling delivery*

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# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

2020 was a year like no other. At the start of the year, there is no way you could have convinced me of what was to come. We started the year with a lot of exciting projects lined up. I took my annual trip down to our partner nursery, Vivero Forestal, and got to meet with community leaders throughout the monarch overwintering area. We also collected video footage to create a short film, *Monarchs Matter*, which you can find on our website and YouTube channel.

We also started plans to support Vivero Forestal and Hacienda La Cruz with a volunteer program. Unfortunately, this came to a screeching halt when the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

With everything closing down, our team had to act swiftly. In some cases, we needed to redistribute trees, as some towns were completely closed off. The nursery had to navigate how to safely remain open, as the late winter and early spring are the beginning of the busy season. The pandemic also meant we had to delay our monitoring season.

We are grateful, though, that out of everything that could have happened, these were all minor inconveniences. Despite the challenges, we planted 395,000 trees in over 23 communities, and 362 hectares of forestland were restored.

Thank you,

*Megan Fulton*

MEGAN FULTON  
Executive Director

## OUR MISSION:

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 Area of Michoacán, Mexico. Our goal is to help conserve the monarch butterfly winter habitat while aiding the surrounding communities in creating a sustainable livelihood supported by good forest stewardship.



*Monarch Cluster | Senguio*



# MONARCH HEALTH & POPULATION IN 2020

This year (2020-2021), the monarch population continues to see challenges. According to the Xerces Society's annual Thanksgiving count, the western population was at just 2,000 monarchs. The eastern monarchs – those that migrate to Mexico each year – experienced a 26% decrease in population size from the previous year. The main stressors impacting the decline are the continued mass use of pesticides, the climate crisis, the clearcutting of the winter habitat, and migration problems.

**There are ways to combat the population loss.**

- Plant nectar-producing flowers and pollinator-friendly gardens
- Advocate for pollinator habitat along highways
- Donate to have trees planted in the overwintering habitat and surrounding communities
- Write letters and emails, and call your local representation to tell them there needs to be more protection for monarchs, pollinator habitats, and forestland





# 2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



395,000

native trees planted



362

hectares of land  
restored to forest



4,175

volunteers that  
supported  
reforestation efforts



23

communities and  
landowners  
impacted



# ORGANIZATION UPDATES:

While the COVID-19 pandemic overshadowed almost everything in 2020, good things still happened at Forests for Monarchs.

First and foremost, we were able to support the continued operations at the Vivero Forestal nursery, where all the trees we plant are cultivated and cared for under the direction of our Founder, Jose Luis Alvarez. Nursery work is already mainly outdoors, and when social distancing wasn't possible, staff had access to masks. The Vivero Forestal nursery staff's passion and dedication made it possible to plant 395,000 trees in 2020.

Before the pandemic struck, we collected hours of video footage to put together a short documentary focused on the community forestry efforts making it possible for us to continue this work. The film, *Monarchs Matter*, took nearly a year to put together and has reached over 1,200 viewers. It is available to stream on YouTube.

## PARTNER NEWS:

We entered the fourth year of our partnership with the Mexican Hass Avocado Importers Association (MHAIA) and planted an additional 200,000 trees together. MHAIA and Avocados from Mexico sponsored the *Monarchs Matter* documentary as well.

Additionally, we renewed our longtime partnership with American Forests, planting 70,000 trees in communities surrounding the monarch overwintering area. These trees will help take pressure off the relict forests home to the monarch winter habitat. Thank you, American Forests!

In 2020 we also saw our longtime partnership with Vermont Woods Studios grow. This Vermont-based sustainable wood furniture company supported and helped sponsor the documentary and helped plant 12,800 trees.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michael Hamm, Ph. D, President  
Peggy Farabaugh, Vice President  
Ed Rashin, Treasurer  
Molly Hoopes, Secretary  
Candace Bowden  
Barbara Maldonado  
Ben Miles  
Michaela Rogers

## TAKE ACTION

Your donation directly supports the production of native trees in communities around the Monarch Biosphere Reserve and the Highland Lakes Watershed Region.

[www.forestsformonarchs.org/donate](http://www.forestsformonarchs.org/donate)



*Tree Seedlings | Vivero Forestal*



# 2020 FINANCES

## Total Contributions

**\$198,883**

Partnership Contributions  
Grants & Foundations  
Individual Contributions\*

\$135,150  
\$35,000  
\$21,618

\*Includes partner donations and grants under \$5,000 and third-party platform contributions such as Amazon Smile, GreaterGood.org & Facebook

## Program Expenses

**\$140,108**

Tree Seedling Production + Transportation & Distribution  
Monitoring & Technical Field Support

\$127,251  
\$12,857

## Administrative Expenses

**\$62,790**

Contract Services (Salary)  
Accounting Services  
Travel & Meetings  
Fundraising  
Administrative Support

\$17,979  
\$4,765  
\$7,695  
\$17,303  
\$15,048

For more financial information, please see our 2020 990 located on our website.







# FORESTS FOR MONARCHS

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