

## **Unique partnerships forming to restore imperiled Monarch butterfly in Ottawa and Lanark County thanks to a \$58,000 OTF Grant**

**Lanark County** - The Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF) launched a new Monarch butterfly recovery project in Eastern Ontario thanks to a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) and the partnership of the National Capital Commission, Hydro One, and Lanark County.

“I’m proud to announce the Ontario Trillium Foundation is supporting The Canadian Wildlife Federation with this \$58,000 seed grant,” said Merrilee Fullerton, MPP Kanata-Carleton.

“It’s an important investment in an outstanding organization that does so much for our entire community.”

CWF is testing whether the creation of native meadows along roadsides and rights-of-way could successfully control Wild Parsnip, while restoring Monarch butterfly habitat and reducing management costs.

“The Monarch butterfly population is in steep decline,” said Carolyn Callaghan, CWF Senior Conservation Biologist, terrestrial wildlife. “Although once common across North America, this species is now facing the very real possibility of extinction due to habitat loss, broad scale use of pesticides and herbicides, and climate change.”

CWF is working with the National Capital Commission, Hydro One, and Lanark County to create learning labs for establishing wildflower meadows in Ottawa and Lanark County. Work has begun to prepare the sites and planting native wildflower seeds will happen next spring.

In Lanark County, the issue of how to manage invasive wild parsnip has been an important topic of public discourse. Many citizens are concerned about the risk of human health from touching the invasive wild parsnip. Others are concerned about environmental and human health risks of spraying herbicide along roadsides to manage invasive plants. “If we can find a way to satisfy both concerns through establishing native wildflower meadows while also restoring Monarchs then we will have done a good job for our citizens,” said John Fenik, Warden, Lanark County.

“This project is the right fit for the National Capital Commission and it will help to advance our dual management priorities,” said Eva Katic, Senior Manager, Greenbelt and Natural Resources, National Capital Commission. “We are very excited to be part of this project and appreciate the learning and public engagement component.”

“We support the recovery of Monarch butterflies and are always looking to become more sustainable in our operations,” said Elise Croll, Director, Environmental Services, Hydro One. “Hydro One proudly supports community-based initiatives and events throughout Ontario. It’s one of the ways we connect with our customers and communities. This project is also in line with one of our key biodiversity



initiatives - protecting Ontario's pollinator species, such as bees and butterflies. Over the last two years we've proudly planted over 100 hectares with pollinator-friendly plants across the province."

It is also worth mentioning that thanks to the \$58,000 Seed grant, WCF was able to hire a project coordinator to work with partners to restore at least 10 hectares of roadside and rights-of-way in eastern Ontario along with a technician and a restoration ecologist.

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The [Canadian Wildlife Federation](http://CanadianWildlifeFederation.ca) is a national, not-for-profit charitable organization dedicated to fostering awareness and appreciation of our natural world. By spreading knowledge of human impacts on the environment, carrying out research, developing and delivering education programs, promoting the sustainable use of natural resources, recommending changes to policy and co-operating with like-minded partners, CWF encourages a future in which Canadians can live in harmony with nature. For more information visit [CanadianWildlifeFederation.ca](http://CanadianWildlifeFederation.ca).

The [Ontario Trillium Foundation](http://OntarioTrilliumFoundation.ca) (OTF) is an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada's leading granting foundations. OTF awarded more than \$120 million to some 700 projects last year to build healthy and vibrant communities in Ontario.

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#### **Background**

The Monarch population has dropped by 90 per cent over the past 20 years and the species was recently listed as endangered by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC). To reverse this worrying trend, the Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF) is seeking creative solutions by turning to unlikely habitat: rights-of-way (such as hydro-electric corridors and roadsides) as well as pathways. The aim is to encourage management of rights-of-way and pathways that helps to restore the Monarch butterfly while effectively managing invasive plants such as wild parsnip.

Right-of-Way corridors that are restored for Monarch butterflies will be used as a nursery for caterpillars, fuel for the long journey of the adults, and rest stops along the way. They will also be beautiful sites to behold for Monarch lovers across the province.

For more information visit [www.cwf-fcf.org](http://www.cwf-fcf.org).