

Nationwide Monarch Butterfly Candidate Conservation Agreement (CCA) for Energy and Transportation lands

PROJECT TITLE

Nationwide Monarch Butterfly
Candidate Conservation Agreement
for Energy and Transportation lands.

STUDY TIMELINE

10/2019 – 10/2020

INVESTIGATORS

VHB Consulting Engineers

VTRANS CONTACT

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This fact sheet was prepared to
highlight recent Accelerated
Innovation Deployment (AID)
Grants.

More information about the
VTrans Research Program,
including additional Fact Sheets,
can be found at:
[http://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/
research](http://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/research)

Problem Statement

The Monarch Butterfly is proposed for listing as a federally recognized endangered species. Habitat along transportation infrastructure supports monarch butterflies. Best management practices along/within our transportation infrastructure could provide long term habitat for this species and help in the recovery of this species. If the monarch species were listed as a federally listed endangered/threatened species additional review would be required for all projects. Entering into this agreement will provide assurances that further review under the ESA is not required.



Monarch Butterfly

Habitat in ROW

Methodology

We have explored all VTrans lands that could be adopted into the agreement without impacting operations. This exercise was mostly a GIS mapping exercise and then extrapolating viable habitat within VTrans ownership. All existing BMP's were also evaluated to determine which are beneficial to this agreement.

Next Steps

The application was submitted and accepted into the nationwide agreement and VTrans is an active partner in this conservation effort. VTrans has enrolled 42,534 acres into the agreement. VTrans is in the process of completing biological effectiveness monitoring on adopted acreage (8% of enrolled lands) as part of the annual reporting requirements. Once the monitoring is completed, we will determine if adaptive management is required.

Potential Impacts and VTrans Benefits

Entering the Monarch CCA will be a permit streamlining effort for all VTrans projects if the Monarch Butterfly is listed in 2020. This will provide for regulatory assurances for all VTrans projects under the ESA. If we do not enter the agreement, VTrans would need to coordinate on a project by project basis for potential impacts to the Monarch Butterfly, which could delay projects and add additional cost. Much of the existing BMP's VTrans Operations adheres to will play an important role in administering the requirements within the agreement. VTrans is also examining various other design practices to bolster habitat within our Rights of Way. Many of the practices will also benefit many other species of pollinators as they use the same sorts of habitat.