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SUPERVISOR'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Township to Invest in Saving Monarch Butterflies at New Park

Macomb Township, Mich. --- Pitchford Park will be home to a one-acre wildflower meadow in its wet areas providing a crucial habitat for monarch butterflies, following the approval of a \$3,000 grant by the Township Board of Trustees at the meeting on September 27, 2023.

According to the World Wildlife Fund, populations of monarch butterflies have significantly declined throughout the last 25 years, which has been seen in the butterflies' migratory populations. Much of the decline in population can be attributed to loss of habitat and heightened use of pesticides.

Hoping to address this issue, Macomb Township trustees plan to cultivate a wildflower meadow mixed with milkweed plants, catering specifically to the monarch butterflies. The funds for this initiative came from CN Railways' EcoConnexions program and are administered through Macomb County's Department of Planning and Economic Development.

Macomb Township successfully lobbied the county for additional funding from the program to purchase and plant milkweed in the meadow.

Monarch butterflies lay their eggs only on milkweed and monarch butterfly caterpillars feed only on milkweed leaves, as stated by the U.S. National Park Service.

"Milkweed was a common flowering plant in wet areas in Macomb County, but that habitat is diminishing," said Macomb Township Treasurer Leon Drolet.

"Water detention ponds and swales in Macomb Township can provide a quality habitat for the Monarch butterflies, but those areas are often planted with lawn grass right on the water's edge. Worse, many are taken over by invasive phragmite plants," he continued.

By utilizing the grant to grow a wildflower meadow in Pitchford Park, Macomb Township will provide a large habitat for the butterflies along the perimeter walking path. The addition not only enhances the biodiversity of the area but also offers residents a beautiful landscape to enjoy.

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