

# Project Category

NSBF Byway Community Award: Partnership

# Project Name

Route 66 Monarch Flyway

# Byway Name

Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway

Distance: 400 miles

Designation:2005

# Overview

The Route 66 Monarch Flyway, which the Illinois Monarch Project debuted on November 18th, 2020, is a 66-mile-wide corridor that stretches from Chicago to St. Louis across the state of Illinois. The project is seeking to bring the unique aspect of Route 66 to Illinois' efforts to help the monarch butterfly by planting native wildflowers and restoring habitat projects within the corridor. One of the goals of this effort is to bring together all aspects of life in Illinois, which are represented in the four sectors of the Illinois Monarch Project (IMP) – Urban, Agriculture, Rights-of-Ways and Natural Lands. The IMP collaborates with public and private partners, in addition to individuals across the state, to protect and enhance existing habitat and establish new habitat that supports monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

# Intrinsic Qualities

A dedicated committee with representation from Pheasants Forever, Illinois Farm Bureau, McLean County Soil & Water Conservation District, National Parks Service, Chicago Zoological Society, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Department of Transportation, and the Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway has been working on the Flyway.

# Byway Best Practice

The Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway partnered with NSBF & Toyota last August on a successful grant that brought in area master gardeners to establish habitats for Monarch Butterflies along Route 66 in Springfield, IL. That dedicated group is already planning more planting events in 2022. Best practices include following grant guidelines and proven techniques of master gardeners and the IL Dept. of Natural Resources.

# Keys to Success

Several projects are in various stages of planning and implementation, and, as long as they benefit the monarch, they are a welcome part of the effort. We kept the definition broad in scope to allow room for creativity of events and on-the-ground efforts. All plantings or restorations are required to use native plants suitable for the site and include milkweed. In several locations, there are discussions about the installation of trails along the historic route, community events that could be focused on the monarch, restoration of public areas and unique collaborations. We are always looking for new ideas and new people to get involved as we build a network along Route 66!

# Additional Information

## Contact Information

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## Project Year(s):

2020-2030

## Website

[www.illinoisroute66.org](http://www.illinoisroute66.org)

# Photographs

