History of Waldon Pond 2004-present



And Danaidae Den

The term **Danaidae** refers to a **family of large butterflies**, commonly known as **Milkweed butterflies**.

2004 It started with a vision Thank you Jon Gray!









The Project Required $

- Aquarius Waterscapes
- The Glassen Foundation
- Wildflower Association of Michigan
- Whitetails Unlimited
- Warner, Cantrell & Padmos
- Orion Stone Depot
- Picture Perfect Patio
- Oaks Concrete Products
- Heritage Farm
- Lloyd's Excavating
- Moote Electric
- Bordine's
- Country Oaks Landscaping
- Lake Orion Education Foundation
- Oakland Wildflower Farm

A lot of students, and hard work.









2006 A paver walkway was added.

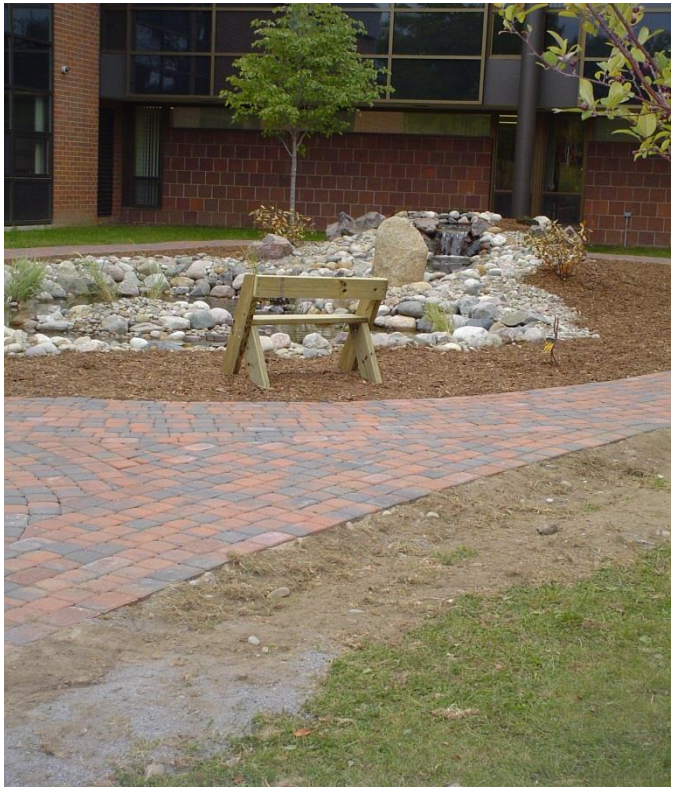




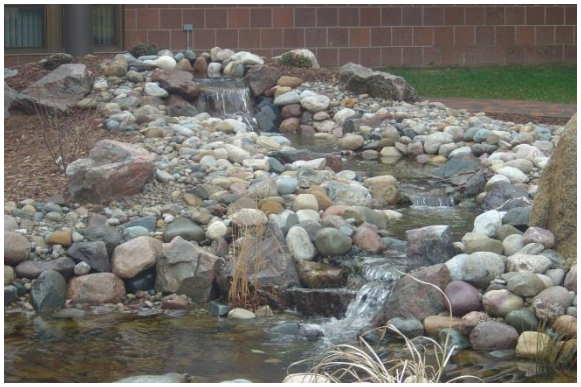


some landscaping….

The trees you see in this picture were successfully dug up (by 6th graders!) and transplanted to a location outside of the pond area. They are growing well as of 2026.







and Phases 1 & 2 were complete.



A Four Season "Classroom" (trees are still here at this point)



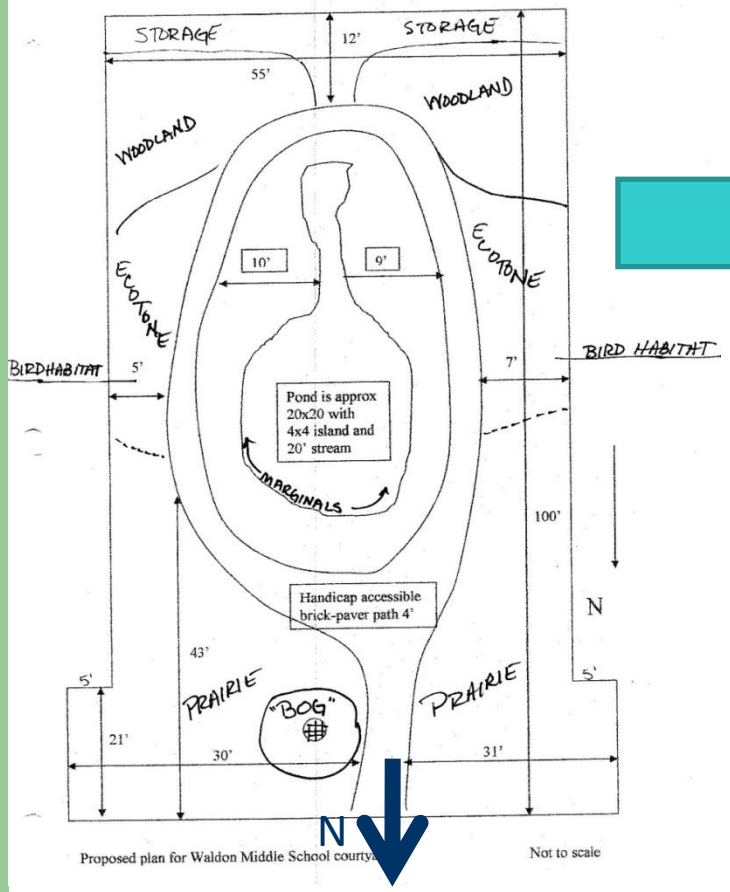


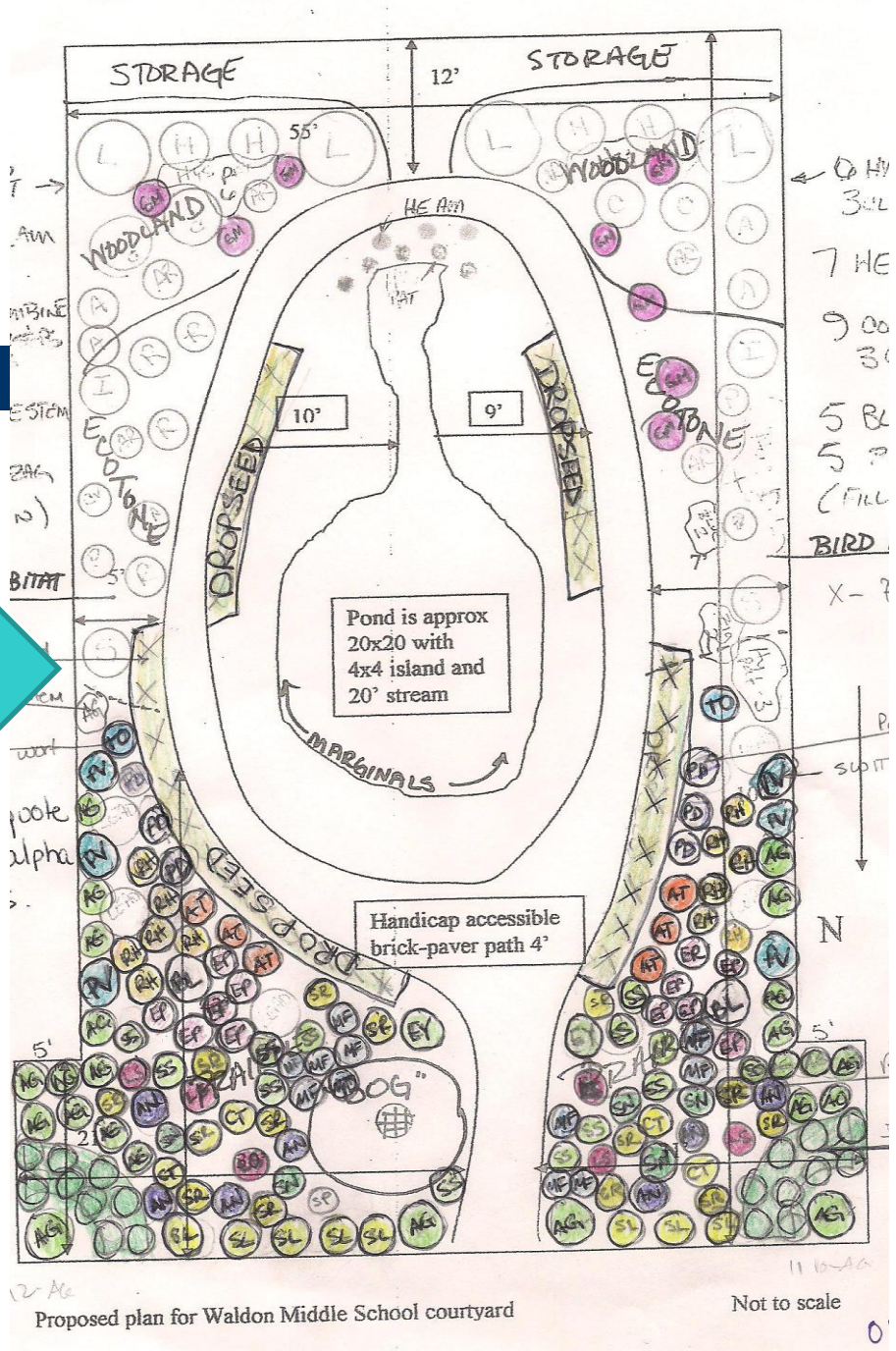


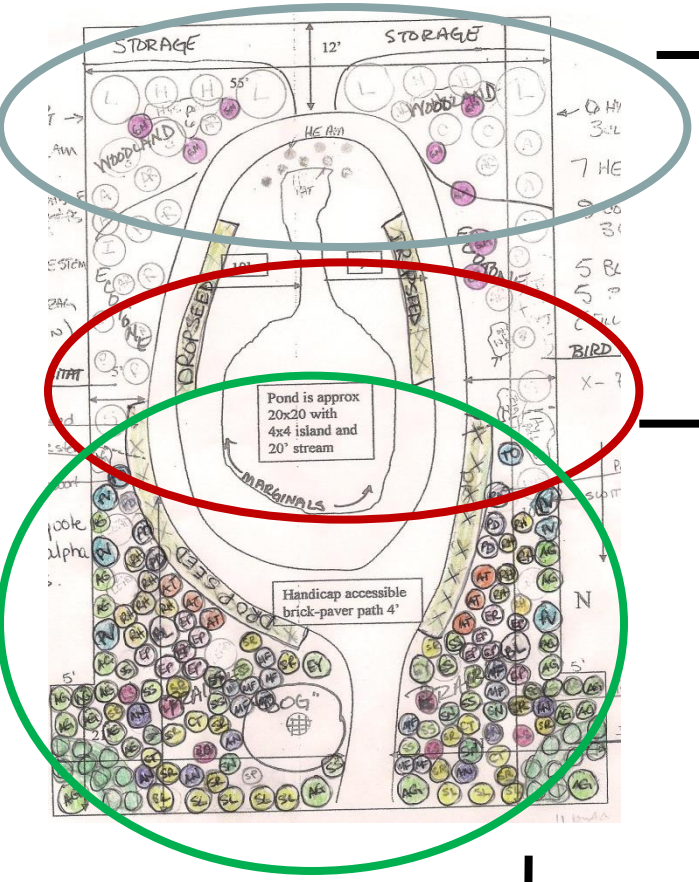


2006 Phase 3 Native Plants

Original design created by Amy Murray, Heritage Farm, Oxford: prior to 2008







Woodland – Sept & Oct 2008

- Shady
- Very moist-not sure why
  - Sensitive fern covered area after first planting
- Due to overhang-mid-size shrubs/trees are 'canopy'
  - Alternate leaf dogwood, red-twig dogwood, spicebush, elderberry, black chokeberry, American hazelnut
  - virginia creeper, virgin's bower, columbine, spikenard, Alum root, blue stem and zigzag goldenrod, bottlebrush grass, golden alexander

Ecotone (transition zone) – Oct 2008

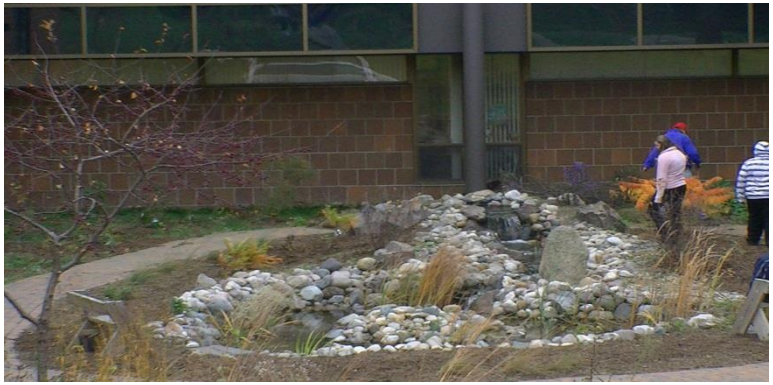
- Varying sun depends on time of day
- Soil is compacted
- Leadplant, Pasture rose

Prairie – June 2009

- Full sun depending on sun direction
- Soil compacted
- New England aster, white false indigo, tall tickseed, purple coneflower, rattlesnake master, wild geranium, dense blazingstar, bee balm, switch grass, white beardtongue, black-eyed Susan, compass plant, stiff goldenrod, Indian grass, prairie drop seed, spiderwort, big and little blue stem

Removing & Adding



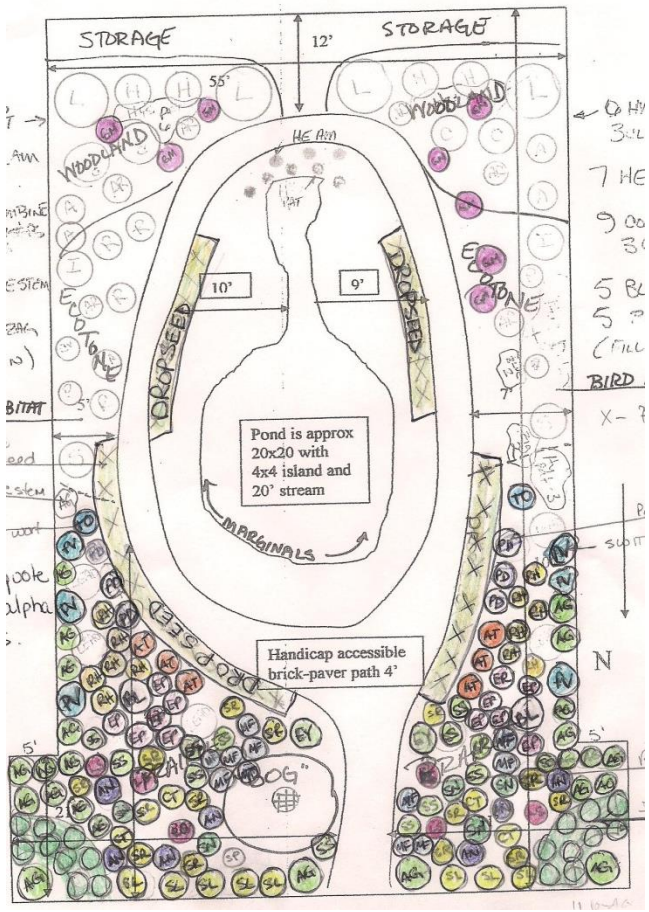


- Native plants and wildflowers added
- Birdhouses constructed
- Bat houses constructed
- Benches constructed by Life Skills classes
- Mulched annually with help from Buildings and Grounds.
- Maple trees are moved out (getting too big, dropping too many leaves, obscuring view from 2nd floor classrooms)

Michigan Green School Certification Points 1st award 2008

- Reuses Magazines/Newsprint: Use it to smother weeds in the worm compost
- Adopt a Species: Monarch butterfly
- Ecological Spokesperson: Ruth Vrbensky and native plants
- Birdhouse Habitat
- MI Garden Project
- Earth Day Celebrations
- Reduces Use of Resources: Mulching reduces need for water/herbicides

Work Continues…



Oct 2010, Plants Added

- **Woodland**:
  - Cardinal flower, great blue lobelia, culver's root, Indian tobacco, swamp milkweed
- **Ecotone and Prairie**:
  - Meadowsweet, shrubby cinquefoil, swamp milkweed, prairie dock, New Jersey tea, Bicknell's sedge (skirts pond), blue-eyed grass

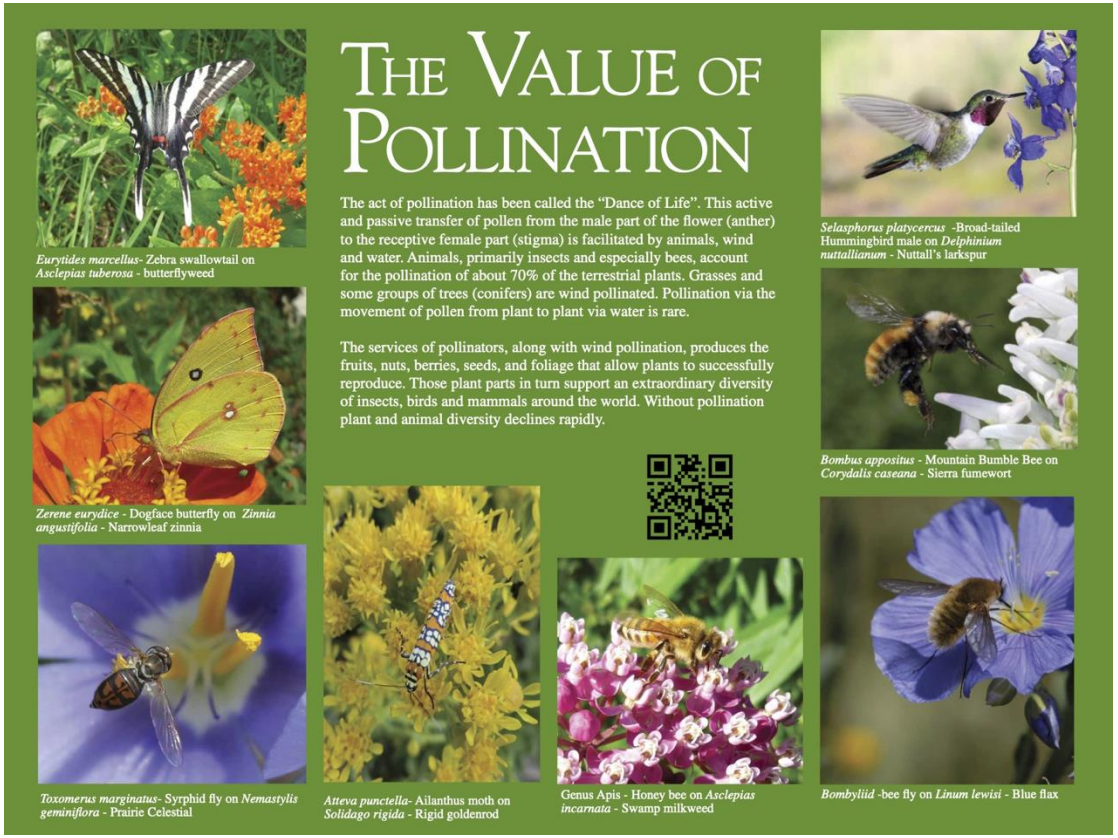
FUTURE:

Evaluate, maintain, fill in gaps

2010 Certified as Eco-school by NWF



2010 Certified as a Monarch Waystation Danaidae Den (Monarch Watch)



2011 Monarch Release

Monarchs (ordered via mail order) that were released, began returning and laying eggs on the milkweed in the pond area. Classes would search for the eggs and rear them in the classroom for re-release. Eventually no eggs had to be purchased online.









Monarch Caterpillars

Classes reared these cats from eggs we found on milkweed in the pond!!

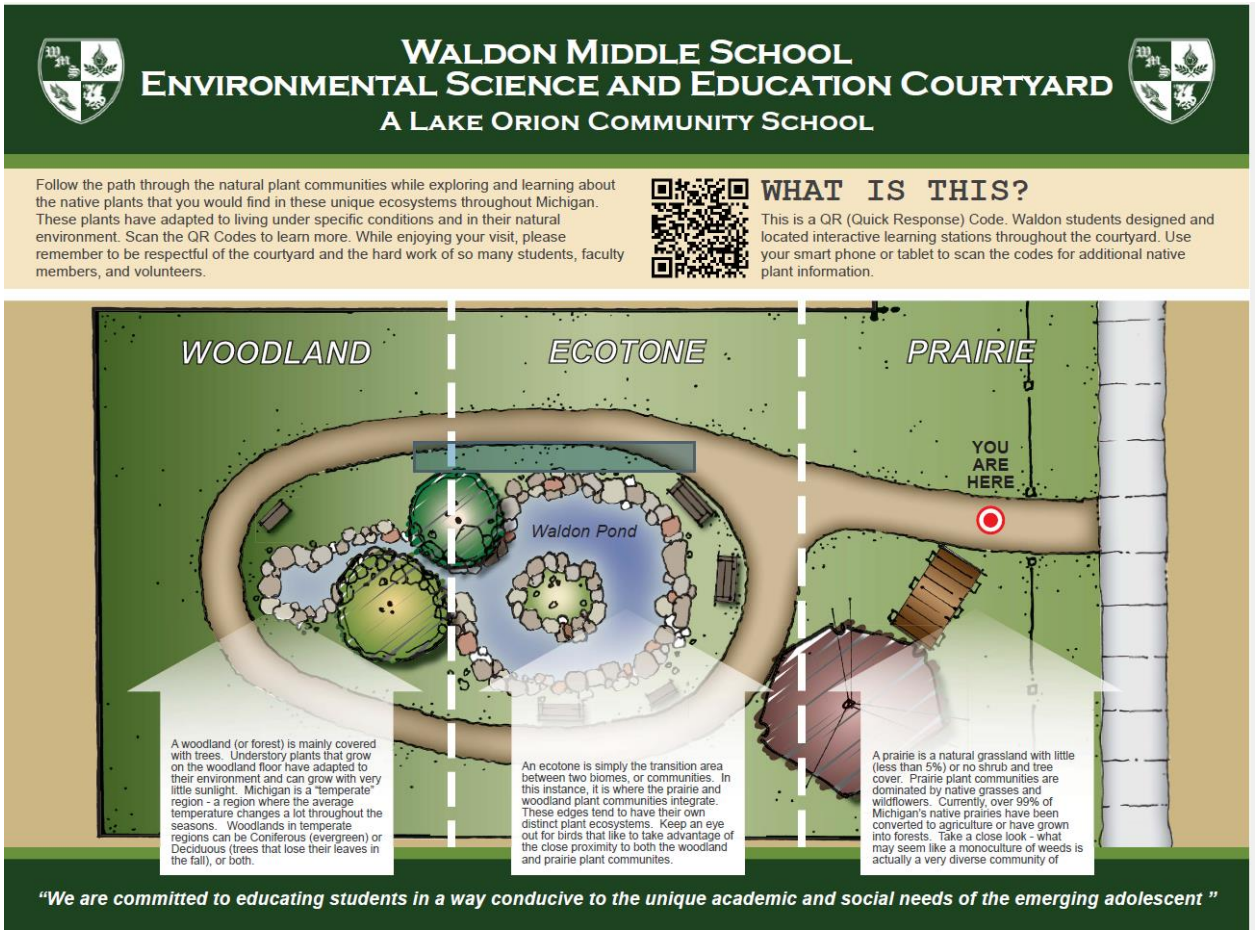


2013 Signage and QR Codes

- Students construct native plant information pages that would be linked to QR codes.
- Posts are cut and set. These posts are fitted with a unique QR code for the species of plant in that location.



Signpost placed in entranceway.



2024 School webpage

https://www.lakeorionschools.org/waldon-middle-school/student-life/waldon-pond

About Us
Parents
Student Resources
Student Life
- Athletics
- Clubs & Activities
- GAP program
- Lunch Menu
- **Waldon Pond**
  - Boneset
  - Common Milkweed
  - Compass Plant
  - Hazelnut
  - Lead Plant
  - Prairie Dropseed
  - Prickly Pear Cactus
  - Purple Coneflower
  - Rattlesnake Master
  - Sensitive Fern

Waldon Pond



2025 Repair and Replace

- New waterfall water pump installed

AguaFina Gardens International
http://www.aguafina.com
Landscape architect in Sylvan Lake, MI

- Wooden post QR codes repaired and replaced
- Pond website updated

New trial QR codes were 3D printed!
They work, but a more permanent solution is being designed!
Pull out a QR scanner and try it!!



School/Student Uses & Certifications

- Journaling
- Flower identification
- Planting & propagation
- Stream studies
- Aquatic habitat studies
- Certified NWF Schoolyard Habitat
- Certified Monarch Way Station through Monarch Watch
- Eagle Scout Projects