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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Massive 1,000 Acres Pollinator Habitat Project  
Begins in Greater Cincinnati**

CINCINNATI (April 1, 2026) – Ohio River Foundation (ORF) announces the launch of The 1,000 Acres Pollinator Habitat Project, a new multi-park habitat restoration project focused on pollinators. It is the largest pollinator habitat project ever in the tri-state region that will create and restore more than 1,000 acres of native habitat, benefiting the Eastern Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus* and other pollinator species that are threatened, protected, or in decline due to habitat loss.

According to the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) the Eastern Monarch population has declined by more than 80% since the 1990s and has a 56-74% chance of extinction by 2080. The USFWS will likely be deciding in 2026 whether to give the monarch butterfly protected status as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). As the monarch butterfly is considered for federal protection, this project holds huge potential to help reverse this species' decline. Furthermore, habitat restoration will also benefit the endangered Rusty Patch Bumblebee *Bombus affinus* and many other pollinator species.

“The value of pollinators to overall ecological health and food production is immeasurable. Healthy pollinators mean healthy ecosystems and a stronger food supply for all of us,” said Rich Cogen, ORF Executive Director and project lead.

The availability of suitable pollinator habitat has decreased substantially in the past 25 years. Changes in land development and agricultural herbicide use have resulted in the loss and fragmentation of thousands of acres of habitat.

This massive project will create, restore, and enhance 1,000 acres of pollinator habitat for monarchs and other pollinators. Ohio River Foundation will coordinate the project and provide,

with its partners, education sessions and volunteer opportunities during the course of this multi-year project.

“Among the exciting opportunities that this project presents is its immense scalability,” Cogen added. “There is no reason this project could not grow to thousands of acres of pollinator habitat. The impact of such a huge amount of available habitat would be enormous.”

Current partners for this project are: Butler County Metroparks, 5 Rivers Metroparks, Great Parks of Hamilton County, Warren County Park District, Buffalo Trace Land Trust (Indiana), and Pollinator Partnership. More public landowners will be added.

Seed funding to launch the Project is being provided by The Kettering Family Foundation and The Elevar Fund.

### **About Ohio River Foundation**

Ohio River Foundation (ORF) is dedicated to protecting and improving the water quality and ecology of the Ohio River and all waters in its 14-state watershed. ORF works towards these goals through environmental education and conservation activities that serve to inspire environmental stewardship and bolster climate change resiliency for native species, habitats, and communities. For more information, visit [www.ohioriverfdn.org](http://www.ohioriverfdn.org).

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