

## Section I – Items for Board of Directors Action

**TO:** Chair and Members of the Board of Directors  
Meeting #11/19, Friday, January 24, 2020

**FROM:** Darryl Gray, Director, Education and Training

**RE:** **FLIGHT OF THE MONARCHS DAY PROCLAMATION**

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### KEY ISSUE

Approval of a TRCA proclamation of Flight of the Monarch Day, on August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, as well as TRCA application for mayoral proclamations in local watershed municipalities in support of Flight of the Monarch Day, August 22<sup>nd</sup> 2020.

### RECOMMENDATION

**WHEREAS TRCA is the national host of the Monarch Nation program, a federally funded program seeking to achieve community activation to support species at risk in Canada;**

**WHEREAS Monarch Nation brings together a collective of partners in Ontario and across Canada, whose combined experience and expertise in educating the public about species at risk, particularly monarch butterflies, places them in an ideal position to advocate for the monarch butterfly;**

**AND WHEREAS the monarch butterfly is designated as a species at risk in Ontario and Canada by The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), Government of Canada *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) and Species At Risk in Ontario (SARO);**

**THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT TRCA proclaim August 22, 2020 as Flight of the Monarchs Day;**

**THAT an application for a mayoral proclamation be made to TRCA's local watershed municipalities to recognize August 22, 2020 as Flight of the Monarchs Day;**

**AND FURTHER THAT TRCA staff work with the Government of Canada to seek adoption of a nationally-recognized day of awareness related to the monarch butterfly and other species at risk.**

### BACKGROUND

Monarch butterflies are one of the most iconic and cherished insects in North America. Their epic 5,000-kilometre migration from eastern Canada to the forests of central Mexico begins in late August each year. In 2013, the eastern population of monarch butterflies dropped by 95 per cent, resulting in the smallest recorded population since the mid-1990s. Since 2013, the population has rebounded, owing in part to the collective efforts of thousands of individuals, groups and communities across Canada, however the monarch's future remains in peril. *Flight of the Monarchs Day* is an opportunity to celebrate the growing movement to protect monarch butterflies and the astonishing phenomenon of their migration as their epic journey southward begins.

Since 2009, TRCA has administered the Monarch Teacher Network of Canada, educating

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teachers about monarch butterflies, and empowering them to use monarch butterflies as a lens through which to engage children with nature. Building on the success of the Monarch Teacher Network of Canada, in 2018 TRCA was awarded a \$1,125,000 grant from Environment Canada to develop and deliver the Monarch Nation program to improve engagement and awareness related to species at risk with children aged 6-12 years old. Using the monarch butterfly as the ambassador species to represent all species at risk in Canada, TRCA, through Monarch Nation, collaborates with partners across Canada to deliver programming that raises awareness of the need to protect species at risk while supporting community action to restore and enhance local habitat. Monarch Nation partners are as follows:

- Cambridge Butterfly Conservatory
- David Suzuki Foundation
- Mission Monarch, Montreal
- Monarch Teacher Network, Manitoba Region
- Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute, Nova Scotia
- Robert Bateman Foundation
- Royal Botanical Gardens

Since Monarch Nation began in May 2018, over 40,000 children and more than 1100 educators across Canada have been engaged in species-at-risk education, and close to 50,000 native plants have been installed to create habitat for species at risk.

### **RATIONALE**

Programming for Monarch Nation is developed and delivered regionally through local partnerships, in collaboration and coordination with TRCA, with the intent to meet the specific local needs of individual communities and ensure long-term viability of the program. An essential element of TRCA's role in leading Monarch Nation is ensuring consistency in performance measurement, providing additional resources and supporting materials, as well as administering social media and website content. The centralized support of these functions enhances efficiency for partners as well as providing unified messaging related to monarch butterflies and species at risk for the end users.

In order to continue to advance the work of Monarch Nation, TRCA is leading the creation of a national event, Flight of the Monarchs Day, that will provide a vital opportunity to increase community awareness related to species at risk and engage new communities in the work of habitat restoration and enhancement, as well as raise the visibility of the Monarch Nation program and extend its reach into new areas across Canada. Additionally, direct engagement of municipal councils through official proclamations of Flight of the Monarchs Day, will provide improved opportunities for collaboration between local municipalities and community partners in achieving goals related to conservation of monarch butterflies and other important species that are currently at risk.

Summer 2020 will be the final summer of the program which is scheduled to end in March 2021: an ideal time to raise the profile of the program and ensure momentum carries through and beyond the end of the funding period.

### **Relationship to Building the Living City, the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan**

This report supports the following strategy set forth in the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan:  
**Strategy 5 – Foster sustainable citizenship**

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### **FINANCIAL DETAILS**

Funding for the Monarch Nation program is provided through a Government of Canada grant. The expenses are tracked under account code 366-56/14160.

### **DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE**

TRCA staff will prepare necessary materials for TRCA's proclamation of Flight of the Monarchs Day, including events, press releases and any supporting promotional materials.

TRCA staff will prepare a support package for organizations wishing to hold an event as part of Flight of the Monarchs Day, to be available as a download from the Monarch Nation website.

TRCA staff will also support Monarch Nation partners in requesting official proclamations of Flight of the Monarchs Day from local watershed municipalities.

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**Date: January 9, 2020**