



# United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Washington, D. C. 20240



In Reply Refer To  
FWS/R3/DCN:075367

November 2, 2021

The Honorable Bruce Westerman  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Westerman:

Thank you for your letter of July 29, 2021, regarding the status of the monarch butterfly and the voluntary efforts being undertaken by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and its partners to conserve this important species. We recognize the urgent need to reverse monarch butterfly declines, and we are working closely with partners across the country to undertake voluntary conservation measures.

The Service is committed to enhancing the proactive conservation of the monarch butterfly. We take a collaborative all-hands-on-deck approach to monarch conservation, engaging with a broad array of partners to enact large and small-scale conservation efforts for the benefit of monarchs and their habitats. We are grateful for the conservation efforts already underway by our partners in federal, state, and local agencies, Tribes, non-governmental organizations, industry, and private citizens. Over the past five years, the Service has restored and enhanced more than one million acres of monarch and pollinator habitat through actions on Service lands and through partnerships with willing farmers, ranchers, and other private landowners.

As noted in your letter, one of the important tools the Service is using to encourage voluntary conservation efforts is the nationwide Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA) for energy and transportation rights-of-way holders. To date, 29 private and public energy and transportation partners have enrolled in (18) or applied to (11) the CCAA. These existing commitments cover more than 760,000 acres of monarch habitat across 31 states, and we expect more participants to enroll.

On December 17, 2020, the Service completed its 12-month finding on the petition to list the monarch butterfly under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). We determined that listing the monarch under the ESA is warranted but precluded at this time by higher-priority listing actions. As a part of this finding, we determined that an emergency listing was not necessary because of ongoing conservation measures, including implementation of the CCAA. Pursuant to Executive Order 13990, the Department of the Interior reviewed the December 2020 12-month finding, confirmed that it was based on the best scientific and commercial data available, and re-affirmed the Service's conclusion that listing the monarch under the ESA is warranted but precluded.

Ensuring the future of the monarch butterfly is important to Service. We appreciate your engagement as we work with our many partners to explore options to conserve the monarch and other pollinators. If you would like to discuss our monarch conservation efforts further, or if you have additional questions, please contact Midwest Regional Director Charlie Wooley at (612) 713-5302.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Martha Williams", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Martha Williams  
Principal Deputy Director  
Exercising the Delegated Authority  
of the Director  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service