

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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PARTNERS HOST MONARCH MADNESS: A POLLINATOR FESTIVAL SEPT. 15 AT WELDON SPRING SITE
Enjoy a fun, free family event with food, music and butterfly catching

ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO – How do they do it? Monarch butterflies capture our imagination as they flit and glide among wildflowers, backyards, and parks. We dream of childhood and warm summer days as they dance through the skies. Yet, their dance has a purpose. Adult monarch butterflies are making an incredible, 3,000-



mile journey south to the mountains of Central Mexico. There they will stay, gathered in colonies of millions, waiting for warm spring days. When warmer days do come, the monarchs will awake from hibernation to begin their migration journey north. But these winter survivors won't make the full journey. It takes several generations of monarchs to fly north, find good habitat, lay eggs, and let the next generation carry on.

Discover all things monarch and celebrate their amazing lives at Monarch Madness: A Pollinator Festival from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 15 at the Weldon Spring Site in St. Charles, Missouri. The event is free and open to all! Enjoy kids' crafts, games, exhibitors, native garden tours, butterfly tagging, food trucks, music and more. You can even purchase native plants that attract pollinators and pick up a monarch butterfly passport at the event! You'll get a free gift when you visit each passport station to learn about a monarch's journey and life cycle.

The event is hosted by the Weldon Spring Site, which is managed by the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management (LM); Missourians for Monarchs; St. Charles County Parks and Recreation; Missouri Department of Conservation; Missouri Master Naturalists; Missouri Master Gardeners, Great Rivers Greenway (GRG), North American Butterfly Association, Ameren and the US Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management (LM).

"Monarch butterflies need us" says Judy Meixner, Missourians for Monarchs event coordinator. "The habitat of all pollinators has been dwindling each year, making survival very tough." It's estimated that in the last 21 years, monarch populations have declined more than 80 percent from historic levels. Meixner says that "this icon of summer in the Midwest may be gone if we don't act!"

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“This will be the third year the event will occur at the Weldon Spring Site. The site has gone through an amazing transformation with restoration to native prairie, which is what monarchs need to survive” stated Meixner.

The Weldon Spring Site was once home to World War II and Cold War-era factories. Today, the site preserves the legacy of the people and site operations that contributed to those wars, the subsequent environmental contamination, and also chronicles the environmental cleanup with restoration to native prairie. LM, the site steward, implements a long-term surveillance and maintenance plan that includes an Interpretive Center and 41-acre disposal cell.

“Monarch restoration needs success stories like that of the Weldon Spring Site. Everyone can contribute in making a real difference in monarch survival with even just a few native plants at home” says Meixner.

Limited parking will be available on-site. Additional parking is available at the neighboring Francis Howell High School with a short, half-mile walk along the gravel Hamburg Trail to the site. The Weldon Spring Site is located at 7295 Highway 94—approximately 2 miles south of I-64/Hwy 40. Contact the Weldon Spring Site at (636) 300-2601 or WSInterpretiveCenter@lm.doe.gov for more information.

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About St. Charles County Parks & Recreation

The St. Charles County Parks & Recreation Department offers unique parks, diverse facilities and a broad range of programs and special events for all ages. The County currently operates 15 parks, including a Youth Activity Park and The Historic Daniel Boone Home.

For more information and specifics about each park, visit stccparks.org.

About St. Charles County

Founded in 1812, St. Charles County is one of the fastest growing counties in Missouri, and the state's third largest county in both population and economic share. St. Charles County consistently ranks one of the healthiest places to live in Missouri in the County.

Health Rankings report published by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. It is home to 15 scenic County parks encompassing more than 3,643 acres with additional land under development and more in reserve for future development.



NEWS RELEASE

With a population of 395,504, St Charles County is home to large employers including Citi, MasterCard Worldwide, Boeing and General Motors. St. Charles County ranked among the top 25 counties in the nation in high-tech job growth by the Progressive Policy Institute and consistently has the lowest unemployment rate in the Metropolitan St. Louis area.

St. Charles County employs nearly 1,100 in more than 30 departments and offices, who work to make the county an excellent place to live, work and shop.

For more information, please visit sccmo.org.