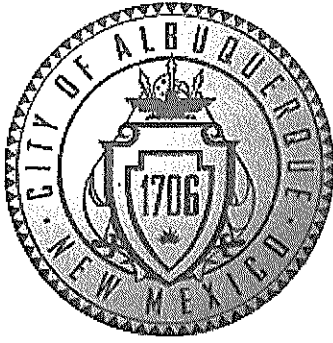


EC-26-174

CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Office of the Mayor



Mayor Timothy M. Keller

INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

May 22, 2026

TO: Klarissa J. Peña, President, City Council

FROM: Timothy M. Keller, Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'TK', is written over the name 'Timothy M. Keller'.

SUBJECT: Update on City Department efforts related to pollinator protection and conservation

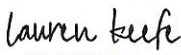
The Parks and Recreation Department (PRD) transmits an annual report updating Council on efforts "To Support Pollinator Conservation Efforts and to Recommit to Bee City USA Standards."

Approved:

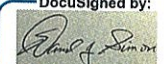
 6/2/26

Samantha Sengel, EdD Date
Chief Administrative Officer

Approved as to Legal Form:

DocuSigned by:
 5/26/2026 | 9:02 AM MDT
1A21D96D32C74EE...
Lauren Keefe Date
City Attorney

Recommended:

DocuSigned by:
 5/22/2026 | 11:12 AM MDT
3A1B6469E7FE4D0...
David J. Simon Date
Director, Parks and Recreation Department

Cover Analysis

1. **What is it?**
An Executive Communication regarding pollinator conservation efforts.

2. **What will this piece of legislation do?**
Updates Council on City department efforts related to pollinator protection and conservation.

3. **Why is this project needed?**
Pollinators are key components of healthy ecosystems that sustain environmental/ecological quality and contribute benefits to the City and its residents.

4. **How much will it cost and what is the funding source?**
N/A An informational report only.

5. **Is there a revenue source associated with this contract? If so, what level of income is projected?**
N/A

6. **What will happen if the project is not approved?**
N/A

7. **Is this service already provided by another entity?**
No.

FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

TITLE: Executive Communication transmitting an annual report to Council required by R-23-127
 R: O:
 FUND: 110
 DEPT: PRD

- [X] No measurable fiscal impact is anticipated, i.e., no impact on fund balance over and above existing appropriations.
- [] (If Applicable) The estimated fiscal impact (defined as impact over and above existing appropriations) of this legislation is as follows:

	Fiscal Years			Total
	2026	2027	2028	
Base Salary/Wages				-
Fringe Benefits at				-
Subtotal Personnel	-	-	-	-
Operating Expenses		-		-
Property		-	-	-
Indirect Costs	\$	\$	\$	\$
Capital Project	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
[x] Estimated revenues not affected				
[] Estimated revenue impact				
Revenue from program				
Amount of Grant	\$	\$	\$	\$
City Cash Match	\$	\$	\$	\$
City Inkind Match	\$	\$	\$	\$
City IDOH	\$	\$	\$	\$
Total Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -


These estimates do not include any adjustment for inflation.

Number of Positions created: 0


COMMENTS: There is no fiscal impact to submit this annual update.

COMMENTS ON NON-MONETARY IMPACTS TO COMMUNITY/CITY GOVERNMENT:

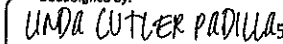
PREPARED BY:

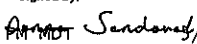
DocuSigned by:

 Josy Rowe 5/22/2026 | 11:10 AM MDT
 FISCAL ANALYST

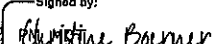
APPROVED:

DocuSigned by:

 5/22/2026 | 11:12 AM MDT
 DIRECTOR

REVIEWED BY:

DocuSigned by:

 UDA CUTLER PADILLA 5/24/2026 | 12:43 PM MDT
 EXECUTIVE BUDGET ANALYST

Signed by:

 Anna Sandones 5/24/2026 | 4:12 PM MDT
 BUDGET OFFICER

Signed by:

 Christine Boerner 5/26/2026 | 8:40 AM MDT
 CHIEF ECONOMIST

**Update on City Department Efforts Related to Pollinator Protection and Conservation
May 2026**

Section 1. That the City of Albuquerque reaffirms the designation and recommits to the standards of Bee City USA and designates the Parks and Recreation Department as the City's BCUSA sponsor; Parks and Recreation Department shall designate a representative from that department to serve as the BCUSA liaison.

- Albuquerque is recognized as a Bee City USA and was the first Bee City USA in the Southwest. Bee Cities are committed to educating the public and advocating for pollinators at all levels to ensure policies and practices that benefit pollinators. The Parks and Recreation Department (PRD) representative for two years was Deputy Director Dennis Vasquez. Since his retirement in 2025, the Director has been the representative.

Section 2. That the City, through coordinated efforts of its departments, will increase plantings and maintenance of native plant species along roadsides and trails, and in roadway medians, parks, and open spaces, and generally strive to improve pollinator habitat.

PRD, Solid Waste Department (SWD), Department of Arts & Culture (DAC), and the Department of Municipal Development (DMD) are City departments that have the most role in pollinator habitat.

- DMD's standard designs and procedure for vegetation along road/street projects is to utilize native plants, which support pollinators. DMD's Green Stormwater Infrastructure projects incorporate native plants (e.g. the recent Morningside GSI project).
- SWD/Clean Cities maintains street medians and a variety of other spaces in the City. SWD plants medians with native plants that support pollinators and also has an extensive and innovative program to plant wildflower beds on medians. This program now has 173 wildflower bed locations across the City. See map.
- DAC has made a major commitment to pollinator conservation, including through establishment of seven significant pollinator exhibits and demonstration gardens at BioPark facilities (Zoo, Botanic Garden, and Tingley Beach). The BioPark also support conservation of the rare Nokomis silverspot butterfly and the endangered Sacramento Mountain checkerspot butterfly by growing host and nectar plants the greenhouses and in the Botanic Garden. See summary.
- PRD's network of parks, trails, open space and other green spaces function as key pollinator habitat in the City. Park landscape projects all utilize native plant species that support pollinators, and PRD grows pollinator-friendly plants at the PRD greenhouse. In addition to core park and buffer landscaping, PRD has been adding special pollinator garden areas to parks as opportunities arise and funding allows. For example, PRD has

recently established pollinator gardens at Cutler Park, Quigley Park, and Altura Park; others are planned. PRD also has been mixing in more clover to grass/turf areas in order to provide more benefit to pollinators. In addition, the City's 30,000+ acres of Major Public Open Space provide essential pollinator habitat, and PRD continues to protect more, with several hundred acres added to the open space network over the past few years. PRD has been an active participant in the "River for Monarchs" initiative, and planted a special pollinator meadow in the Bosque.

Section 3. That the Parks and Recreation Department, ABQ BioPark, and Environmental Health Department will coordinate with other city departments, other entities, and stakeholders to conduct outreach and education efforts to enhance pollinator awareness, health, and habitat.

- The DAC/BioPark's Strategic Conservation Framework has identified plant and pollinator biodiversity as a key programmatic focus for local conservation work, and aims to increase awareness and local community action. As the most visited attraction in the state of New Mexico the ABQ BioPark is uniquely poised as the perfect place to engage with and educate guests on pollinators, native plant species, ecosystem services provided by pollinators, and how the community can support pollinator conservation. The BioPark's four facilities are living classrooms for onsite guests and also reach statewide audiences through outreach programming. The BioPark's pollinator efforts combine exhibit-based education, public habitat creation, and community science, making it a central player in Albuquerque's pollinator protection network. See summary.
- The Environmental Health Department (EHD) provides information to the public about urban wildlife, bees and other pollinators, conserving and protecting pollinators, and integrated pest management (IPM). Education occurs via the City website and significant amount of public outreach throughout the year at events.
- PRD supports a variety of pollinator-related education efforts, and has expanded those in several ways. Numerous Open Space programs geared for all ages incorporate information about pollinators. OSD web pages have information about Burque Bee City USA and pollinators. Open Space sponsors an annual Pollinator Day in conjunction with numerous community partners that celebrates bees, butterflies and the ecosystems that pollinators. (This year's event is June 17, 2026.) Education signage has been added to parks with pollinator gardens. PRD is in the third year of a successful partnership with the non-profit "Think Like a Bee" (TLAB) to support the "Pollinators in the Neighborhood" program. This program includes plant giveaway/education events around the City. Plants and seeds are procured and/or PRD provides greenhouse space so volunteers can propagate plants; over 13,000 plants were distributed as part of the 2025 program. This included six plant giveaways touching 10 neighborhoods + portions of the South Valley, plus plants and materials were provided to 13 schools and other community spaces and organizations. TLAB gave out 660 pollinator kits (a 31% increase

over 2024). PRD also collaborates with other conservation and education organizations that support pollinator habitat and education, including the New Mexico Backyard Refuge Program (NM ByR), which is a partnership between Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation District, the Friends of Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge, and Valle de Oro NWR that encourages public and private landowners to create wildlife habitats in their outdoor spaces, such as yards, patios, and balconies. Participants can certify their spaces to support local wildlife while receiving resources and recognition for their efforts, and providing valuable data on habitat connectivity for pollinators and birds. This fosters urban green space on public and private land that provides habitat for local and migrating wildlife, spreads knowledge about conservation and local wildlife habitats, and ultimately increases biodiversity in the region by creating a mosaic of wildlife habitats throughout communities.

Section 4. That the City, through coordinated efforts of its departments, will encourage and participate in studies and research on the health of native pollinators and their habitats.

- PRD participated in a scientific study conducted by Xerces Society in 2022 that looked at the presence of pesticides in host plants at sites around the City. This data was published in 2025.
- EHD is collaborating with UNM for arbovirus testing and insecticide resistance work.
 - Expanding surveillance in FY27 and FY28 related to funding from DOH
 - Arbovirus surveillance allows program to make treatment decisions based on virus (West Nile and St. Louis encephalitis) activity in the community.

Section 5. That the City, through coordinated efforts of its departments, will develop a plan for mapping pollinator habitats throughout the city with the intention of identifying opportunities to create and enhance pollinator pathways.

- SWD's medians and wildflower beds are mapped, as are PRD's green spaces and other City properties. Other entities, such as NM ByR, are also mapping pollinator habitat.
- Since some private landowners may be sensitive about sharing property data with the City, PRD is collaborating with NM ByR to integrate pollinator habitat on City land with their mapping platform. This project is being coordinated by a UNM graduate student and is getting underway in 2026.
- EHD continues to take "no spray" requests from the public via 311. Two of the reasons for the requests include bees and pollinator gardens. These are mapped and allow us to make more informed treatment decisions. This data will also be integrated into overall pollinator maps.

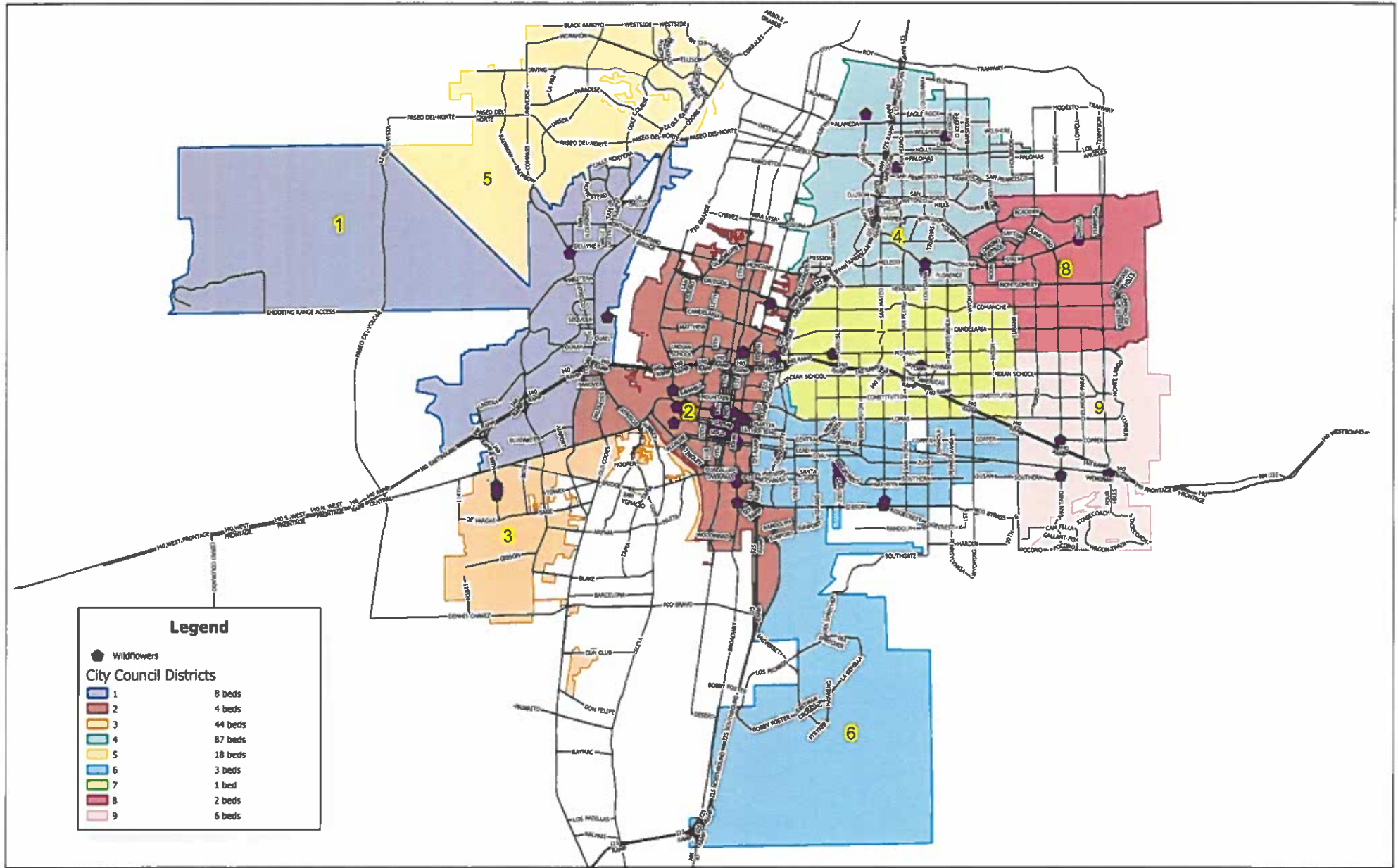
Section 6. That the City will utilize integrated pest management techniques and best management practices that comply with industry standards set by agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency, Centers for Disease Control, and American Mosquito Control Association; and will follow best practices related to pollinator conservation in creating Integrated Pest and Pollinator Management Plans.

- City departments that have management operations in this issue area follow applicable local, state, and federal law and use best practices for IPM/IPPM.
- EHD's program continues to be based in integrated mosquito management (IMM), and when selecting and performing mosquito control activities, EHD takes care to protect pollinators (product type, application times, application rates, etc.)
- EHD completed wide-area larvicide spraying (WALS) field trial during the summer of 2025 using a pollinator friendly product (VectoBac WDG) to gauge effectiveness on *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes, but also West Nile vector *Culex* spp.
-
- PRD is partnering with the Xerces Society to do an IPPM training for City staff on June 4, 2026.

Section 7. That the City will report annually to the City Council on community efforts that have been accomplished in the previous year to enhance pollinator awareness, health, and habitat.

- This will be accomplished regularly going forward.

Wildflower Bed Locations



ABQ BioPark Pollinator Update 2026

Pollinators, Native Plants, and Education Programming to Support Conservation Efforts and Bee City USA Standards

The ABQ BioPark is committed to providing education programming that fosters meaningful connections between people and nature and enhances pollinator awareness.

The BioPark’s Strategic Conservation Framework has identified plant and pollinator biodiversity as a key programmatic focus for local conservation work, and aims to increase awareness and local community action. As the most visited attraction in the state of New Mexico the ABQ BioPark is uniquely poised as the perfect place to engage with and educate guests on pollinators, native plant species, ecosystem services provided by pollinators, and how the community can support pollinator conservation. The BioPark’s four facilities are living classrooms for onsite guests and also reach statewide audiences through outreach programming.

The BioPark’s pollinator efforts combine exhibit-based education, public habitat creation, and community science, making it a central player in Albuquerque’s pollinator protection network.

Formal Programming

The BioPark’s formal programming provides opportunities for all ages to learn about and engage with pollinators. We offer a variety of programming to incorporate conservation messaging and action into all that we do. Formal programming is led by staff and supported by volunteers. Many formal programs involve community partners in their execution and planning. Examples of opportunities for audiences to engage with pollinator conservation are listed below.

Program Name	Program Description and Targeted Audience
Pollinator Discovery Day (Annual)	Pollinator Discovery Day at the Botanic Garden takes place every June. Hands-on activities are included with admission and engage guests of all ages with native pollinators, their place in the environment, and their importance. This event is heavily supported by community partners as well as the BioPark education staff and volunteers.
Blooming with Pride (Annual)	Blooming with Pride is an adults-only sensory-friendly event at the Botanic Gardens. This ticketed event focuses on connecting people to nature and includes activities on understanding color, mimicry, and the importance of biodiversity in our pollinators and plant life.
Discover the BioPark: All About Bugs (Reoccurring)	Discover the BioPark is our school and group-based programming that offers on-grounds and outreach programs. Typically geared towards K-12 students, these programs cover a variety of topics, using live animals and animal artifacts to engage with students. All About Bugs is one of the program choices available and features pollinators and their importance.

Camp BioPark (Reoccurring)	Camp BioPark involves students in week-long environmental education and conscientious stewardship. Pollinator-focused activities include planting native species, touring the BUGarium and Heritage Farm, pollinator trivia, pollinator scavenger hunts, and crafts and discovery stations. Camp BioPark is for students grades K-9.
Urban Wildlife Fiesta (Annual)	Urban Wildlife Fiesta is an education program for all ages and included with admission to the BioPark. This program focuses on a variety of local flora and fauna, how to safely interact with them, and the best ways to take action for local wildlife conservation. Local pollinators and native plants are one of the areas highlighted in this event.
Roar and Snore (2026)	Roar and Snore is a sleepover at the Zoo that is open to Girl Scout troops. Girl Scouts participate in fun hands-on educational activities with an annual theme. The 2026 focus will be on pollinators, both locally and globally.
Harvest Festival (Annual)	Harvest Festival activities focus on food production, reliance on pollinators, and plant conservation. Guests at this annual Botanic Garden event can make seed balls with native seeds, visit discovery stations on food production, and learn about local cultural traditions in agricultural practices. All activities are included with event admission.
Homeschool Day at the Botanic Garden (Annual)	This homeschool program focuses on pollinators, native plant species, and how the two work together to create and sustain biodiverse ecosystems. Homeschool Programs are open to students K-12 and their families.
Homeschool Day at the Heritage Farm (Annual)	This homeschool program focuses on the importance of pollination in food production and the diversity of pollinators and the flowering plants that rely on them. Homeschool programs are open to students K-12 and their families.
Evening Garden Walks (Reoccurring)	Evening Walks are guided tours of the Botanic Gardens that focus on the importance of plant biodiversity, wildlife, pollination, and the need for conservation efforts to maintain species populations. Family and adults-only tours are available.

Informal Programming

Informal programming is led by ABQ BioPark education staff, animal care staff, horticulture staff, and BioPark volunteers. Informal programming is accessible to all guests at the BioPark and is intentionally designed to be appropriate for an all-ages audience. All informal programming is reoccurring.

Program Type	Program Description
BioPark Connections	BioPark Connections are scheduled opportunities for guests to engage with horticulture and animal care staff. BioPark connections at the Botanic Gardens feature pollinators, the importance of native species, and biodiversity.
Discovery Stations	Discovery stations are education stations that use games, biofacts, and activities to engage guests in learning on site. There are several stations at the Botanic Garden devoted to pollinators, ecosystem services, native plants and wildlife, and plant/pollinator biodiversity.

	Some discovery stations are specifically designed to be held in the BUGarium and Pollinator Pavilion.
Volunteer led tours	BioPark volunteers will lead tours throughout the gardens. Popular tour topics include native plants, ecosystem services of pollinators and the Curandera garden.
Story Time	Story time is designed for younger audiences. Story time in the Botanic Garden features books about pollinators and local wildlife. Education messages are emphasized through the use of puppets and biofacts.

Volunteer Services

The ABQ BioPark education department is supported by approximately 300 volunteers in addition to several hundred additional community volunteers. Most volunteers serve the community, but several opportunities for volunteers include conservation work that are not open to the general public. Details on volunteer-only programs that focus on pollinators and native habitats are listed below.

Volunteer Program	Program Description
Nature's Notebook	Nature's notebook is a volunteer-led phenology study, focusing on areas of the Cottonwood Gallery at the Botanic Garden. This community science project tracks seasonal changes to wildlife and native plants, including pollinators. The data is recorded in a national database supporting the Nature's Notebook program.
Seed Cleaning	In partnership with the Center for Species Survival: New Mexico, BioPark volunteers clean native plant seeds and support seed banking to preserve plant and pollinator biodiversity in New Mexico.
Teen Volunteer Field Trips	Summer teen volunteers take field trips to visit local ecosystems with subject matter experts in entomology and botany, learning about field work, field studies, and local pollinators and wildlife.
Dia del Rio	Over the past five years as part of the annual Dia del Rio event at Tingley Beach, volunteers and BioPark staff have planted dozens of trees and hundreds of pollinator habitat grasses and perennials, creating a pollinator corridor in a part of the city which has been identified by Xerces Society and Planet Geo as landscape-deficient.

Exhibits and Demonstration Gardens

The **Pollinator Pavilion** at the Botanic Garden features native butterflies and moths, along with native and exotic plants that support all life stages of these animals. Interpretation panels explain pollinators' role in food production, their life cycles, and how to create pollinator-friendly backyards. An education table allows hands-on learning led by BioPark staff. The seasonal Pollinator Pavilion will open in late May 2026.

The **BUGarium** will open at the Botanic Garden in mid-summer 2026 after an extensive renovation. Exhibits feature the diversity of arthropods, including those unique to the desert southwest. Messaging focuses on the important role played by bugs in every ecosystem with the goal of inspiring respect and understanding for these essential animals. Bees and other pollinators are prominently featured.

Just outside the BUGarium, the **dragonfly pond landscape** is a teaching garden centered on pollen, nectar, and host plants for beneficial insects, including pollinators. The pollinator-friendly plants extend towards the Pollinator Pavilion creating a diverse native plant pathway that supports a variety of insect feeding behaviors.

The BioPark has established a **one-acre pollinator garden and a one-acre native plant garden at Tingley Beach**, a free public park, with interpretive messaging in English and Spanish. These gardens highlight pollinator habitats and integrated pest management (IPM) and provide tips for home gardeners. These gardens were created with a New Mexico Department of Agriculture grant with help from Ancestral Lands, BioPark volunteers and Rocky Mountain Youth Corps.

Since 2024, the BioPark has partnered with the Friends of the Valle de Oro to develop **150 plant labels at the Botanic Garden** that link to information about creating backyard habitat and supporting native plant and pollinator conservation. BioPark horticulturalists grew native perennials that were distributed at the Gutierrez-Hubble House for the Backyard Refuge Day celebration.

The **Desert Gardens Conservation Path** at the Botanic Garden is home to native endangered plants, including the New Mexico penstemon. These plants increase host plant and seed bank availability for the endangered Sacramento Mountain checkerspot butterfly.

A ½ acre outdoor **browse garden** and a portion of the BioPark's greenhouse provides forage for BUGarium and Pollinator Pavilion residents plus browse material and seed bank deposits for the Sacramento Checkerspot. The browse garden was cultivated in partnership with Ancestral Lands.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program

Including use of beneficial and biological pest control in the conservatories and greenhouses, BioPark Horticulture operated through an Integrated Pest Management program for Pollinators. We use natural deterrents/ repellents such as sage, garlic, alliums, thyme, and other fragrant herbs in our High Desert Rose garden, mechanical removal for pests like bagworms when possible, and targeted timed spray with the least aggressive chemical available when absolutely necessary.

As part of IPM management for our closed-system collections, we are using beneficial insects to control harmful insects. This reduces cost in labor and helps us avoid costly and potentially damaging sprays of insecticides in the Collections Greenhouse or in areas where the public could be exposed. We rely on lacewings for aphid control as well as assassin bugs. We also make use of predatory mites to help control the two spotted spider mites. In the Desert and Mediterranean Conservatories, we use mealy bug destroyers, which are a kind of lady bug. Since the Collections Greenhouse is only sprayed with horticultural oil as an occasional treatment, we have already observed reproduction of beneficial insects in the greenhouse including *Aphidoletes* wasps (a parasitic wasp used to control aphids), lady bug larvae and lacewing eggs.

Supporting New Mexico Pollinator Conservation

The BioPark partners with the New Mexico BioPark Society (NMBPS) to support conservation of the rare Nokomis silverspot butterfly and the endangered Sacramento Mountain checkerspot butterfly. Host and

nectar plants are grown in the greenhouses and in the Botanic Garden. Field observers take these plants to the native range habitats to attract butterflies for observation.

The BioPark and NMBPS also promote and encourage community engagement with the New Mexico Butterfly Monitoring Network in order to contribute to the body of scientific knowledge about our state's pollinators.

Through the Center for Species Survival: New Mexico, the NMBPS contributes to IUCN Red List assessments for threatened invertebrate pollinators, including fireflies, butterflies and moths. This work informs conservation planning and supports ex-situ conservation efforts.