

September 3, 2018

Mayor and Council members,

Everyone had great hopes for the Monarch Butterfly Habitat Management and Implementation Plans and what we got is very disappointing. The number one goal of the Implementation Plan should be the preservation and improvement of the habitat. Instead of maintaining, replacing, and improving the eucalyptus groves this plan is more interested in the removal of trees and the public use of the Ellwood Mesa Monarch Butterfly Habitat.

The Monarch Butterfly Habitat is an important and valuable environmental resource to be preserved and is not for the entertainment of the public. Public safety should be maintained by keeping the public from any area that might present a safety threat.

One of the worst parts of the Monarch Butterfly Habitat Management and Implementation Plans is that the Public Works Department has been given the responsibility for most of the Monarch Butterfly Habitat Management and Implementation Plans. This is placing the very people who tried to cut down 100's of eucalyptus trees in charge of their care. The plans should be the responsibility of the Planning and Environmental Review Department with any work done by Public Works staff or qualified contractors.

There is not enough Council and public review of the actions of staff in implementing the plan. Too many inappropriate and unapproved actions have been taken that damaged the habitat in the last two years. There needs to be better protections put in place to stop tree removal and pruning without Council review.

The plans are weak without specific protections for the butterflies and trees. There is far too much use of the wording "managed, as feasible", which further weakens the plans. There are no protections in these plans to keep a large number of trees from being cut down at any time without the Council's or public's knowledge or approval.

There seems to be a continuing push from staff to restore eucalyptus trees with native plants, not eucalyptus trees. At the workshop the public strongly supported any restoration to be with the more appropriate eucalyptus trees.

There is also too much emphasis on clearing understory and removing fallen trees which are much needed by the other wildlife in the groves. I see this as no improvement or very little over current flawed plans.

I am concerned that the plans fail to adequately protect our special eucalyptus trees and Monarch butterflies. The plans need to concentrate on the butterflies, eucalyptus trees, and all wildlife including birds. This is a very special habitat that needs very special protection and care and these two documents don't treat it with adequate care.

Barbara