



Publication

Olathe's Pollinator Prairie offers safe haven for butterflies to do important work

For the past six years, Pollinator Prairie in Olathe, Kan. has provided food and safe shelter for dozens of pollinator-dependent species, in particular monarch butterflies. In the 1960s, this land was the site for Chemical Commodities Inc., (CCI) a chemical brokerage and recycling facility where toxic substances spilled or leaked into the soil and groundwater, requiring a comprehensive remediation program. Beginning in 2003, Boeing, a former CCI customer, partnered with the Environmental Protection Agency and members of the local community to implement cleanup of the site.

In 2012, the land was returned to the community for use. In the six years since, several business and community organizations, including Monarch Watch, Pollinator Partnership, and the Wildlife Habitat Council, have collaborated to create an ecological habitat on the previously hazardous property.

Jennifer Kingston is a geological engineer with Haley & Aldrich, one of Pollinator Prairie's industry partners. Since 2012, Kingston has been integral in the development and growth of the site.

"In order to give this land back to the community, we worked with several groups to design the green space that became these beautiful gardens," Kingston said. "This site is on the flight path for 90 percent of monarchs migrating to

Mexico, and these groups helped us choose the right plants to benefit them on their migration.”

[Read more](#) about Pollinator Prairie and Haley & Aldrich’s role in its redevelopment in The Kansas City Star.