

National Wildlife Federation Habitat Management Plan

Community Name (City, State)

Insert date here

Right click and select “INSERT PICTURE” to include picture from community

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	2
About the National Wildlife Federation and Taylor Morrison Partnership.....	2
About [name of community; exec summary - habitat notables].....	2
Overview of Certified Areas.....	2
Map of Community with Certified Areas Noted.....	2
MAINTENANCE STRATEGIES.....	2
General Maintenance Strategies.....	2
Habitat Open Space.....	4
Monarch Habitat/Pollinator Garden.....	7
Nature Play Space™.....	10
Appendix A: Placement of National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitat Signs in Taylor Morrison Habitats.....	17
Appendix B: Concept Drawings for Nature Play Space™.....	18
Appendix C: Engineering Specs Contact (reference/links).....	19
Appendix D: Construction Documents for Nature Play Space™.....	20
Appendix E: Checklist for Hiring a Landscape Maintenance Contractor and Maintaining Certification.....	21
ATTACHMENTS.....	26
Division Native Plant List.....	26
Division Do Not Plant List.....	26
Tropical Milkweed Fact Sheet (Use FL fact sheet for FL communities).....	26

Please contact tmhabitats@nwf.org for questions on maintenance and management.

For more information on wildlife habitats and certification, visit nwf.org/garden and for more information on monarchs, visit <https://www.nwf.org/Monarch-Butterfly>.

INTRODUCTION

About the National Wildlife Federation and Taylor Morrison Partnership

The National Wildlife Federation and Taylor Morrison, Inc. are teaming up to restore and protect wildlife habitat in the homebuilder's communities nationwide. Together we will engage staff, residents and the public in accessible and effective wildlife habitat stewardship and conservation.

The purpose of the National Wildlife Federation certification for Taylor Morrison communities is to improve and preserve these critical natural areas for the benefit of wildlife and to enhance the enjoyment of residents and the community's sense of pride and ownership. This plan is designed for Habitat Land Managers, Taylor Morrison staff, homeowners association staff and maintenance contractors.

About [name of community; exec summary - habitat notables]

[insert here]

Overview of Certified Areas

[insert here; should be simple sentence or two of the number of certified areas]

Map of Community with Certified Areas Noted

[insert here]

MAINTENANCE STRATEGIES

General Maintenance Strategies

Taylor Morrison habitats provide wildlife with food, water, cover, and places to raise their young. Managing these habitats sustainably will ensure that it is attractive and healthy for wildlife, plants, and people.

Once established, new plantings are designed to be drought tolerant and low-maintenance. However, it's important to note that there's no such thing as a maintenance-free landscape and the habitats will require regular inspections and seasonal maintenance.

- Refer to your community's plant lists and weed identification guides to help you distinguish between intentional plants and invasive or unwanted plants (weeds). Do not plant invasive plant species. Group plants with similar needs (water, sun, etc.) for easier maintenance.
- Do not use weed barriers when installing native plants to ensure that plants can spread over time.
- Prevent erosion by maintaining vegetative cover and/or mulch, correcting drainage problems.

- Water plants regularly until fully established (2-3 seasons), especially during warm temperatures in the first season. Limit water use after plants are established.
- Manage the habitats using organic practices; always identify the pests before using any treatments. Chemical pesticides and non-organic fertilizers should never be used!
- Refer to your county or state's wetlands management regulations for specific guidelines to manage open water and wetlands habitats.

Please find maintenance strategies and a checklist for each certified habitat site below.

TEMPLATE

Natural Open Space™

[Insert photo]

Habitat Types

Check all that apply:

- Woodlands
- Meadow/Grasslands
- Wetlands (Forested Wetland, Swamp, Marsh, Emergent/Seasonal Wetland)
- Open Water

Description







[Insert description of notable features and observed wildlife/plants]






Plant List

Find a full list of plant species below. [Please add a plant list below or a larger inventory as an attachment]




Maintenance Checklist - Natural Open Space





Regularly/Monthly

	HABITAT TYPE	TASK	DESCRIPTION
<input type="checkbox"/>	All Habitats	 REMOVE	Remove litter from natural areas and pathways.
<input type="checkbox"/>	All Habitats	 INSPECT	Inspect plants for damage and dieback.
<input type="checkbox"/>	All Habitats	 REMOVE	Remove non-native plants from all habitats.
<input type="checkbox"/>	All Habitats	 CLEAN	Clean bird feeders regularly (approximately once every two weeks). Scrub off debris and use a diluted bleach solution to prevent the spread of disease.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Grasses & Herbaceous Perennials/ Meadows	<u>MOW!</u>  DO NOT MOW	Mow an edge of no more than 2 feet along pathways. Inspect area before mowing to check for wildlife such as turtles or small mammals. <u>Do NOT mow</u> during periods when ground-nesting birds are breeding and building nests, no mowing before March - September 15 (check local guidelines)

	HABITAT TYPE	TASK	DESCRIPTION
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Trees & Shrubs/ Woodlands	PROTECT	Install fencing or cages around saplings or newly planted trees and shrubs to protect them from browsing by wildlife.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Trees & Shrubs/ Woodlands	 LEAVE	Standing dead trees are known as “snags” and provide cover or serve as a nesting site for a variety of wildlife species. Leave snags standing in the habitat unless they pose a hazard to people. To reduce their danger to people, remove the upper limbs and leave the trunk.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Trees & Shrubs/ Woodlands	 LEAVE	Leave rotting logs and woody debris in the habitat; they provide cover for many wildlife species, including insects, birds, turtles, and small mammals. Consider gathering fallen branches to create a brush pile.

Yearly/Seasonally

	TASK	DESCRIPTION
Spring		
<input type="checkbox"/>	 SEED/PLANT	Reseed or plant native grasses and herbaceous perennials in gaps in the habitat.
Summer		
<input type="checkbox"/>	 WATER	Check soil moisture and water plants during prolonged dry spells.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 INSPECT	Inspect bird baths and water dishes; refill with fresh water.

Fall		
<input type="checkbox"/>	 LEAVE	Leave the leaves: do not remove leaf litter from open space habitats. Fallen leaves add nutrients to the soil as they break down and provide sources of food and cover to wildlife. In addition, many animals overwinter in leaf litter, including lizards, box turtles, butterflies, and moths.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 LEAVE	Leave grasses, plant stems, leaves, and seed heads on plants, do not cut back or remove . These plant materials provide food, cover, and nesting sites for insects and other wildlife species during fall and winter.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 SEED/PLANT	Reseed or plant grasses and herbaceous perennials in gaps in the habitat.
Winter		
<input type="checkbox"/>	 CLEAN	Nesting boxes can be cleaned out at the end of the season when there is no longer any breeding activity. Remove the nesting material and scrub the inside with a mild detergent and water.

Monarch Habitat/Pollinator Garden

[insert photo]

Description

[insert descriptions]

Plant List and Design [if available]

Find a full list of plant species and monarch design [if available] below.





General Maintenance Strategies


The monarch habitat/pollinator gardens provide butterflies and their caterpillars with the necessary elements of habitat to survive and reproduce: food, water, cover, and places to raise their young. The garden is planted with a mix of native grasses and flowering perennials, including native milkweed species, and is designed to feature blooms throughout the growing season. Once established, the plantings are drought tolerant and low-maintenance. However, it's important to note that there's no such thing as a maintenance-free garden and the plantings will require regular inspections and seasonal maintenance.

- Refer to your community's plant lists and weed identification guides to help you distinguish between intentional plants and unwanted plants (weeds).
- Water plants regularly until fully established, especially during warm temperatures in the first season.
- The garden also includes **water sources**: puddling areas and puddling dishes for butterflies. These are easy to maintain. For the puddling areas, simply keep them moist and don't allow standing water to pool up, which will attract mosquitoes.
- **Eliminate the use of synthetic pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers in the monarch habitat/pollinator garden.** Non-chemical, organic gardening practices ensure that the Monarch Habitat/Pollinator Garden is a healthy, safe place for wildlife, families, and pets.












Maintenance Checklist - Monarch Demonstration Garden





Regularly/Monthly

	TASK	DESCRIPTION
<input type="checkbox"/>	 REMOVE	Remove debris and litter from planting beds and pathways.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 INSPECT	Inspect plants and gardens for damage, dieback, and weeds.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 HAND REMOVE	Remove non-native and unwanted plants ("weeds") from the garden beds by hand.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 INSPECT	Inspect butterfly puddling areas; don't allow standing water to pool up.

	TASK	DESCRIPTION
<input type="checkbox"/>	 WATER	Check soil moisture and water plants during prolonged dry spells.

Yearly/Seasonally

	TASK	DESCRIPTION
Spring		
<input type="checkbox"/>	 PRUNE	Once the spring temperatures have consistently reached 50 degrees or above, cut back perennials and ornamental grasses to approximately 12 inches.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 INSPECT	Inspect and test the irrigation system, if applicable.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 DIVIDE	Divide perennials and native grasses; replant to fill in gaps throughout the garden.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 REMOVE	Remove non-native and unwanted plants (weeds) from the garden beds.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 PLANT	Replace any native plants or shrubs that do not emerge from winter freeze.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 PLANT	Add annual flowering plants to the garden for color, if desirable.
Summer		
<input type="checkbox"/>	 WATER	Water plants during prolonged dry periods.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 REMOVE	Remove non-native and unwanted plants. Plants grow vigorously during summer months, be sure to remove weeds by hand before they reproduce.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 INSPECT	Inspect butterfly puddling areas.
Fall		
<input type="checkbox"/>	 DIVIDE	Divide perennials and native grasses; replant to fill in gaps throughout the garden.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 REMOVE	Continue to remove non-native and unwanted plants from the garden by hand.

	TASK	DESCRIPTION
<input type="checkbox"/>	 LEAVE	Leave grasses, plant stems, leaves, and seed heads in the garden, do not cut back or remove . These plant materials provide food, cover, and nesting sites for insects and other wildlife species during fall and winter.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 SEED/PLANT	Reseed or plant grasses and herbaceous perennials in gaps in the habitat.
Winter		
<input type="checkbox"/>	 INSPECT	Inspect plantings during their dormant period. Allow grasses, perennials, and plant material to remain in the garden through winter.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 INSPECT	Inspect garden infrastructure and schedule any maintenance projects.

TEMPLATE

Nature Play Space™

[insert photo]

Description

[insert description]

Design

[insert concept design]

General Maintenance

Nature Play Space™ environments are living places, dynamic, and ever changing. They are subject to wear and tear and require consistent care, inspections, and maintenance to allow children to safely engage with them. Securing ongoing maintenance for the Nature Play Spaces should be included in the project overall planning. Items will need to be updated or replaced over time. Maintenance plans and schedules, risk-benefit assessments, inspection programs, maintenance records, and evaluation and reviews can support the maintenance of Nature Play Spaces. The following are typical materials found throughout Nature Play Spaces. Refer to the list below for considerations for what to expect and recommendations for care.

Disclaimer: Playground materials and equipment warranties and maintenance provided by the manufacturer to Taylor Morrison.

Certified Safety Playground Inspections

Play Equipment

Please refer to repair information and warranty from manufacturer: [insert link to manufacturer(s)]

Materials Checklist







Check all that apply:



- Canvas
- Concrete
- Earth
- Fabric and Textile
- Fine Crushed Stone
- Lumber
- Metal
- Mulch
- Natural Play Equipment
- Rock and Stone
- Rubber
- Sand
- Water Features

Signage

Maintenance Checklist - Nature Play Space

Regularly/Monthly

	TASK	DESCRIPTION
<input type="checkbox"/>	 ROUTINE VISUAL INSPECTIONS	Identification of hazards from vandalism, use or weather conditions. Inspect surfaces, structures, and pathways for conditions that may harm children, including sharp edges, splinters, and trip hazards. Make sure poured in place (PIP) surfacing is intact. Look out for tripping hazards, like exposed concrete footings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 OPERATIONAL INSPECTION	Inspect surfaces, structures, and pathways for damage or deterioration. Assess whether materials can be repaired or patched, or must be replaced. Check that protective surfacing extends at least 6 feet in all directions from play equipment as recommended by the landscape architects, suppliers, or installers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 ANNUAL INSPECTION	Technical check of equipment or features for long-term wear. This can be carried out by an independent specialist (Certified Playground Safety Inspector - CPSI).
<input type="checkbox"/>	 PLANTS & VEGETATION	Tree maintenance requirements should be based on arborist advice. Inspection of plant material for pest and disease control. Annual pruning - timing and type dependent on variety for trees and shrubs. Ornamental grasses should only be trimmed in early spring. Leave the dried seed heads on plants during fall and winter. Leave the leaves!
<input type="checkbox"/>	 CLEAN	Periodically rinse off or clean surfaces, structures, and materials.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 REPLENISH	Make sure surfaces around playground equipment are maintained with required minimum of wood chips, mulch, sand, pea gravel or mats made of safety-tested rubber or rubber-like materials per playground manufacturer recommendations. Replenish or refill mulch, sand, soil, or compost if used in garden beds, pathways, or digging areas.

	TASK	DESCRIPTION
<input type="checkbox"/>	 REAPPLY	Reapply paint or sealant to surfaces and materials, as needed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	 PLANTS & GREEN SPACE	(See Open Space Habitat and Monarch Habitat/Pollinator Garden Maintenance above for maintenance.)

Nature Play Space: Maintenance Issues

Grass / Meadows

Where it may be found in the Nature Play Space: *mounds, grass slopes, long grass, meadows.*

- Hand mower or trimmer may be needed pending the slopes
- Long grass areas / Meadow areas only need to be mowed two times a year. Patterns can be mowed into the grass to create a pathway or maze.
- Inspect and remove any trash or debris.
- Inspection of any signs to communicate to the users and the community the appearance.

Water

Where it may be found in the Nature Play Space: *sand play areas, dry river beds, big puddles, irrigation bubblers or drip irrigation systems, pumps or water wells, manufactured equipment that sprays, squirts or otherwise supplies water.*

- Inspecting any equipment and the surrounding areas.
- Making sure water pumps work and water sumps are not clogged with debris.
- Pending location, water may need to be blown out so it does not freeze.
- Allow for the cost of water supply.
- Drainage connection; water pumps, etc. (Manufacturer’s guidance should be followed.) Maintain drain outlets to prevent blocking and water build-up.

Concrete

Where it may be found in the Nature Play Space: *Primary paths, sidewalks, steps, retaining walls, concrete curbing/edging*

- Regularly sweep to keep clear of mulch, sand, and other debris.
- Wash to remove tough stains or dirt as needed. Can be hosed off, although keep an eye on local water restrictions.
- Over time concrete may need to be patched due to damage from freeze/thaw and wear.
- Depending on where it is in the play space, the intention may be for it to be painted, and a fresh coat will be necessary every few years.

- Keep clear of snow to mitigate melting and refreezing causing hazardous icy conditions, and to minimize the use of salt-based deicers which will harm adjacent planting beds. If it is necessary to treat ice, consider using sand instead.

Earth and mud play

Where it may be found in the Nature Play Space: **Earth and mud play**

A 50/50 blend of sand to peat moss, earth play offers a tactile experience different from sand, tends to drain more easily, and does not compact the same as sand. To make it more 'dirty' add 'mini' bark mulch to the surface and rake it in. Maintenance considerations for earth play digging areas are approached the same way as sand. Please see 'Sand' below.

Mud: Simply mix top soil with water. While mud play is a wonderful tactile experience for children, it needs to be intentionally planned and designed for. After all, if successful it makes a mess! For that reason, it may be reserved for special occasions as care providers need to coordinate with parents to provide a clean change of clothes that day.

Fine Crushed Stone

Where it may be found in the Nature Play Space: Paths, gathering areas, outdoor classrooms

Commonly used for ground surfacing in gathering areas and paths, fine crushed stone is an excellent material for durability, ease of maintenance, and permeability. Compacted properly, it is appropriate for ADA access, and in some cases larger perennials and trees can be planted in it directly.

- Overtime in less trafficked areas it will become necessary to hand-pull weeds.
- Fine crushed stone can be gently raked of debris.
- Replenish with a top-dressing as needed to maintain the ideal depth of 4".

Lumber

Where it may be found in the Nature Play Space: *Arbors, trellising and lattices, balance poles, benches, bridges, decks/stages, fencing, low bridges with ballerina bars, outdoor storage, pallets, pergolas, playhouses, pull-up rails, raised beds, shade structures, tables, wheeled toy storage*

Dimensioned lumber is such a versatile material, it is commonly used in Nature Play Spaces for constructing the wide array of settings and components listed above that need to be maintained for safety and longevity. Tropical hardwoods, typically harvested from non-sustainable sources, should be avoided. Black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) is a high-quality, dense, decay-resistant heartwood lumber, widely available in the U.S. that grows 20 to 40 percent faster than tropical hardwoods and offers a wide range of Nature Play

Space™ applications in rough sawn, dimensioned, and debarked/sanded form as both horizontal and vertical members. Other dimensional lumber commonly used is cedar or douglas fir; Cedar being known for its rot-resistance, and douglas fir being structurally sound.

Composite lumber such as Trex™ has long been used on horizontal surfaces such as decks and stages that are exposed to both weather and heavy use by children. The material is excellent but expensive. Fortunately, several types of treated lumber are available as an alternative, including thermally modified, polymerized, or acetylated lumber. With the care and attention, the life expectancy of treated lumber, especially in dry climates, can be similar to manufactured play equipment, 10 – 15 years. All wooden components should be free of sharp edges, sharp hardware, and splinters. Common pressure treated lumber should be additionally protected using a water-based sealant when used for raised planting beds or where children can have access. Below ground oil-based sealants may be used to slow the effects or moisture penetration and decay.

Metals

Where it may be found in the Nature Play Space: *Shade structures, sheds, pergolas, wheeled toys, acoustic and music play, kitchen play elements, fencing*

Similar to rock, stone, and concrete, metals in the Nature Play Space are durable and relatively maintenance free.

- Susceptible to rust, some metals may need to have a fresh coat of paint applied periodically.
- Make sure that fasteners don't have sharp snags, that they are inaccessible where possible, and not coming loose.
- Routinely check fencing and sheds for damage or safety hazards.

Mulch

Where it may be found in the Nature Play Space: *Fall and use zones, planting beds*

Mulch used for pathways can be similar to mulch used in garden beds, but for fall/use zones around climbing and play structures, licensing and play standards require at least 9" of playground mulch or engineered wood fiber. This can be found at a local landscape materials distributor, and/or some school districts may provide this at no cost to a school. For ADA accessibility, engineered wood fiber is specifically designed to allow for wheelchair access. In both instances of mulch used for paths or in use zones, landscape fabric should be used to discourage weed growth.

- Weeds may need to be pulled by hand.
- Replenish as necessary to maintain depth.

Natural Play Elements

Where it may be found in the Nature Play Space: *Natural loose parts, logs, log stumps, tree cookies*

Natural play elements are subject to organic processes of decay and breakdown. Typical life expectancy of wooden elements in the Nature Play Space is 10 years. Some natural loose parts are easiest to simply discard or compost where possible, switching them out for fresh, seasonal materials gathered from the nature play space. Logs and stumps can be set aside from tree work done on site, or acquired from a local tree company. To extend the life of wooden components such as logs, stumps, and materials used for natural construction, a water-based sealant or beeswax product should be applied.

- For safety, be sure to sand or bevel sharp edges.
- Keep an eye out for splintering components.
- Reapply sealant every couple of years. Follow manufacturer directions for use.

Plastic, PVC, & Composite Materials

Where it may be found in the Nature Play Space: *Acoustic panels, artificial turf, music & art walls, manufactured tunnels, outdoor storage, tables, loose parts, raised water play tables*

- Plastics in the Nature Play Space™ will break down over time due to exposure to the sun. Care should be taken to see that plastic elements are not brittle or beginning to splinter and crack.
- They can be easily washed and sanitized if needed, or simply rinsed off.

Rock and Stone

Where it may be found in the Nature Play Space: *Dry creek beds, boulders, stepping stones, flagstone patios or steppers, rock mulch*

- Rock and stone are some of the longer lasting materials in the nat, and are critical in achieving site naturalization. For childcare centers, boulders with a finish height greater than 18" from grade require a fall zone.
- Ensure that stepping stones or boulders are solidly placed, and do not wiggle when stepped on posing a risk hazard.
- While they have been standing the geologic test of time for ages and do not require much maintenance, rock and stone may periodically need to have dust and debris rinsed or leaves removed.
- Use rock mulch sparingly, it's hard on tools, and difficult to work around when planting.
- For areas serving very young children, consider smooth varieties for boulders.

Sand

Where it may be found in the Nature Play Space: *sand play, absorbing surfacing*

- To allow for easy digging, regular raking will help keep material 'fluffed' and clean.
- Digging areas should have high borders to help with containment, but inevitably the material will need to be replenished as it has a remarkable tendency to 'creep' beyond the setting.
- Maintain an ideal depth of 12" in toddler spaces, and a depth of 18" for ages Pre-K and up.
- Must drain properly, depending on the soil types or slopes.

Signage

Where it may be found in the Nature Play Space: *entrances, habitat gardens, or throughout space*

- All signage in the Nature Play Spaces should be regularly inspected for damage or graffiti. Ensure that the signs are not obstructed by vegetation or other structures in the Nature Play Space. Make notes of the condition of each sign during inspections.
- In general, signs should be cleaned approximately once per year, more frequently if the conditions in the Nature Play Space require it. Use a mild detergent and soft cloth or sponge to lightly scrub the surface.
- If the signs have been marked with graffiti, use traditional graffiti removal methods only after less-abrasive methods have been exhausted.
- If the signs are damaged beyond repair or the images or text on the panes have faded, they should be replaced.

Inappropriate Safety Surfacing

- Concrete
- Carpet not tested to ASTM F1292
- Blacktop / Asphalt
- Packed Earth / Dirt
- Grass
- CCA treated wood mulch

Appendix A: Placement of National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitat Signs in Taylor Morrison Habitats

The National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitat sign indicates that a landscape or garden has been officially certified as a National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitat® and that it provides the essential elements needed for healthy and sustainable wildlife habitats: food, water cover, and places for wildlife to raise their young.

Certified Wildlife Habitat signs can help create a sense of place and serve as a focal point in Taylor Morrison habitats. They can also foster a sense of pride and encourage community members to interact with the spaces and observe the relationships between people, plants, and wildlife.

Follow these guidelines to find the best placement of Certified Wildlife Habitat signs in Taylor Morrison landscapes.

DO

- Place signs near the front or edges of planting beds, visible to people passing by.
- Install signs in habitats where people can engage with the surroundings or gently interact with plants.
- Install signs in habitats that are visually appealing, near flowering perennials, low-growing grasses, or groundcovers.

DON'T

- Place signs near plants with foliage or flowers that will obscure the sign as the plant grows throughout the season.
- Install signs in the middle of a lawn or pathway.
- Place signs near equipment or large structures.
- Place signs in habitats with large gaps or unfinished sections.

Example of *effective* Certified Wildlife Habitat Sign Placement:



Example of *ineffective* Certified Wildlife Habitat Sign Placement:



Appendix B: Concept Drawings for Nature Play Space™

TEMPLATE

Appendix C: Engineering Specs Contact (reference/links)

TEMPLATE

Appendix D: Construction Documents for Nature Play Space™
(if available)

TEMPLATE

Appendix E: Checklist for Hiring a Landscape Maintenance Contractor and Maintaining Certification

Taylor Morrison and National Wildlife Federation (NWF) have teamed up to restore and protect wildlife habitat in Taylor Morrison communities nationwide. Together we are engaging staff, residents and the public in accessible and effective wildlife habitat stewardship and conservation.

All National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitats® provide food, water, cover, and places to raise their young. They must be sustainability maintained to enhance biodiversity, reduce their ecological footprint, and lower costs. Taylor Morrison communities will have at least one of the following certified spaces which will be outlined in their Homeowners Association (HOA) management and maintenance plan:

- Certified Monarch Habitat/Pollinator Garden
- Certified Natural Open Space™
- Certified Nature Play Space™
- Other natural areas and sustainability features to be maintained

The landscape management company plays a critical role in supporting the health and biodiversity of Taylor Morrison communities, especially these certified areas, and will be your partner in sustainability.

Before services are contracted:

Each HOA has created an actionable landscape management and maintenance plan based on the certified areas and other sustainability features of the community's landscapes. Please share HOA landscape management and maintenance plan with potential contractors.

In general, any landscape maintenance contractor should be well-versed in:

- Non-chemical (organic) management practices
- Maintenance of perennial native plants
- Water conservation methods
- Exotic and invasive species control

It's important that the landscape maintenance contractors are selected based on their:

- Understanding of the habitat features in your community
- General knowledge of native plants and ecology
- Alignment with the specific conservation practices and sustainable products

Use the following checklist to guide your interviews with prospective contractors.

1. Native Plants - Trees, Shrubs, Grasses, and Herbaceous Perennials

Because of their value to wildlife, native plants are the foundation of Taylor Morrison certified habitats. Native plants are required for the Taylor Morrison community to maintain certification as a habitat. The landscape contractors must incorporate organic maintenance practices and should have a general knowledge of native plants and weeds in your region. Refer to the HOA habitat management plan to find specific maintenance practices for each habitat type.

If new plants are installed, the landscape maintenance company must select native plants from the *Native Plant List* (attached) and avoid plants on the *Do Not Plant* list (attached) to select species.

Provide the landscaping company with guidelines for mowing, snow removal, pavement-to-soil ratios, weeding, watering, mulching, and use of native plant species.

Discuss the following considerations with the landscape contractors when discussing each habitat type:

Woodlands: Because of their size, long life, and positive impact on their environment, trees cannot be easily replaced. Therefore, they should be located where they will thrive for the long-term.

- The landscaping contractors must be able to assess tree health and must employ safety procedures when caring for trees. Do they understand proper planting and pruning techniques to ensure that trees stay healthy?**

Meadow/Grasslands: If certain plants dominate these habitats over time, they must be thinned to allow other species to spread and to ensure a diverse plant community. If gaps form in the landscape, these areas can be planted or re-seeded with plants listed in the Native Plant List (attached). Refer to the habitat management plan for specific mowing practices.

- The native grasses and herbaceous perennials that make up meadows and grassland sites should not be cut back or mowed after blooming and should be managed for wildlife. Do the landscaping contractors understand meadow and grassland mowing practices?**

Wetlands (Forested Wetland, Swamp, Marsh, Emergent/Seasonal Wetland): Refer to local regulations for specific wetland management practices.

- Are the landscaping contractors familiar with local wetland management regulations?**

Monarch Pledge and Gardens: The majority of the plants in the monarch gardens are herbaceous perennials, including native milkweed species, and should not be cut back or removed after blooming. Leave dried seed heads on the plants during fall and winter. These plants will attract butterflies and host plants will have caterpillars on them. If new plants are added to these habitats, the contractors should refer to the *Native Plant List* and the *Do Not Plant* list (attached) to select native species that will thrive in these sites. Knowledge of seasonal annuals that provide color and nectar.

- Are the landscaping contractors familiar with native milkweed species?**

2. Soil Health

SOIL STRUCTURE (soil amendments, compaction, compost, fertilizers, soil testing): Leave the Leaves! Soil structure and organic makeup impact the amount of water retention, permeability, water infiltration, drainage, and aeration needed to make plants grow. A soil test and amendments should be added to all new our revised planting area to improve the soil's physical properties.

- Are the landscaping contractors trained to understand comprehensive soil management services including fertilizer applications (when/if needed), amendments, composting, soil testing, and leaf management?**

3. Safety Requirements and Codes

Although your landscaper has probably worked in your region, no two properties are alike. Outline the specific organizational safety practices that must be maintained at your site. Include community-wide standards for your property in your plans.

- Are the landscaping contractors familiar with federal, regional, and community safety compliance mandates?**

4. Irrigation Systems

If your certified habitats have irrigation systems, be sure to communicate with the landscaping management company about how to maintain them efficiently. Describe the current irrigation methods and how you plan to conserve water and reduce waste; outline the methods used to monitor leaks and water flows. Which parts of your water system are managed remotely? What is your plan for irrigation system inspection and maintenance?

- Are the landscaping contractors familiar with the following water-saving practices and systems?**

- **Rain shut-off devices**
- **Flow sensors**
- **Automatic irrigation systems**
- **Low-flow emitters like drip and soaker systems**
- **Evapotranspiration-based controllers**
- **Low-water-use or drought-tolerant plants**
- **The management and re-use of stormwater**
- **Water loss and application times (city, county and town restrictions)**
- **Irrigation heads and pipes that maybe be leaking**

5. Recycling and Composting

It is important for the landscaping management practices to create as little impact as possible. Discuss or make plans for the landscaping contractors to recycle or dispose of waste and debris in an environmentally-friendly manner. If your property already has recycling policies, make sure the landscapers incorporate these practices into their plans.

- Are the landscaping contractors familiar with composting systems or reusing materials (mulch, rocks, logs, etc.), if applicable?**

6. Establishment Period Special Needs

Newly-installed plants require extra watering, weeding, and mulching in order to develop strong root systems and become established in landscapes. Weed barriers should never be used in these habitats to ensure that plants can spread out over time. This establishment period can take anywhere from two to five years, but if it's done well, the payoff will last for decades. Discuss the specific needs of plants, drainage, and community use with the landscaping company. Refer to the HOA habitat management plan to find specific maintenance practices for each habitat type.

- Do the landscaping contractors understand the different management practices of newly-established landscapes?**

7. Pest, Disease, and Weed Management

The certified habitats should be regularly monitored for pests, diseases and weeds. Many weeds or invasive species have few or no natural enemies to keep their populations in balance with the rest of the local ecosystem and will compete with native species for sunlight, water, and nutrients. The landscapers must first be able to correctly identify plants as weeds or invasives and then determine the best way to remove and dispose of them. They should keep a log of control methods and results. Pull weeds as soon as you recognize

them. It is best to remove weeds when they are small and before they flower or set seed. After weeds or invasives are removed, it is important to replant these areas with native species as soon as possible.

There will inevitably be some damage from pests and weeds in organically managed landscapes, so set your tolerance thresholds and plan your recourse once those thresholds are exceeded.

Herbicides and pesticides will not be used in certified monarch habitats, hand-weeding may be required until the garden is well-established.

- Are the landscaping contractors familiar with pests, diseases, and weeds and management strategies?**

TEMPLATE

ATTACHMENTS

Division Native Plant List

Division Do Not Plant List

Tropical Milkweed Fact Sheet (Use FL fact sheet for FL communities)

TEMPLATE