

## **Rainforest Trust and its Partners Protect Critical Habitat for Endangered Monarch Butterfly in Mexico, Surpassing 40 Million Acre Benchmark**

**WARRENTON, Va., Sept. 1, 2022**—Recently, [Rainforest Trust](#) partner [ProNatura Noreste](#) signed into protection the official designation of 1.3 million acres of habitat in Mexico, critical to the survival of the Endangered Monarch Butterfly. With designation of this landscape, Rainforest Trust has now protected more than 41 million acres of habitat to date. This 1.3 million acre corridor is a highly important area where critical migratory routes of the Endangered Monarch butterfly converge. The new reserve is part of a larger strategy to ensure conservation and connectivity between protected areas in the region, including the neighboring 1,853-acre Rainforest Trust-supported Regalo de Dios Voluntary Conservation Area (declared August 2019). This protected area intersects four Key Biodiversity Areas and will provide a fundamental corridor for 281 bird species, including the Yellow-headed Amazon (EN) and Maroon-fronted Parrot (EN).

The Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) is one of the most well-known and recognizable butterfly species. These insects have black and orange markings, and migrate each year from summer breeding grounds in the United States and Canada nearly 3,000 miles to Central Mexico and California during winter months. On July 21, 2022, the Monarch Butterfly was listed as Endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). This status change is driven by continued habitat destruction and climate change. Droughts are increasingly common, limiting the growth of milkweed while increasing the risk and frequency of wildfires. Greater temperature extremes trigger the butterflies' migration earlier, before milkweed is available.

To date, Rainforest Trust and partners have protected over 41.8 million acres of habitat—safeguarding more than 46 billion trees, 2,300 species, and 9 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents. More than 16 million of the acres protected are high integrity forest.

Officially incorporated on December 8, 1988, in its first decade Rainforest Trust safeguarded more than 200,000 acres of Latin America's irreplaceable ecosystems with landmark projects in Belize, Argentina and Venezuela. In 2002, the organization achieved its first multi-million-acre victory for both tropical conservation and indigenous rights. At its 25th anniversary in 2013, Rainforest Trust forged into Africa and Asia with new and exciting projects to protect the imperiled rainforests of Madagascar, Borneo and the Philippines. In 2018, Rainforest Trust celebrated its 30th Anniversary. With work in 49 countries with 151 local partners, the organization had already secured over 20 million acres through its vast network of conservation partners. Over three decades, Rainforest Trust saw incredible successes in a short time span. In 2022 alone Rainforest Trust protected more than three million acres—including projects in Ecuador, Brazil, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Mozambique, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Côte D'Ivoire, and Costa Rica.

Other newly established protected areas include:

Also in [Mexico](#), Rainforest Trust worked with Instituto para el Manejo y Conservación de la Biodiversidad, A.C. (INMACOB) to designate 24,147 acres of habitat for Endangered amphibian

species, including the Schultze's Stream Frog, and the Mourning Frog. This region is part of an ancestral Jaguar corridor stretching from the United States to Argentina.

In [Democratic Republic of the Congo \(DRC\)](#), Rainforest Trust worked with local partner Strong Roots to protect 636,308 acres of dense tropical rainforest. This landscape includes high altitude, dense tropical forest, and old-growth forests, known to hold significant quantities of carbon. Protection of this area will safeguard habitat for species like the Critically Endangered Grauer's Gorilla, Chimpanzees, and African Forest Elephants.

In [Indonesia](#), Rainforest Trust worked with Yayasan Adudu Nantu Internasional (YANI) to safeguard 15,340 acres, creating the Nantu Community Conservation Forest, and adding to the existing 127,289-acre Nantu Wildlife Sanctuary. Located within the northern peninsula of Indonesia's Sulawesi island, this area is critical habitat for Endangered Mountain and Lowland Anoa, Sulawesi Babirusa (VU), Heck's Macaque (VU), Snoring Rail (VU), and the Red-knobbed Hornbill (VU).

Studies show that protected areas are one of the most cost-effective ways to safeguard nature, vulnerable human populations, and climate—provided they are well-managed and respect the rights and needs of Indigenous populations and local communities. Strong working relationships with local partners is critical to Rainforest Trust's conservation work. Together, Rainforest Trust and its partners develop plans to establish and maintain protected areas that are based on science and best practices for each location. Ninety-nine percent of the forest area Rainforest Trust has protected remains standing post protection.

In September of 2021, Rainforest Trust made a \$500 million commitment to reverse biodiversity loss by 2030, joining the largest ever private funding commitment to biodiversity conservation. This pledge highlights the increasing importance of protected areas, and the role they play in the future of conservation, and species loss. The organization has protected more than 40 million acres since its inception and is well on its way to protecting 125 million additional acres of habitat by 2025.

To learn more about the Rainforest Trust, visit [www.rainforesttrust.org](http://www.rainforesttrust.org).

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### **About Rainforest Trust**

Since 1988, Rainforest Trust has been safeguarding imperiled tropical habitats and saving endangered species by establishing protected areas in partnership with local organizations and communities. With its partners, Rainforest Trust has safeguarded more than 41 million acres of vital habitat across Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Pacific. Rainforest Trust is a nonprofit organization that relies upon the generous support of the public to successfully implement its important conservation action. The organization is proud of earning a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator. Learn more about the work of Rainforest Trust by visiting [www.RainforestTrust.org](http://www.RainforestTrust.org), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), or [Facebook](#).