

July 13, 2016

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Flint Hills Resources Employees Plant Milkweed for Monarch Butterflies

Rosemount, Minn. – A group of employees from Flint Hills Resources recently planted more than 400 native prairie plants – including milkweed – at the Pine Bend Bluffs natural area to help attract monarch butterflies, whose population is in decline. The second annual event was conducted in partnership with Friends of the Mississippi River and Great River Greening. Located across highway 52 from the Pine Bend refinery in Rosemount, the Flint Hills-owned Pine Bend Bluffs comprise 1,650 acres of natural property along the Mississippi River. [Click here](#) for a downloadable photo from the planting event.

“Milkweed is essential to the monarch butterfly population. It’s where they lay their eggs, and it provides the only food source for caterpillars that eventually turn into butterflies,” said Karen Schik, senior ecologist at Friends of the Mississippi River. “We are thrilled to partner with Flint Hills Resources to increase monarch habitat at the Pine Bend Bluffs.”

Since 2000, Flint Hills Resources has partnered with Friends of the Mississippi River and Great River Greening to restore the Pine Bend Bluffs to pre-settlement conditions. [Restoration efforts](#) have focused on the protection and enhancement of native prairie plants with prescribed burns and the removal of invasive plants. The area provides critical habitat for both resident and migratory animals and is a migration corridor for millions of songbirds and 40% of North America’s waterfowl and shorebirds.

“The Pine Bend Bluffs has become a thriving place for all types of wildlife,” said Don Kern, facilities manager at Flint Hills Resources. “In addition to our recent efforts for butterflies, our employees monitor bluebird nesting structures, build snake hibernacula, and oversee [buckthorn-eating goats](#) as they help control invasive species and reduce overgrowth.”

About Flint Hills Resources

Flint Hills Resources’ Pine Bend refinery produces transportation fuels used throughout the Midwest, including most of Minnesota’s gasoline, diesel fuel, jet fuel, as well as other products people rely on such as propane and asphalt. Located 17 miles southeast of Minneapolis, Pine Bend has a capacity of 339,000 barrels per day and is among the cleanest, most efficient, and safest oil refineries in the country. Flint Hills Resources directly and indirectly supports more than 4,000 Minnesota jobs and has invested nearly \$1.7 billion on upgrades and improvements to its Minnesota facilities since 2010. With 1,300 full-time employees, the Flint Hills Resources Pine Bend refinery is one of the largest employers in Dakota County. More information about the company is available at pinebendrefinery.com.