

# Group ready to ask city to protect butterflies

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SANTA CRUZ — A group that works to protect monarch butterfly wintering sites is set to ask the city to help preserve the butterflies.

The Monarch Project of the Xerces Society announced it will appear before the Santa Cruz Planning Commission next month to urge that the city's upcoming general plan does not endanger the butterflies. The group has proposed "land-use planning goals and objectives" that would protect the monarchs.

Monarch butterflies annually migrate to Santa Cruz, mainly to the trees around Natural Bridges State Park. The city holds an annual day honoring the arrival of the monarchs, who usually show up in late September or early October and remain until February.

"We'd like it to be easy for planners and other people who process development applications to find

out where monarch habitat is what it takes to protect," said Katrin Snow of the Monarch Project. Monarch habitats exist in small pockets, according to Snow, making it difficult to keep track of them.

The project proposes that the city keep a list and map of monarch overwintering sites and prohibit certain activities that would damage the habitat, such as cutting trees and large vegetation.

The Monarch Project is also recommending the city require environmental impact reports of proposed developments that would have impacts on the butterflies.

Natural Bridges is the second-largest monarch wintering site in the world, according to the Monterey Bay Natural History association. The biggest is the Sierra Madre mountains in Mexico.