# Federal Highway Administration Roadside Pollinator Habitat

Deirdre Remley, Environmental Protection Specialist
Office of Project Development and Environmental Review
Federal Highway Administration

September 2016

deirdre.remley@dot.gov 202-366-0524



# Roadside Pollinator Habitat Overview

- Laws about Roadside Pollinator Habitat
- Funding
- Cost Savings
- Do wildflowers attract large animals?
- Pollinator Mortality and Roadside Habitat
- ESA and Pollinators
- Small changes/Big Differences
- FHWA Recent and Ongoing Efforts

## **Pollinator Laws**

#### Section 1415 of Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, December 2015

Administrative Provisions to Encourage Pollinator Habitat and Forage on Transportation Rights-of-Way Directs FHWA to:

- Encourage integrated vegetation management practices on ... transportation rights-of-way, including reduced mowing
- encourage the development of habitat and forage for Monarch butterflies, other native pollinators, and honey bees through plantings of native forbs and grasses that can ... facilitate migrations of [butterflies and] other pollinators.

## Presidential Memorandum, "Creating a Federal Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators," June 2014

#### Directs USDOT/FHWA to:

- Evaluate current guidance and informational resources
- Identify opportunities to increase pollinator habitat along roadways
- Implement program improvements, as appropriate
- Work with State DOTs and transportation associations to promote pollinator-friendly practices and corridors



# Pollinator Activities are Eligible for Federal Funds

## **Federal-aid Funding Eligibilities**

- 23 U.S.C. 319, "Landscaping and scenic enhancement"
- 23 U.S.C. 329, "Eligibility for control of noxious weeds and aquatic noxious weeds and establishment of native species"

## **Discretionary Grant Programs**

 Transportation Alternatives (Previously Known as TAP, now part of Surface Transportation Block Grants)
 <a href="http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\_alternatives/guidance/">http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\_alternatives/guidance/</a>

# FHWA Federal Funding for Vegetation Management

### **FHWA Funding Eligibilities**

**23 U.S.C. 319, "Landscaping and scenic enhancement"** (FAST Act section 1415 made modifications)

23 U.S.C. 329, "Eligibility for control of noxious weeds and aquatic noxious weeds and establishment of native species" (FAST Act section 1415 made modifications) Guidance is at: (<a href="http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/guidance/noxweeds.cfm">http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/guidance/noxweeds.cfm</a>)

23 U.S.C. 133, "Surface Transportation Block Grant Program," Transportation Alternatives Set Aside

Guidance is at: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidetap.cfm



## Some Ways to Fund Pollinator Activities

### **Funding Sources**

- License Plate Sales
- Native Plant Societies
- Zoos (technical expertise, funds, and public outreach)
- Corporate philanthropy
- Non-profit organizations grants, specialized expertise, etc.
- University programs/cooperative extensions

## **Cost Savings**

#### Things you May be Doing Already – Small Changes/Big Benefits

### **Reducing mowing:**

- You may already have native remnant habitat reduce mowing to let it grow
- Targeted Invasive plant control Native plants thrive, saving maintenance costs
- Seasonal avoidance You may already be doing this for special status species (e.g. federally listed), a small change in schedule can make a big difference for pollinators

#### **Designing with Low-Maintenance Native Plants**

Long-term cost savings offset initial costs

#### **Greening Infrastructure – Meeting Stormwater Permit Requirements**

- Native plants improve stormwater infiltration and may make it possible to reduce the footprint and cost of stormwater diversion/retention structures
- Native plants have deep root systems for stabilizing slopes

## FHWA Recent and Ongoing Efforts

#### **Best Management Practices:**

- BMPs for managers
- BMPs Handbook for Practitioners

### Revegetation Handbook and Plant Selector Tool

- Update and Expansion of FHWA "Roadside Revegetation" with pollinator information
- Companion Plant Selector Tool with Focus on Workhorse Species

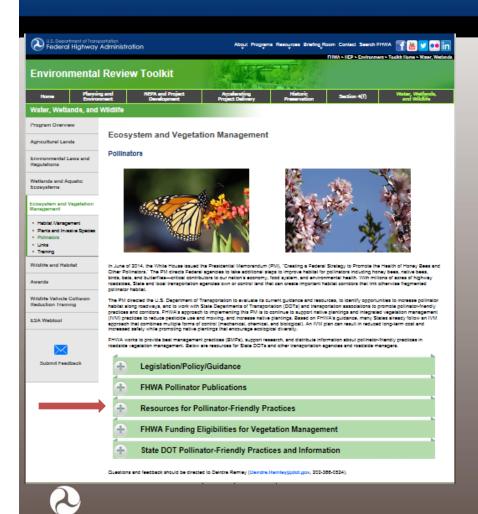
#### **ESA Discussions Considerations for Pollinator Species**

- Conservation Options for Pollinators that may be listed in the Future
- Conservation Options for Federally Listed Species

## FHWA Resources: "Pollinators" Web Page

http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/ecosystems/vegmgmt\_pollinators.asp

Legislation/Policy/Guidance





## For More Information

Deirdre Remley
Federal Highway Administration

deirdre.remley@dot.gov

202-366-0524

http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/ecosystems/vegmgmt\_pollinators.asp