

# Federal Highway Administration Roadside Pollinator Habitat

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U.S. Department of Transportation  
**Federal Highway Administration**

# 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)  
[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\\_alternatives/guidance/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/guidance/)



# 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: (<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/guidance/noxweeds.cfm>)

**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](http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/ecosystems/vegmgmt_pollinators.asp)

The screenshot shows the FHWA Environmental Review Toolkit website. The main navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Planning and Environment', 'NEPA and Project Development', 'Accelerating Project Delivery', 'Historic Preservation', 'Section 4(f)', and 'Water, Wetlands, and Wildlife'. The 'Water, Wetlands, and Wildlife' section is active, showing a sidebar with 'Program Overview', 'Agricultural Lands', 'Environmental Laws and Regulations', 'Wetlands and Aquatic Ecosystems', 'Ecosystem and Vegetation Management', 'Wildlife and Habitat', 'Awards', 'Wildlife Vehicle Collision Reduction Training', and 'ESA Webtool'. The 'Ecosystem and Vegetation Management' section is expanded to show 'Pollinators'. Below this, there are two images: a monarch butterfly on a flower and a close-up of pink cherry blossoms. The text below the images discusses the Presidential Memorandum (PM) issued in June 2014, the PM's goals for habitat improvement, and the role of FHWA in evaluating and supporting pollinator-friendly practices. At the bottom of the page, a red arrow points to a list of resources: 'Legislation/Policy/Guidance', 'FHWA Pollinator Publications', 'Resources for Pollinator-Friendly Practices', 'FHWA Funding Eligibilities for Vegetation Management', and 'State DOT Pollinator-Friendly Practices and Information'.

A vertical list of resource categories is shown on the right side of the slide. The categories are: 'Legislation/Policy/Guidance', 'FHWA Pollinator Publications', 'Resources for Pollinator-Friendly Practices', 'Roadside Pollinator Habitat Resources', 'Pollinator Planting Guides and Supplier Information', 'Native Vegetation Planting Guides and Supplier Information', 'Controlling Invasive and Exotic Plants', 'Pollinator Certification Programs and Public Education Materials', 'FHWA Funding Eligibilities for Vegetation Management', and 'State DOT Pollinator-Friendly Practices and Information'. A red arrow points to the 'Resources for Pollinator-Friendly Practices' category.

Legislation/Policy/Guidance

FHWA Pollinator Publications

Resources for Pollinator-Friendly Practices

Roadside Pollinator Habitat Resources

- AASHTO and FHWA Webinar, "Bees, Butterflies, and other Pollinators: Vegetation Management"
- Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, "Roadsides" web page
- Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, "Pollinators and Roadsides"
- Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Pollinator Best Management Practices for Roadsides and Other Rights-Of-Way
- U.S. Forest Service, Pollinator-Friendly Best Management Practices for Federal Lands
- U.S. Forest Service, Pollinators web page
- USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Insects and Pollinators web page
- Xerces Society, "Pollinator Conservation" web page
- Pacific Northwest Extension, How to Reduce Bee Poisoning from Pesticides
- National Agroforestry Center, Inside Agroforestry, "Windbreaks"
- Xerces Society, "Roadsides as Habitat for Pollinators," Proceedings of the 2013 International Conference on Ecology and Transportation

Pollinator Planting Guides and Supplier Information

- Pollinator Partnership Ecoregional Planting Guides
- Project Milkweed
- Xerces Society Pollinator Conservation Resources Center
- Bee Smart™ Pollinator Gardener smartphone app

Native Vegetation Planting Guides and Supplier Information

- Native Seed Network
- PlantNative web page
- Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center web page
- Reforestation, Nurseries, & Genetic Resources web page
- Coordinated Technology Implementation Program, "Roadside Revegetation: An Integrated Approach to Establishing Native Plants"
- U.S. EPA, Level III and IV Ecoregions of the Continental United States

Controlling Invasive and Exotic Plants

- Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System
- Center for Invasive Species Management, "Roadside Weed Management"
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, "Introduced, Invasive, and Noxious Plants" list

Pollinator Certification Programs and Public Education Materials

- Monarch Watch, Monarch Waystation Program
- National Wildlife Federation, "Pollinators in Peril" and "Million Pollinator Garden Challenge"

FHWA Funding Eligibilities for Vegetation Management

State DOT Pollinator-Friendly Practices and Information

Questions and feedback should be directed to Deirdre Remley (Deirdre.Remley@dot.gov, 202-368-0524).



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# For More Information

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