



Roadside Pollinator Program Questions and Answers

The Roadside Pollinator Program Questions and Answers (Q&A) provides information on the Pollinator-Friendly Practices on Roadsides and Highway Rights-of-Way Program (also referred to as the Roadside Pollinator Program) established under Section 11528 of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), enacted as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. No. 117-58, November 15, 2021), and codified at 23 U.S.C. 332.

Updated May 7, 2024. As appropriate, new Q&As will follow within their respective sections, including answers to questions submitted to the Roadside Pollinator Program mailbox at Pollinators@DOT.gov.

Except for the statutes and regulations cited, the contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the States or the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide information regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Table of Contents

- 1. Program Overview 3**
 - 1.1: What is the purpose of this program? 3**
 - 1.2: Who is eligible to apply? 3**
 - 1.3: Is there a limit to the number of Roadside Pollinator applications submitted? 3**
 - 1.4: Is this program limited to certain pollinator species? 3**
 - 1.5: Will there be future Roadside Pollinator Program grant opportunities? 3**
- 2. Funding for the Roadside Pollinator Program (RPP) 4**
 - 2.1: What is the maximum funding amount that can be awarded? 4**
 - 2.2: What if the total costs of the project exceed the Federal award under the Roadside Pollinator Program? 4**
 - 2.3: When can funds be expended after an award is announced? 4**
- 3. Project Types and Eligible Activities 4**
 - 3.1: Do construction activities need to be physically located within the Right-of-Way or can portions of the Project extend beyond it? 4**
 - 3.2: If Roadside Pollinator Program funds are used for one component of a larger project, do I need to include information on activities in the larger project in the tables on the Application Template? 4**
 - 3.3: Does the Roadside Pollinator Project need to be programmed into the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) or Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)? 5**
 - 3.4: Can I request funds to create a new Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan if my organization does not currently have one? 5**



3.5: Are mitigation activities for new or existing highway projects eligible under this grant program? 5

3.6: Are voluntary activities under Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCAA) and other Voluntary Conservation Agreements eligible activities for this program? 5

3.7: Are any activities not eligible for funding? 5

4. Grant Application 6

4.1: Is a Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan required to apply? 6

4.2: What determines if a Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan is eligible for the program? 6

4.3: When does the statutorily required consultation and or coordination need to be completed? 6

4.4 What is the difference between consultation and coordination? 6

4.5: What documentation is required to show coordination with applicable State agencies or consultation with affected or interested Indian tribes? 6

4.6: Is the Application Submittal Template, provided as Attachment A of the NOFO, a submission requirement? 6

4.7: Where can I find information on how to complete the Application Template? 6

5. Technical Assistance..... 7

5.1: What types of support or technical assistance can State DOTs, Federal Land Management Agencies, and Tribes obtain from FHWA? 7

6. Grant Administration 7

6.1: What is the deadline to complete the Roadside Pollinator Project? 7

6.2: What requirements are there for post construction monitoring and adaptive management?... 7

6.3: Is this program subject to 2 CFR Part 200 and Title 23, U.S.C. requirements? 7

6.4: What is the process if a species receives protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) during planning or implementation of an awarded Roadside Pollinator Project? 7

6.5: How can I learn more about the grant administration process? 8

7. NOFO Terminology..... 8

7.1: What is the definition of a “Roadside Pollinator Project” within the context of the Roadside Pollinator Program? 8

7.2: What is the definition of a “Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan” within the context of the Roadside Pollinator Program? 8

7.3: What constitutes a “Pollinator-friendly practice” for the purposes of this program? 8

7.4: What is the definition of “Roadside” in the context of Roadside Pollinator Program? 8

7.5: What is the definition of “Right-of-Way” in the context of Roadside Pollinator Program? 9

7.6: What is a “Route eligible for Federal-Aid”? 9

7.7: What are “locally appropriate native plants”? 9

7.8: Where can I find a complete list of definitions and terminology? 10



1. Program Overview

1.1: What is the purpose of this program?

The purpose of the Roadside Pollinator Program is to provide grants for Roadside Pollinator Projects that seek to improve, further develop, or implement a Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan on highway rights-of-ways and roadsides on routes eligible for Federal-aid (23 U.S.C. 332(a), (f)) (see question #7.6 in this document). Through these activities, grant recipients can promote the conservation and protection of pollinator habitat and encourage further development of pollinator habitat in other rights-of-ways and roadsides in an entity's jurisdiction.

1.2: Who is eligible to apply?

Eligible entities are State Departments of Transportation, Indian Tribes, and Federal Land Management Agencies (FLMA) (23 U.S.C. 332(b)). For the purposes of defining "Indian Tribe," this NOFO is using the definition of the term in 23 U.S.C. 171(c)(6), meaning any Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, or community that is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians and also including a Native village and a Native Corporation, as those terms are defined in section 3 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (which is codified at 43 U.S.C. 1602).

1.3: Is there a limit to the number of Roadside Pollinator applications submitted?

Only one award, not to exceed \$150,000, will be provided per eligible entity, regardless of the number of applications submitted (23 U.S.C. 332(e)(2)(B)). An eligible entity is the whole agency eligible to apply, such as the U.S. Forest Service or a statewide DOT and not a unit or region of such an entity like an individual National Forest or regional DOT office.

As an eligible entity will only receive one award regardless of the number of applications submitted, FHWA encourages the submission of only one application per entity. Eligible entities that elect to submit more than one application should rank their applications in order of priority on the application template. For entities that submit multiple applications with a ranking of priority, FHWA will fund the application the applicant has ranked the highest that has received an overall rating of Satisfactory. If an entity submits multiple applications with no indication of ranking, FHWA will fund the earliest submitted Satisfactory application. If, after funding all Satisfactory applications, there is sufficient funding remaining, FHWA reserves the right to fund multiple applications from an eligible entity in a single award up to the \$150,000 award limit.

Please see Section C.3.i of the NOFO for more information on submitting multiple applications per eligible entity.

1.4: Is this program limited to certain pollinator species?

No. Funds can be used to implement, improve, or further develop Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plans for any species of pollinator, including invertebrates, birds, and bats.

1.5: Will there be future Roadside Pollinator Program grant opportunities?

While section 11528 of BIL authorized this program for Fiscal Years 2022 through 2026, the first round of funding was appropriated for Fiscal Year 2023 by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (Pub. L. No. 117-328). Currently, there is no dedicated funding for any future NOFOs. Any future funding opportunities will be posted on the FHWA [Roadside Pollinator Program webpage](#) as well as Grants.gov. State DOTs can



consult with their FHWA Division Office about other Federal funding sources and activities eligible for Federal funding.

2. Funding for the Roadside Pollinator Program (RPP)

2.1: What is the maximum funding amount that can be awarded?

Only one award, not to exceed \$150,000, including indirect costs, regardless of the number of applications submitted, will be provided to any applicant (23 U.S.C. 332(e)(2)(B)).

2.2: What if the total costs of the project exceed the Federal award under the Roadside Pollinator Program?

The Federal share of the cost of an activity carried out with a grant under section 332 is 100 percent of total eligible project costs and no match is required (23 U.S.C. 332(g)). At no point will FHWA award more than \$150,000 under this program to carry out a Roadside Pollinator Project (23 U.S.C. 332(e)(2)(B)). If the budget for the activities in an application exceeds \$150,000, applicants must provide additional funding from sources other than the Roadside Pollinator Program.

2.3: When can funds be expended after an award is announced?

Funds will be available for eligible grant activities once a grant agreement is signed and fully executed. Unless authorized by FHWA in writing, expenses incurred prior to the full execution of a Roadside Pollinator Program grant agreement are not eligible for reimbursement. See Section F.1 of the NOFO for more information.

3. Project Types and Eligible Activities

3.1: Do construction activities need to be physically located within the Right-of-Way or can portions of the Project extend beyond it?

Funds used for Pollinator Friendly Practices (PFPs) in Categories 1-4 (pollinator-friendly mowing strategies, implementation of an integrated vegetation management plan or Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan, planting or seeding, and safety) are described in NOFO Section C.3.iii. These funds can only be used for work within the right-of-way (ROW) with the sole exception being areas immediately adjacent to the ROW where the grant recipient can demonstrate the area outside of the ROW is adequately controlled via lease, easement, or ownership by the recipient. Projects within Categories 5-9 (expert training or assistance on pollinator-friendly practices, outreach, updating, improving or further developing the Pollinators-Friendly Practices Plan, protecting existing habitat, and removing nonnative grasses from planting and seed mixes) may occur outside of the ROW; however, to fulfill the purpose of the program, they must be connected to activities that will take place within the ROW.

Grant funding cannot be used to acquire ROW. See Section C.3.iv of the NOFO for more information.

3.2: If Roadside Pollinator Program funds are used for one component of a larger project, do I need to include information on activities in the larger project in the tables on the Application Template?

No, the applicant should only include practices that they plan to implement using Roadside Pollinator Program funding in the tables. Where the applicant wishes to carry out pollinator-friendly practices



without using Roadside Pollinator Program funding, can be briefly described in the narrative section so that reviewers can gain the context of how the Roadside Pollinator Project fits into the larger project. FHWA will only evaluate applicable Roadside Pollinator Project(s) against the Roadside Pollinator Program criteria and only those activities should be included in the tables on the Application Template.

3.3: Does the Roadside Pollinator Project need to be programmed into the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) or Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)?

For Roadside Pollinator Projects within the categories involving construction (pollinator-friendly mowing strategies, implementation of an integrated vegetation management plan or Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan, planting or seeding, and safety), the application should demonstrate receipt of all applicable State or local planning approvals. In accordance with 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135, these categories of Roadside Pollinator Projects must be in the applicable plan and programming documents (e.g., metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, and STIP). Projects not currently included in these plans can be amended by the State and metropolitan planning organization (MPO). Projects that are not required to be in long range transportation plans, STIPs, and TIPs will not need to be included in such plans to receive a grant. These types of projects may include: obtaining expert training or assistance on pollinator-friendly practices; outreach; updating, improving, or further developing the Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan; protecting existing habitat; or removing nonnative grasses from planting and seeding mixes.

3.4: Can I request funds to create a new Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan if my organization does not currently have one?

No, the creation of new plans is not an eligible activity. Roadside Pollinator Program funds can only be used to implement, improve, or further develop an existing Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan (23 U.S.C. 332(f)). State DOTs can consult with their FHWA Division Office about other Federal funding sources that may be eligible to support the creation of a Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan.

3.5: Are mitigation activities for new or existing highway projects eligible under this grant program?

No, mitigation activities required as part of NEPA or other permitting requirements are not eligible under this grant program. The goal of the Roadside Pollinator Program is to increase the overall amount of pollinator habitat, not to replace habitat lost to other activities.

3.6: Are voluntary activities under Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCAA) and other Voluntary Conservation Agreements eligible activities for this program?

Yes, as they are voluntary commitments, activities under a CCAA or other Voluntary Conservation Agreements are not considered required mitigation and are eligible for this program.

3.7: Are any activities not eligible for funding?

Yes. Ineligible activities under this grant program include but are not limited to:

- Right-of-Way acquisition;
- Roadside Pollinator Projects involving non-native plant species;
- Pre-award activities (unless authorized by FHWA in writing; see question 2.3);
- Mitigation activities; and
- Development of a new Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan

Section C of the NOFO provides additional information on eligible activities and eligible costs.



4. Grant Application

4.1: Is a Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan required to apply?

Yes. An applicant is required to include a Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan as part of the application that describes the activities and practices the applicant intends to implement or has implemented (23 U.S.C. 332(d)(1)). Please see #4.2 of the Q&A document for more details on the requirements for this Plan.

4.2: What determines if a Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan is eligible for the program?

FHWA will either fund the improvement or further development of a Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan or the implementation of a Plan. The Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan must include the Pollinator-Friendly Practices that the applicant plans to implement as part of the Roadside Pollinator Project (23 U.S.C. 332(d), (f)). In addition, the Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan should include all Pollinator-Friendly Practices the applicant plans to implement, as the number of such practices will factor into the amount of any Roadside Pollinator Program grant award (23 U.S.C. 332(e)(2)(A)).

4.3: When does the statutorily required consultation and or coordination need to be completed?

Coordination with applicable State agencies and consultation with affected or interested Indian tribes is part of the Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan development process. Such coordination and consultation must be completed before the application is submitted (23 U.S.C. 332(d)(2), (3)). Documentation showing coordination and consultation, or an explanation of why the requirement is not applicable, is necessary to be eligible for funding.

4.4 What is the difference between consultation and coordination?

For the purposes of this program, completing the requirement for consultation may be as simple as demonstrating that contact or notification was provided by the applicant to the affected or interested Indian Tribe. Completing the requirement for coordination requires demonstrating that some level of reciprocal engagement occurred between the applicant and the applicable State agency.

4.5: What documentation is required to show coordination with applicable State agencies or consultation with affected or interested Indian tribes?

Examples of documentation of coordination or consultation include but are not limited to emails, letters, informal or formal agreements, and signed meeting minutes. FHWA will review the provided documentation to determine if consultation or coordination occurred as required by 23 U.S.C. 332(d)(2) and (3).

4.6: Is the Application Submittal Template, provided as Attachment A of the NOFO, a submission requirement?

Yes. See Section D.2.i.f of the NOFO for more information on the application template. Applicants are not required to and should not submit a separate project narrative. In determining whether an application is eligible for a Roadside Pollinator Program grant award, the overall project rating, and any award amount, FHWA will only consider information contained in the application template.

4.7: Where can I find information on how to complete the Application Template?

Instructions on how to complete the Application Template are included in the Application Template itself. The Application Template also includes examples of Completed Pollinator-Friendly Practices tables in



Appendix B. Additional instructions on how to complete specific items in the Application Template can be found in NOFO Section D.2.i.g.

5. Technical Assistance

5.1: What types of support or technical assistance can State DOTs, Federal Land Management Agencies, and Tribes obtain from FHWA?

As stated in Section A of the NOFO, FHWA will not provide technical assistance during the application period. However, grant resources can be found on [DOT Navigator](#) and the [BIL Technical Assistance Webpage](#). There are also grant application development support and resources on [Grants.gov](#), including the [Grants Learning Center](#) and [Applicant Training](#). For Tribes, DOT suggests reviewing resources on [Transportation Funding Opportunities for Tribal Nations](#). For more information about designing and managing pollinator projects on roadsides and right-of-way, please see the [Pollinators](#) resource page on the FHWA Environmental Review Toolkit.

6. Grant Administration

6.1: What is the deadline to complete the Roadside Pollinator Project?

FY 2023 Roadside Pollinator Program funds must be obligated by September 30, 2026 (23 U.S.C. 332(l)(2)) which means a grant agreement needs to be signed and fully executed within that timeline. FHWA will specify a period of performance and budget period as part of each grant agreement. Once the grant agreement is executed, the Roadside Pollinator Project can continue until the funds are expended, the agreement is terminated, or the period of performance expires. FHWA will work with individual applicants to determine the appropriate timeline and interim milestones for each Roadside Pollinator Project, as some activities such as monitoring may take several years to complete, which may be allowable.

6.2: What requirements are there for post construction monitoring and adaptive management?

If applicable, the terms for post construction monitoring and adaptive management will be specific to each grant agreement, and the grant agreement will specify responsible parties, timelines, and requirements. Newly implemented practices or pollinator habitat may require ongoing monitoring and adaptive management to ensure success.

6.3: Is this program subject to 2 CFR Part 200 and Title 23, U.S.C. requirements?

Yes. All awards will be administered pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards found in 2 CFR Part 200, as adopted by DOT at 2 CFR Part 1201. Additionally, applicable Federal laws, rules, and regulations set forth in title 23, U.S.C., and title 23 of the CFR will apply to awards under this program.

Note that the applicability of Federal requirements to a project may be affected by the scope of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews for that project.

6.4: What is the process if a species receives protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) during planning or implementation of an awarded Roadside Pollinator Project?

FHWA recognizes that species listings may occur after grant award and because the Roadside Pollinator Project is federally funded, consultation under Section 7 of the ESA is required for Roadside Pollinator Projects that may affect ESA listed species. Follow the process for Section 7 ESA consultation for your local



area or region to determine if the Roadside Pollinator Project may affect newly protected species, and to complete the consultation process, if required.

6.5: How can I learn more about the grant administration process?

For more information about the grant administration process please consult the [DOT's Project Delivery Toolbox](#).

7. NOFO Terminology

7.1: What is the definition of a "Roadside Pollinator Project" within the context of the Roadside Pollinator Program?

A Roadside Pollinator Project refers to the total activities to be funded by the applicant with a Roadside Pollinator Program award. This may include the implementation of practices included in a Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan (see #7.2 in this document) or further development of the Plan itself.

7.2: What is the definition of a "Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan" within the context of the Roadside Pollinator Program?

A Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan is a document, part of a document, webpage, webtool, set of documents or combination thereof that outline an applicant's strategy for the preservation, establishment, or maintenance of pollinator populations or habitat. For example, a Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan could be a single stand-alone document; a set of documents such as an Integrated Vegetation Management Plan, CCAA and policy related to mowing; or a multi-agency webtool. No matter what form the Plan takes, the applicant must attach or link to it in its entirety. By including a Plan in their application, the applicant is confirming that the Plan they are using is formal policy, guidance used, and recognized by the applicant.

7.3: What constitutes a "Pollinator-friendly practice" for the purposes of this program?

Pollinator-friendly-practices are those practices that contribute to the preservation, establishment, or persistence of pollinator populations or habitat. Pollinator-Friendly Practices for which the applicant is requesting funding and that are included in the Roadside Pollinator Project must fall under one or more of the Categories of Practice listed in Section C.3.iii of the NOFO to be eligible for funding and will be included in determining the amount of any Roadside Pollinator Program grant award (23 U.S.C. 332(d), (e)(2)(A), (f)). These Categories are:

1. Pollinator-friendly mowing strategies
2. Implementation of an integrated vegetation management plan or Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan
3. Planting or Seeding
4. Safety
5. Obtaining expert training or assistance on pollinator-friendly practices
6. Outreach
7. Updating, improving, or further developing the Pollinator-Friendly Practices Plan
8. Protecting Existing Habitat
9. Removing nonnative grasses from planting and seeding mixes

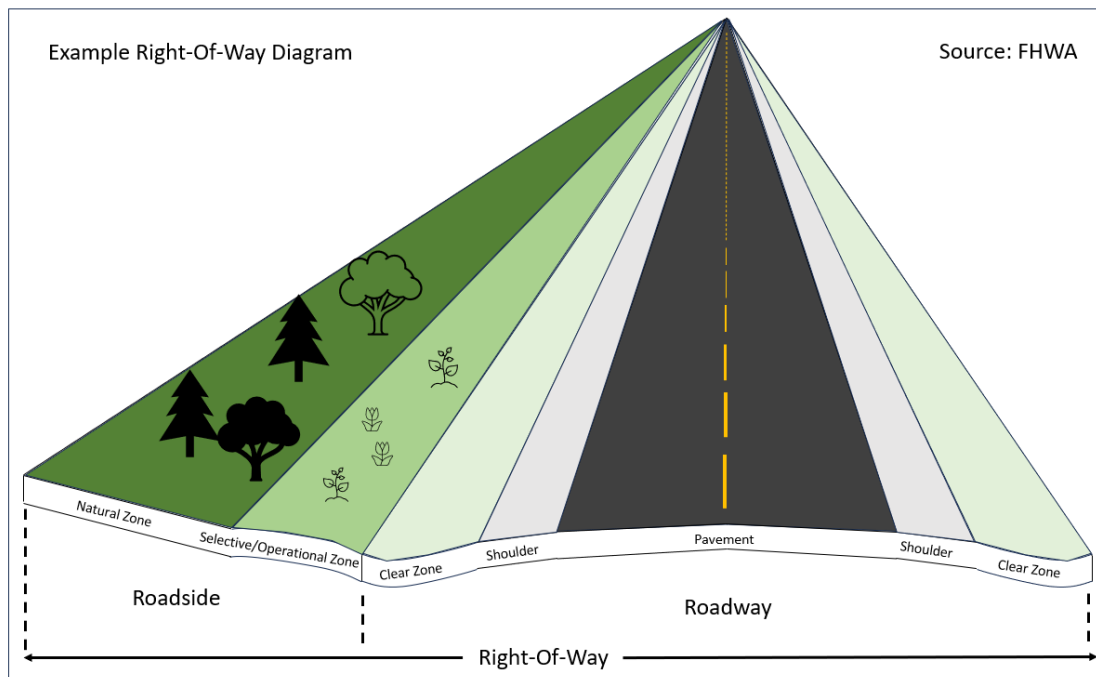
7.4: What is the definition of "Roadside" in the context of Roadside Pollinator Program?



Roadside means the portion of the right-of-way outside the roadway (see the [FLH Project Development and Design Manual](#)).

7.5: What is the definition of “Right-of-Way” in the context of Roadside Pollinator Program?

The term Right-of-Way means real property and rights therein obtained for the construction, operation, maintenance, or mitigation of a transportation or related facility funded under title 23, United States Code (23 CFR 710.105). In other words, the Right-of-Way is the area between the Roadside Pollinator Project boundaries, often from fence line to fence line.



7.6: What is a “Route eligible for Federal-Aid”?

Routes that are eligible for Federal-Aid are typically public roads at a functional classification above local roads and rural minor collectors. Each State Department of Transportation maintains their own map of roads and routes that are eligible for Federal-Aid. With respect to tribal lands, roads that are eligible for Federal-Aid are typically included within each tribe’s Tribal Transportation Program. The below video gives more information on the Federal-Aid system.

[General Information: Funding Basics and Eligibility | FHWA \(dot.gov\)](#)

7.7: What are “locally appropriate native plants”?

Native species are those that occur naturally in a particular region, State, ecosystem, or habitat, without the direct or indirect actions of modern humans. However, some species have very large ranges with considerable variability across them. Locally appropriate native plants are examples of native species that are found within your Roadside Pollinator Project’s local area or nearby areas with similar growing conditions. Locally appropriate native plants and communities are best equipped to establish in your area and provide the most benefits to pollinators.

Locally appropriate plant materials are sourced from specific geographic locations and considered locally adapted to climate, soils, competitive regimes, pests and pathogens, and many other factors specific to the



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Questions and Answers

geographic location (from [National Academies, An Assessment of Native Seed Needs and the Capacity for Their Supply \(2023\)](#)).

7.8: Where can I find a complete list of definitions and terminology?

Please see Section H.4. of the NOFO for a complete list of definitions and terminology. For clarification, questions can be sent to Pollinators@dot.gov.