



GRANT ALERT

July 28, 2024

National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant (Culvert AOP Program)

DEADLINE

PROGRAM NAME & LINK

Monday, September 23, 2024, 11:59 p.m. EST

(Applicants must complete the Grants.gov registration process before submitting the final application; the process usually takes 2-4 weeks to complete.)

[National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program | US Department of Transportation](#)

DESCRIPTION

This discretionary grant program was authorized under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) for the purpose of providing supplemental funding for grants on a competitive basis for projects that replace, remove, and/or repair culverts or weirs that would meaningfully improve or restore fish passage for anadromous fish. The program seeks to meaningfully improve or restore anadromous fish passage and may include infrastructure to facilitate fish passage around or over the weir and weir improvements. The program is also generally referred to as the Culvert Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) Program.

What's New this Round?

- Changes to a multi-year NOFO. This NOFO sets out the application requirements and dates for funding available in FY 2023 through FY 2026.
- Future application Deadlines:
 - FY 2024 Deadline: Monday, August 25, 2025
 - FY 2025 Deadline: Monday, August 24, 2026
 - FY 2026 Deadline: Monday, August 23, 2027
- Establishes different application periods. It is important to note that the application period for the first round of funding under this notice for FY 2023 is 90 days long, whereas the application periods for all remaining FYs of funding (FY 2024 through FY 2026) are 60 days.
- Provides clarifying language with regards to advance payment in Section B.5 to clarify that recipients and sub-recipients have the option to request alternative funding arrangements.
- Adds language to strongly encourage use of NOFO application template.
- Provides clarifying language to Selection Criteria in Section E.1 as a result of feedback and consultation on the Year One NOFO.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants

- State government
- Units of local government
- Indian Tribe (any Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation)

Projects

Culvert Projects:

- Projects to replace, remove, or repair culverts that would meaningfully improve or restore fish passage for anadromous fish.

Weir Projects:

- Projects to replace, remove, or repair weirs that would meaningfully improve or restore fish passage for anadromous fish.
 - Projects may include infrastructure to facilitate fish passage around or over the weir and/or weir improvements.

FUNDING

General

- For the FY 2023 round due September 23, 2024, a total of \$196 million is available for the Culvert AOP Program.
- If USDOT does not award and obligate all funds available for a FY, USDOT may carry over any unobligated funds to be awarded in the next FY or publish additional solicitations.
- There is no minimum or maximum award size for the FY 2023 Culvert AOP Program.
 - Awards anticipated to range from \$200,000 to \$50,000,000.

Cost-Sharing

- The federal share of the Culvert AOP Program may not exceed 80% of the total cost of the project. The local share of the Culvert AOP Program is no less than 20% of eligible activity costs.
- Indian Tribes are not required to provide a cost share under the Culvert AOP Program.

APPLICATION & SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection Criteria

The DOT will use the project selection criteria to assess how a project will advance DOT policy priorities including safety, increased resilience to climate change, equity, and advancing the state of practice in aquatic organism passage. In the case of a bundle of projects, benefits executing the projects as a bundle compared to as individual projects should be explained.

Selection Criteria:

Project Benefits

Projects that improve fish passage for one or more of the following:

- Anadromous fish stocks listed as an endangered species or a threatened species under section 4 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973;
- Anadromous fish stocks identified by NMFS or USFWS that could reasonably become listed as an endangered species or a threatened species under that section;

- Conservation Benefits to Anadromous Fish
- Regional and Watershed Context
- Ecosystem Benefits
- Project Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation
- Climate Change, Sustainability, and Resilience
- Equity and Barriers to Opportunity

- Anadromous fish stocks identified by NMFS or USFWS as prey for endangered species, threatened species, or protected species, including Southern resident orcas;
- Anadromous fish stocks identified by NFMS or USFWS as climate resilient stocks; Projects that open up more than 200 meters of upstream habitat for anadromous fish before the end of the natural habitat.

PROJECT TIMEFRAME

If a grant recipient will be a State department of transportation (State DOT) or if a State DOT will serve as a pass-through to a non-State DOT entity awarded a grant, the DOT Payment System will be “Current Bill” in the Federal Management Information System (FMIS) and the start of the period of performance will begin on the date Culvert AOP Program funds are obligated in FMIS and end on the project end date in FMIS.

If a grant recipient will be a non-State DOT entity, the DOT Payment System will be “DELPHI eInvoicing” and the start of the period of performance will begin on the date of the grant agreement executed by DOT which will obligate the Culvert AOP Program and end on the period of performance that is listed in the grant agreement.

ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Program Specific Reporting Requirements

Each applicant selected for Culvert AOP Program grant funding must collect and report to DOT information on the project’s performance based on performance indicators DOT identifies related to program goals and other information as requested by DOT. Performance indicators should include measurable goals or targets that DOT will use internally to determine whether the project meets program goals, and grant funds achieve the intended long-term outcomes of the Culvert AOP Program. DOT will work with the grant recipient to establish a recommended two to four performance measures that enable DOT to measure and evaluate the outcomes of the individual grant. Performance reporting continues for several years after project construction is completed.

Indicators may document changes from an established baseline such as fish passage or available habitat. Other indicators or metrics may consist of monitoring or maintenance activities, including those proposed to be done after completion of project construction. Non-construction projects may have indicators that consider success of a planning or project development effort. Applicants must agree to provide the required data or access to right-of-way or adjacent stream and riparian corridors for long-term data collection to DOT or partner agencies. As appropriate, applicants must agree to supply any supporting design reports outlining site conditions and the constructed “as-built” plans including documented post-construction conditions specific to fish passage that will establish baseline conditions for future monitoring.

PENNDOT ROLE

PennDOT Emphasis

PennDOT continues to promote projects which address climate change, sustainability, and environmental justice. The Culvert AOP provides PennDOT, other state agencies, and their partners, the opportunity to continue to address these issues by completing and supporting projects which benefit anadromous fish passage through and/or around culverts and weirs. These projects lead to more robust and healthier ecosystems within the Commonwealth's watersheds.

PennDOT Support

Transportation Federal Funding Opportunities
Resource Account:
RA-PDTRANSFEDFUNDOPP@pa.gov.

PennDOT will consider providing support for regionally supported grant proposals as applicable. PennDOT support may include offering data and subject matter expertise as available.

The deadline for requesting PennDOT support is Monday, September 9, 2024.