



GRANT ALERT

April 6, 2023

Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program (WCPP)

DEADLINE

Tuesday, August 1, 2023, 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.)

PROGRAM NAME & LINK

[Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program | US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration](#)

DESCRIPTION

The Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program (WCPP) is a competitive grant program with the goal of reducing Wildlife Vehicle Collisions (WVCs) while improving habitat connectivity for terrestrial and aquatic species. The WCPP provides funding for construction and non-construction projects.

What's New this Round? This is the first funding round for the WCPP.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants

- State Departments of Transportation
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)
- Units of local government
- Regional transportation authorities
- Special purpose districts or public authorities with a transportation function
- Indian tribes
- Federal Land Management Agencies (FLMA)
- A group of any of the above entities

Projects

Construction Projects

- Engineering, design, permitting, right-of-way acquisition, and other activities related to the construction of infrastructure improvements, such as the building or design of a wildlife crossing overpass or underpass.

Non-Construction Projects

- Planning, research, and educational activities that are not directly related to construction of infrastructure improvements, such as a hot spot analysis of WVCs.

FUNDING

General

- The total amount of funding available for awards under this NOFO is up to \$111,850,000, which comprises funding authorized to be appropriated by the BIL for FFY 2022 and FFY 2023.
- FHWA expects to obligate FFY 2022 funds before FFY 2023 funds. The FFY 2022 funds must be obligated by September 20, 2025, and FFY 2023 funds must be obligated by September 30, 2026.
- There is no minimum or maximum award size; however, applicants are encouraged to submit comprehensive applications for large-scale projects with total project costs of \$200,000 or greater. FHWA anticipates awarding between 15- 50 grants with anticipated awards ranging from \$200,000 to \$20 million, although FHWA may also make awards outside of this range.

Cost-Sharing

- The federal share of a WCPP grant may not exceed 80% of total eligible activity costs. Recipients are required to contribute a local matching share of no less than 20% of eligible activity costs. All local matching funds must be from non-federal sources.
- FHWA will award 60 percent or more of available funds for projects located in rural areas (23 U.S.C. 171(g)).

APPLICATION & SELECTION CRITERIA

Primary Merit Criteria

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 171(e)(1) and to further the purpose of this program, there are two primary merit criteria. Each of the primary merit criteria are of equal importance.

- **Criterion # 1.1: Reduction of Wildlife Vehicle Collisions.** FHWA will assess the extent to which the proposed project is likely to protect motorists and wildlife by reducing the number of WVCs.
- **Criterion #1.2: Improvement of Terrestrial and Aquatic Habitat Connectivity.** FHWA will assess the extent to which the proposed project is likely to improve terrestrial and aquatic habitat connectivity.

Secondary Merit Criteria

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 171(e)(2) and to further the purpose of this program, there are six secondary merit criteria. Secondary merit criteria will only be evaluated for applications that meet both Primary Merit Criterion #1.1 and #1.2.:

- Criterion #2.1: Leveraging Investments
- Criterion #2.2: Economic Development and Visitation Opportunities
- Criterion #2.3: Innovation
- Criterion #2.4: Education and Outreach
- Criterion #2.5: Monitoring and Research
- Criterion #2.6: Survival of Species

PROJECT TIMEFRAME

The start of the period of performance will begin on the date that WCPP funds are authorized in FMIS and end on the project end date in FMIS. The project schedule is defined by the applicant with beginning and end dates and intermediate milestones. The schedule should be detailed enough to ensure “all necessary activities will be complete to allow WCPP funds to be obligated and expended in a timely manner consistent with the schedule.”

ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Data Collection and Monitoring Requirements

The WCPP is a pilot program, which FHWA intends to use to identify practices and projects that most effectively reduce WVC and improve wildlife connectivity. Data gleaned from monitoring activities will contribute to research and the development of a study of the practice of methods to reduce WVCs, as required by 23 U.S.C. 172(a), and associated activities.

Performance indicators used in reporting should align with project goals and the primary merit criteria. The WCPP funds may be used for comparisons over baseline conditions, data collection, monitoring and performance reporting and should be accounted for in the applicant’s budget. Before establishing the grant agreement, FHWA will work with grant recipients to determine the most appropriate indicators and metrics to assess project benefits for inclusion in the agreements.

Applicants must agree to provide the required data or, if applicable, access to right-of-way or adjacent wildlife corridors for long-term data collection by FHWA or agencies with wildlife jurisdiction. As appropriate, applicants must agree to supply any supporting design reports outlining site 11 conditions (e.g., geomorphic, and biological) and the constructed “as-built” plans including documented post-construction conditions specific to WVCs and habitat connectivity which will establish baseline conditions for future monitoring.

PENNDOT ROLE

PennDOT Emphasis

PennDOT emphasizes the importance of reducing impacts to wildlife and improving, or at the very least, maintaining habitat connectivity. However, the priority for public safety is paramount and cannot be overstated. As a transportation agency, the function of PennDOT is first and foremost to provide a safe and efficient transportation infrastructure for the traveling public. These projects can lead to improved roadway safety and habitat connectivity for terrestrial and aquatic species within the Commonwealth.

PennDOT Support

Transportation Federal Funding Opportunities
Resource Account:

RA-PDTRANSFEDFUNDOPP@pa.gov

Per this NOFO, PennDOT is required to administer grants for local/regional partners. As such, PennDOT must review and approve all applications for this program to ensure the project can be delivered for the budget and within the schedule being proposed by the applicant.

The deadline for requesting PennDOT’s approval is July 11, 2022.

PROJECT EXAMPLES

Construction Project examples include:

- Design and pre-construction of an underpass or overpass for wildlife passage.
- Environmental permitting and right-of-way acquisition to construct a wildlife crossing structure.
- Adaptation or replacement of a culvert or bridge structure to accommodate connectivity for terrestrial species that are experiencing WVCs.
- Construction of a wildlife overpass or underpass and fencing.
- Preservation or restoration of habitat necessary to secure the effectiveness of a crossing project.
- Construction of multiple crossing structures in an area to connect habitat for terrestrial or aquatic species.
- Other construction projects that meet the grant criteria.

Non-Construction Project examples include:

- Research on safety innovations to reduce WVCs.
- Research and monitoring on the effectiveness of WVC mitigation.
- Development of mapping tools to document WVCs.
- Analysis of impacts of WVCs and best practices to reduce WVCs.
- Planning studies to identify terrestrial and aquatic wildlife migration corridors and roadway barriers to habitat that lead to WVCs.
- Tracking wildlife and mapping WVCs.
- Outreach activities to educate the public on the hazards of WVCs.
- Other non-construction projects that meet the grant criteria.