

2019 Rights-of-Way as Habitat Working Group Transportation Peer Exchange

Attending DOTs and updates

Colorado DOT (Susan Suddjian)

- Has utilized public-private partnerships to developed habitat. There are multiple projects currently in the works including a topsoil research project to help inform vegetation development projects.

Ohio DOT (Megan Michael and Joel Hunt)

- Has been implementing IVM focusing on training workforce on basic IVM practices and plant identification, increasing the number of licensed commercial pesticide applicators and modifying existing and purchasing new spray equipment. Implemented conservation mowing guidelines and currently establishing 1,200 acres of high-value habitat at 120 sites in 57 of Ohio's 88 counties.

FHWA (Brian Smith)

- Ecologist with FHWA Resource Center. Member of ROWHWG and Monarch CCAA steering committees. Working on DOT green infrastructure practices.

Indiana DOT (Matt Kraushar and Sandra Bowman)

- Has been integrating pollinator habitat with other projects such as wetland mitigation and stormwater projects to get multiple benefits out of these projects. There is a native seeding contract in place, which will help develop more pollinator habitat.

Illinois DOT (Stephanie Dobbs)

- Has been implementing IVM and habitat management on her ROWs for some time now. Shared with WG the success of the outreach video on times mowing and IVM from Illinois DOT.

Idaho DOT (Cathy Ford)

- Has been a partner in the CCAA for about a year and is working on how they would implement the requirements of the agreement.

Missouri DOT (Stacy Armstrong)

- Has been working on getting institutional buy-in from upper level management for a pollinator habitat program and CCAA consideration.

Delaware DOT (Jamie Pavona)

- Has been working on a GIS database to track sites and management. Delaware DOT plans on joining the CCAA and is interested in how others are implementing the agreement.

Kentucky DOT (Ellen Mullins and David Cornett)

- Has been developing a GIS database to identify and track the quality of actively managed pollinator sites. Kentucky DOT has been utilizing material storage sites and old rest areas as pollinator habitat restoration sites. Invasive species management has been a large challenge.

Oklahoma DOT (Vonceil Harmon)

- The American burying beetle programmatic agreement requires planting of native vegetation, so it has been helping with developing pollinator habitat. Oklahoma DOT has gotten involved in CCAA discussions and are working on inventorying habitat. One strategy they have been applying is to train maintenance staff to find old habitat and use the scorecard to monitor. The recent election has caused things to slow down during the change in administrations.

Michigan DOT (Kelsey Buchmayer)

- Has been working on inventorying habitat creation projects, high quality habitat, and high priority areas in the ROW. Michigan DOT is focusing on education to inform the concerned public about our currently implemented pollinator habitat management program. A few partnerships with DNR and conservation groups to develop more pollinator habitat are currently in the works.

[Discussion topic: How to get a successful pollinator habitat program going](#)

Indiana DOT suggested making allies with communications staff in the organization will allow you to craft striking and effective educational materials to help get your message across. Peer pressure and friendly competition is a powerful motivator as well. For example, Indiana DOT had a competition for maintenance staff to take pictures of pollinators in the ROW with the top pictures utilized on the department's social media accounts during pollinator week.

Kentucky DOT says putting the idea in front of the right people and instilling competition has worked for them as well. They have also used free seed packets and pamphlets listing factors to consider such as slope and hydrology. Kentucky DOT also has a pollinator committee and is aiming to have representatives from different divisions as members to address issues from all sides.

FHWA mentioned that there is a main contact for SPR funds for every region and they may be good resources for DOTs.

The group worked together to develop a list of areas that should have a place on a pollinator committee to ensure its success. This list includes:

Operations and maintenance

Planning

Communication

Design

Real estate

Field staff

Central office

Finance and procurement

Partners – including other state agencies and research groups

Safety

Legislative affairs

Contracting topic: how are contracts utilized for this work?

Indiana DOT said in their organization environmental contractors are utilized for restoration work and they have a set of education and experience based pre qualifications contractors must meet.

Sharing

- Indiana and Ohio DOTs have intergovernmental agreements for pollinators.
- Stephanie and Joel will send out a copy of their MOUs.

Access the Rights-of-Way as Habitat Working Group Website

Register and create account

Step 1: Register at <http://rightofway.erc.uic.edu/working-group-access/>

Step 2: Create an account at <http://rightofway.erc.uic.edu/register/>

Step 3: Check Your Email To Activate Your Account!

Discussion board link (click on working group access, upper right):

<http://rightofway.erc.uic.edu/working-group-access/>

Provides access to:

Working Group Directory

Discussion Board

Past meetings' presentation and information

Webinars

Our Taskforces

- We can use the website as a warehouse of webinars and training materials to reference what other DOTs are doing.
- We can also post different sources of information that would be useful to other DOTs
 - Illinois suggests Dplex – a monarch research group that gets into the nitty gritty and is very scientific.