

SUBJECT: Federal Lands Access Program (Access Program)

ISSUE: To provide pertinent information related to the Federal Lands Access Program.

The Federal Lands Access Program (Access Program) provides Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds for projects on publicly owned roadways that are located on or adjacent to, or that provide access to Federal Lands.

BACKGROUND:

FHWA administers federal highway funding through State Departments of Transportation (SDOT). It is the responsibility of a roadway owning authority (state, county, local, etc.) to manage their highway programs to include the management of individual projects. FHWA authority for highway funding is established in multi-year transportation authorizations.

The Federal Lands Access Program (Access Program) was established in 23 U.S.C. 204 to improve transportation facilities that provide access to, are adjacent to, or are located within Federal lands. The Access Program supplements State and local resources for public roads, transit systems, and other transportation facilities, with an emphasis on high-use recreation sites and economic generators.

The Program is designed to provide flexibility for a wide range of transportation projects in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The Access Program is funded by contract authority from the Highway Trust Fund and subject to obligation limitations. Funds are allocated among the States using a statutory formula based on road mileage, number of bridges, land area, and visitation. 80% of this funding is distributed by legislative formula among twelve western states based upon the amount of federal land owned by the following agencies: National Park Service, US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of War, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The remainder is distributed to the other 38 states according to the infrastructure data reported by those eight agencies.

The intent of the program is to fund projects accessing those lands that are high recreational use facilities or high economic generators. The funding is to be used on roads owned by state or local agency. The funds are allocated to projects through a competitive program established by each SDOT.

PROJECT SELECTION:

Project selection is decided through a Programming Decision Committee (PDC) composed of one FHWA representative, one SDOT representative, and one local transportation representative. The selection of projects requires coordination between the federal agencies and the selection committee. Each state is responsible for developing their procedures for project submittal and selection. The PDC will issue calls for projects to county or local transportation organizations and receive project candidates from those agencies or the State DOT themselves. The PDC does not accept project nominations directly from Federal Agencies. The Federal Agency must work with their local transportation authority or SDOT to coordinate and develop project submittals. The PDC

will review the project submittals and eliminate those not meeting the minimum criteria. The selection of projects requires coordination between the federal agencies and the selection committee. Each federal agency will be required to assist the PDC to prioritize project submittals applicable to their agencies. Federal Agencies may coordinate this through their internal programs prior to project submittal.

INSTALLATION INVOLVEMENT:

This program can potentially benefit DoW but it must be noted DoW is one of eight Federal Agencies competing for this funding and decisions are ultimately made by the SDOT and its PDC for funding depending upon their prioritized needs. Installations can facilitate project submittal through proactive collaboration with State and local transportation officials.

For those installations that have already established relationships and communication with your SDOT, your local transportation authority, your regional or metropolitan planning authority, continue with that network and discuss this funding opportunity with those organizations. Project submittals must be a part of the required transportation planning processes at the local and State level.

If your installation does not have an established communication network with your SDOT, start by contacting your SDOT District or Regional office or your local or county highway agency, depending upon roadway ownership. These avenues will be the primary means for project submittal. FURTHER INFORMATION: Internally to DoW, US Army Transportation Command, Transportation Engineering Agency (ARTRANS TEA), Highways for National Defense (HND) program managers can provide information.

External to DoW, information can be found on the FHWA website or within one of the Divisions of its Office of Federal Lands Highways. These websites will also post links to individual SDOT information as it is established and made available.

LINKS:

HND: <https://www.army.mil/artrans#org-tea>

FHWA: <https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/flap>