

National Culvert Removal Replacement and Restoration Grant Program

Notice of Funding Opportunity Number 693JJ324NF00025**FISCAL YEARS (FY) 2023 – 2026**

SUMMARY OVERVIEW OF KEY INFORMATION: FYs 2023 through 2026 (Year Two through Year Five) National Culvert Removal, Replacement and Restoration Grant Program (Culvert Aquatic Organism Passage (Culvert AOP) Program).	
Issuing Agency	Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation
Program Overview	Awards grants to eligible applicants for projects for the replacement, removal, and repair of culverts or weirs that would meaningfully improve or restore fish passage for anadromous fish.
Goals and Objective	The primary objective of the Culvert AOP Program is to meaningfully improve or restore anadromous fish passage through the replacement, removal, or repair of culverts or weirs, which may include infrastructure to facilitate fish passage around or over the weir and weir improvements.
Eligible Applicants	States, units of local government, and Indian Tribes.
Eligible Project Types	<p>Culverts and Weirs having a transportation nexus and posing barriers to anadromous fish. With respect to weirs, projects may include infrastructure to facilitate fish passage around or over the weir and weir improvements.</p> <p>A weir is a constructed barrier on a stream channel designed to provide hydraulic control without completely stopping flow or creating a large storage impoundment. A dam is not a weir for the purposes of this program.</p>
Funding	<p>Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58, November 15, 2021), also known as the “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law,” provides \$200 million annually for FY 2022-2026.</p> <p>DOT intends to use \$4 million annually to pay the administrative expenses necessary to carry out the program, in accordance with 49 U.S.C. 6703(h), leaving \$196 million available annually, along with any unused funds from previous FYs, including FY 2022.</p>
Opening Dates:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 2023 Opening: Tuesday, June 25, 2024 • FY 2024 Opening: Monday, June 23, 2025 • FY 2025 Opening: Monday, June 22, 2026 • FY 2026 Opening: Monday, June 21, 2027
Deadline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 2023 Deadline: Monday, September 23, 2024 • FY 2024 Deadline: Monday, August 25, 2025

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FY 2025 Deadline: Monday, August 24, 2026• FY 2026 Deadline: Monday, August 23, 2027
Cost-Share	80 percent Federal share for grants to States or units of local government (requiring a 20 percent match). 100 percent Federal share for grants to Indian Tribes (requiring no match).

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Notice of Funding Opportunity for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 through FY 2026 National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

ACTION: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

SUMMARY:

The purpose of this NOFO is to solicit applications for the National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program. The program is referred to in this NOFO as the Culvert Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) Program. This NOFO establishes a multi-year funding opportunity for applicants to submit projects for the remaining available amount of funds provided to the Culvert AOP Program in division J of Title VIII of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (also known as the “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law” or BIL), covering funds available for FY 2023 through FY 2026. This NOFO will result in the distribution of up to \$784 million along with any unobligated funds from FY 2022, with at least \$196 million distributed for each of FYs 2023 through 2026. The actual amount available to be awarded under this NOFO will be subject to the availability of funds.

The DOT will award Culvert AOP Program funds on a competitive basis for the replacement, removal, repair, and improvement of culverts or weirs that would meaningfully improve or restore fish passage for [anadromous](#) fish. See 49 U.S.C 6703. This NOFO describes the application requirements, selection, and evaluation criteria; applicable program and Federal requirements; and available technical assistance during the grant solicitation period.

DATES:

See the table below for important dates and deadlines for FYs 2023 – 2026 applications. All days for the open application period represent calendar days (i.e., not working days).

Activity	Funding Year (Fiscal Year)			
	Year Two (FY23)	Year Three (FY24)	Year Four (FY25)	Year Five (FY26)
NOFO Release	6/25/2024	6/23/2025	6/22/2026	6/21/2027
Minimum Number of Days of Application Open Period	90 days	60 days	60 days	60 days

Activity	Funding Year (Fiscal Year)			
	Year Two (FY23)	Year Three (FY24)	Year Four (FY25)	Year Five (FY26)
NOFO Close	9/23/2024	8/25/2025	8/24/2026	8/23/2027

Applicants that are properly registered¹ in Grants.gov can only submit applications via the Workspace function starting with the NOFO release date and ending on the NOFO close date indicated above for each FY. Applications must be submitted electronically through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) no later than 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time, on those “NOFO Close” dates for any Funding Year the applicant wishes to apply for funding. The Grants.gov “Apply” function will open by the NOFO Release Date and will close after the NOFO Close Date.

DOT encourages applicants to submit applications in advance of the applicable application deadline for Year Two through Year Five funds after the Application Open Period begins; however, each FY, applications will not be evaluated, and awards will not be made, until after the application deadline for that FY.

For each Application Open Period, DOT plans to conduct outreach regarding the Culvert AOP Program in the form of a virtual meeting (Webinar) after the NOFO period opens, and before the NOFO period closes. The Webinar will be conducted in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). To view upcoming Webinars and register, please follow the instructions posted on [Culvert AOP Program Website \(FHWA\)](#). Webinars will be recorded and posted on DOT's Website at [Culvert AOP Program Website \(FHWA\)](#). A Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD) is available for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing at 202-366-3993.

ADDRESSES: Applications must be submitted electronically through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Refer to Assistance Listing (formerly known as the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (CFDA)): 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Points of contact are listed in [Section D.1](#).

Refer to [Section A.3](#) for information about submitting questions to DOT.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Each section of this NOFO contains information and instructions relevant to the application process for Culvert AOP Program grants. Applicants should read this NOFO in its entirety so that they have the information they need to submit eligible and competitive applications.

¹ [grants.gov/applicants/applicant-registration](https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-registration)

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NOTE: This NOFO contains collection-of-information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act. The use of Standard Forms 424, 424A, 424B, 424C, 424D, and SF-LLL has been approved by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Control Number 2105-0520. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection displays a currently valid OMB control number.

NOTE: DOT uses [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) for receipt of all applications. Applicants must register and use the system to submit applications electronically. Applicants are encouraged to register in advance of the submission deadline and to register to receive notifications of updates/amendments to this NOFO. Approval of user registrations for the site may take multiple weeks. It is the Applicant’s responsibility to monitor this site for any updates to this NOFO.

NOTE: To assist potential applicants to understand terminology and nomenclature, this NOFO will denote defined terms (found in [Section H.4](#)) using hyperlinks the first time this NOFO uses that term.

SECTION A - PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1) Overview

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (Pub. L. 117-58, November 15, 2021, “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law,” or “BIL”) appropriated \$200 million,¹ annually, for Federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 through 2026 to be awarded by DOT for Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) under the National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program under 49 U.S.C. 6703 (Culvert AOP Program). The program provides competitive grants for the replacement, removal, and repair of culverts or weirs that: (1) would meaningfully improve or restore [fish passage](#) for [anadromous](#) fish; and (2) with respect to [weirs](#), may include (A) infrastructure to facilitate anadromous fish passage around or over the weir; and (B) weir improvements (49 U.S.C. 6703(b)).

On October 6, 2022, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) issued a NOFO soliciting applications for \$196 million in FY 2022 Culvert AOP Program funds. DOT awarded \$195,877,358 to 59 applications from [Tribal](#), [State](#), and [local](#) governments to advance improvements at 169 locations nationwide.

This NOFO covers funds available for FY 2023 through 2026, along with any unused funds from FY 2022. [Eligible applicants](#) may apply for a specific fiscal year of funding at any time between the opening of the respective fiscal year’s application period up to the application deadline for that fiscal year.

The Culvert AOP Program seeks applications from States and a diverse array of local units of government and Indian Tribes regardless of size, location, and experience administering Federal funding awards who are seeking projects to improve or restore fish passage for anadromous fish.

The primary goal of the Culvert AOP Program is to improve or restore anadromous fish passage through the replacement, removal, repair, or improvement of [culverts](#) or weirs. The grant program prioritizes projects that would improve fish passage for: (A) anadromous fish stocks listed as an [endangered species](#) or a [threatened species](#) under Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1533); (B) anadromous fish stocks identified by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) that [could reasonably become listed](#) as an endangered species or a threatened species under that Section; (C) anadromous fish stocks identified by the NMFS or the USFWS as prey for endangered species, threatened species, or [protected species](#), including southern resident orcas (*Orcinus orca*); or (D) anadromous fish stocks identified by the NMFS or the USFWS as [climate resilient](#)

¹ Section 21203(i) of BIL authorizes to be appropriated \$800 million to carry out the program for each of FY 2022 through 2026. Under Title VIII of Division J of BIL an additional amount of \$1 billion is to remain available until expended for the Culvert AOP Program, as authorized by 49 U.S.C. 6703, provided that \$200 million is to remain available until expended for each individual FY 2022 through 2026. Due to the 2 percent authorized for administrative expenses necessary to carry out the program under 49 U.S.C. 6703, \$196 million is available for award for each individual FY from FY 2023 to FY 2026 under this notice.

[stocks](#) (49 U.S.C. 6703(e)(1)).² The program also prioritizes projects that would open up more than 200 meters of upstream (anadromous) habitat before the end of the natural habitat (49 U.S.C. 6703(e)(2)).

DOT seeks to fund projects that advance the Departmental priorities of safety, [equity](#), climate and sustainability, and workforce development, job quality, and wealth creation as described in the DOT Strategic Plan; Research, Development and Technology Strategic Plan; and in executive orders.³

[Section E](#) of this NOFO, which outlines the Culvert AOP Program grant selection criteria, describes the process for selecting projects that further these goals. [Section F.4](#) describes progress and performance reporting requirements for selected projects, including the relationship between that reporting and the program’s selection criteria, and the Administration’s goals, as appropriate.

2) **Additional Information**

- i. The Culvert AOP Program grant is described in the Federal Assistance Listings under the assistance listing program title “Highway Planning and Construction” and assistance listing number 20.205.
- ii. DOT is committed to considering project funding decisions holistically among the various discretionary grant programs available in BIL. DOT also recognizes that applicants may be seeking funding from multiple discretionary grant programs and opportunities. An applicant may seek the same award amounts from multiple DOT discretionary opportunities or seek a combination of funding from multiple DOT opportunities.
 - a. The applicant should identify any other DOT programs and opportunities they intend to apply for (or utilize if the Federal funding is already available to the applicant), and what award amounts they will be seeking, in the appropriate sections of this NOFO, including [Section D.2.b.ii](#).

3) **Technical Assistance**

To support applicants, DOT will provide technical and interagency resources at the [Culvert AOP Program Website \(FHWA\)](#). In accordance with 49 U.S.C 6703(g), DOT will also provide technical assistance to Indian Tribes and [underserved communities](#) to assist in the project design and grant process and procedures. DOT will not, however, review applications in advance or provide guidance to an applicant regarding how to address any information that should be

² See definitions of this terms in [Section H.4](#). These all refer to Federal classifications.

³ Executive Order (E.O.) 14008, *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad* (86 FR 7619). (E.O.) 13985, *Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government* (86 FR 7009). E.O. 14025, *Worker Organizing and Empowerment* (86 FR 22829), and E.O. 14052, *Implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* (86 FR 64335).

included in an application. As appropriate, DOT will post answers to questions and requests for clarifications at Grants.gov under this NOFO's page.

Additional information and resources for technical assistance can be found on DOT Navigator (<https://www.transportation.gov/dot-navigator>) and the BIL Technical Assistance Webpage (https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/technical_support.cfm).

4) Changes from the FY 2022 (Year One) NOFO

The following summarizes major changes from the FY 2022 (Year One) NOFO:

- Changes to a multi-year NOFO. This NOFO sets out the application requirements and dates for funding available in FY 2023 through FY 2026.
- 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 ([Attachment 1](#)).
- Provides clarifying language to Selection Criteria in [Section E.1](#) as a result of feedback and consultation on the Year One NOFO.

SECTION B - FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1) Award Amount Available

The BIL appropriated a total of \$200 million in Culvert AOP Program funding for each FY from FY 2023 (Year Two) through FY 2026 (Year Five). Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 6703(h), up to 2 percent of this funding may be used to pay the administrative expenses necessary to carry out the program. DOT therefore intends to use 2 percent of the \$200 million in available funding (\$4 million) on administrative expenses each FY, leaving \$196 million available for grants for Year Two through Year Five, along with any additional funding available from FY 2022. If DOT does not award and obligate all funds available for a FY, DOT may carry over any unobligated funds to be awarded in the next FY or publish additional solicitations. FY 2025 funds cannot be obligated before October 1, 2024, and FY 2026 funds cannot be obligated before October 1, 2025.

2) Award Size

There is no minimum or maximum award size for the Culvert AOP Program. From funding available each FY, DOT anticipates awarding Culvert AOP Program Grants ranging from \$200,000 to \$50 million. DOT reserves the discretion to consider award sizes outside the anticipated award range listed above upon receiving the full pool of applications and assessing the needs of the program in relation to the Culvert AOP Program grant priorities in [Section A.1](#) and considerations and criteria found in [Section E.1](#).

For reference, in Year One, the Culvert AOP program awarded \$195.8 million in grants to 59 applicants for improvements at 169 locations, with the minimum award being \$211,564, largest award being \$20 million, and average award being \$3.3 million.

3) Statutory Funding Provisions

Culvert AOP Program funds are available until expended.

4) Previous Culvert AOP Program Awards

Recipients of Culvert AOP Program grants may apply for additional Culvert AOP Program funding to support additional phases or components of a project previously awarded Culvert AOP Program funds. To be competitive, the applicant should demonstrate the extent to which the previously funded project phase has met estimated project schedules and budget, as well as the ability to realize the benefits expected for the overall project. A previous Culvert AOP Program award, or application, does not affect competitiveness under this NOFO.

While DOT may award grants to support additional phases or components of a previously awarded project, DOT will not award additional Culvert AOP Program funds for the same work covered by a previous Culvert AOP Program grant award.

5) Type of Award

An applicant awarded a grant will execute a grant agreement with the applicable DOT Operating Administration (such as the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit

Administration (FTA), or Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)). Procedures for grant administration may vary based on the DOT Operating Administration administering the grant.¹ The applicable DOT Operating Administration may consider cooperative agreements on a case-by-case basis in which substantial involvement between the DOT Operating Administration and the recipient is anticipated.

DOT will primarily administer grants on a reimbursement basis. Recipients or sub-recipients do have the option to request alternative funding arrangements. Under the reimbursement approach, Culvert AOP Program funds will reimburse recipients only for costs incurred after execution of Culvert grants that DOT determines to be allowable, reasonable, and allocable, as defined under [2 CFR Part 200](#), and after the recipient submits valid requests for reimbursement. If the recipient or sub-recipients requests alternative funding arrangements, DOT will consider these arrangements and determine allowance at its sole discretion and in accordance with [2 CFR 200.305](#).

6) Availability of Funds

Obligation of a Culvert AOP grant occurs when a selected applicant enters a project agreement with the DOT and DOT authorizes the project to proceed. For construction grants, this is generally after the applicant has satisfied applicable administrative requirements, including transportation and environmental review requirements and compliance with 2 CFR 200.317-200.327.

7) Period of Performance

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 Fiscal 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.

¹ For example, for funds administered by FHWA, if the successful applicant is a State department of transportation (State DOT) or a State DOT will serve as a pass-through entity to a non-State DOT entity, Culvert AOP Program funds will be awarded upon the execution of a project agreement, which is a type of grant agreement for the administration of funds to a State DOT in the Fiscal Management Information System (FMIS). If the successful applicant is a non-State DOT, Culvert AOP Program funds will be awarded upon the execution of a grant agreement with FHWA. A determination will be made if the successful applicant will administer the grant or whether a State DOT will administer the project at the request of the successful applicant.

SECTION C - ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

To be selected for a grant, an applicant must meet the eligibility requirements under this section, including the following: Eligible Applicant; Statutory Cost Sharing or Match; and Eligible Project requirements. Applications that do not meet these threshold eligibility requirements will not be evaluated under criteria in [Section E.1](#).

1) Eligible Applicants

Eligible Applicants are: (1) States; (2) units of local government; and (3) Indian Tribes (49 U.S.C. 6703(c)). For the purpose of this program and as defined in Section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304), Indian Tribe means any Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (85 Stat. 688) [43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.], which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians (49 U.S.C. 6703(a)(2)).

Multiple Eligible Applicants may submit a joint application. Such applications should identify a Lead Applicant as the primary point of contact and identify the primary recipient of the award. The requirements applicable to the Lead Applicant will apply to a joint application that receives Culvert AOP Program funding. Joint applications should include a description of the roles and responsibilities of each applicant. Although not required, applicants without experience with DOT funding requirements may consider jointly applying with another Eligible Applicant with an established financial relationship with DOT and knowledge of Federal grant administration requirements, which may minimize delays in establishing and implementing funding agreements.

2) Cost Sharing or Matching

a) Cost-share for a State or a unit of local government

Per 49 U.S.C. 6703(f), there is an 80 percent limit to the Federal share of the total project costs¹ of carrying out a project with a grant to a State or a unit of local government under the Culvert AOP Program. Recipients are required to contribute a local matching share of no less than 20 percent of eligible activities of the total project costs.

Additional information on non-Federal matching requirements can be found at <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dot-navigator/understanding-non-federal-match-requirements>.

DOT will not consider previously incurred costs or previously expended or encumbered funds towards the matching requirement for any project. Matching funds are otherwise subject to the same Federal requirements described in [Section F.2](#) as awarded funds.

¹ For example, on a \$5 million project, the maximum Federal share would be \$4 million (80 percent times \$5 million) and the minimum required matching would be \$1 million (20 percent times \$5 million).

See [Section D.2.b.ii](#) for information about documenting cost sharing in the application.

For each project that receives a grant under this NOFO, DOT expects the project to be completed using at least the level of non-Federal funding that was specified in the application.

b) Cost-share for Indian Tribes

The Culvert AOP Program does not require Indian Tribes to provide a cost share.

3) Other

a) Number of Applications

There is no limitation on the number of applications that an Eligible Applicant may submit. Each application must be complete and be able to stand on its own merits. DOT encourages joint applications from Eligible Applicants with a lead applicant identified.

An Eligible Applicant may bundle two or more otherwise Eligible Projects as a single application. DOT reserves the right to partially fund applications with bundled projects, partially fund any individual projects enclosed within a bundled application, or partially fund any components of an individual project enclosed within a bundled application. If applicants choose to bundle projects, bundled projects should provide additive value to an eligible stock, watershed, or region.

b) Eligible Projects

Eligible Projects must: (1) meaningfully improve or restore fish passage for anadromous fish; and (2) involve the replacement, removal, or repair of culverts or weirs. With respect to weirs, an Eligible Project may also include infrastructure to facilitate fish passage around or over the weir and weir improvements. See 49 U.S.C. 6703(b). Eligible Projects should also: (3) have a [transportation nexus](#) (*e.g.*, involve, relate to, or be situated in close proximity to a road/rail crossing, pipeline, highway, or other transportation infrastructure).²

Applications may propose a project (or bundled multiple projects) that may include non-construction activities, construction activities, or both. Non-construction activities can include planning, feasibility analyses, revenue forecasting, environmental review, preliminary engineering and [design studies](#), and other preconstruction activities. Construction activities can include replacement and preservation, reconstruction, rehabilitation, acquisition of real property (including land related to the project and improvements to the land), environmental mitigation, construction contingencies, acquisition of equipment, and operational improvements directly related to improving system performance.

Eligible grant activities may include preliminary and detailed design studies and associated environmental studies; predevelopment/preconstruction; preliminary engineering; acquisition of rights-of-way; consultation and permitting activities; completion of environmental review under

² The Culvert AOP Program is located under Chapter 67, Multimodal Infrastructure Investments, of Title 49, Transportation, of the U.S.C.

the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process; the replacement, removal, or repair of culverts or weirs, or weir improvements; and the replacement of an eligible facility with a new facility that meaningfully restores fish passage, as well as performing data collection and monitoring prior to, during, and following construction activities funded by the Culvert AOP Program. See [2 CFR § 200.403](#). DOT recognizes that some potential projects may focus on subsets of activities within project development (*e.g.*, environmental studies and reviews, preliminary engineering) or propose to complete project activities (*e.g.*, final design and construction). DOT will allow proposed projects that include subsets of these activities or that propose to complete project activities. Proposals may also include capacity-building and stakeholder engagement to support the project activities.

Costs of replacing, removing, or repairing culverts or weirs that are the subject of a settlement agreement or court order³ are eligible under the Culvert AOP Program, and are reimbursable if awarded a grant under this program and incurred pursuant to such award.

³ For example, the 2013 “Permanent Injunction Regarding Culvert Correction” issued by the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington.

SECTION D - APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1) Address to Request Application Package

All application materials may be found on Grants.gov at <http://www.Grants.gov>.

Once at Grants.gov, select the Search Grants tab. Then enter one of the following:

- Opportunity Number: 693JJ324NF00025
- Opportunity Name: FY 2023-FY 2026 National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program
- Assistance Listing Number: 20.205

When at one of these pages, select the Opportunity, which will open to a page with several tabs. The first tab is a synopsis of the opportunity. Select the Application Package tab to download the forms needed to submit a Culvert AOP Program application.

For a TDD, please call (202) 366-3993. If potential applicants are unable to download the application package from the internet, they may send a written request for a paper copy to the address below.

Requests should be sent to:

Ryan Buck
Agreement Officer
Office of Acquisition and Grants Management
Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE., Mailstop E62-204
Washington, DC 20590-0001
Email: CulvertAOP@dot.gov (preferred)
Phone: (202) 366-4229

Alternate:
Robin Hobbs
Agreement Officer/Team Leader
Office of Acquisition and Grants Management
Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE., Mailstop E62-204
Washington, DC 20590-0001
Email: CulvertAOP@dot.gov (preferred)
Phone: (202) 366-4004

2) **Content and Form of Application Submission**

a) **Application Overview**

All applications must be submitted electronically through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

NOTE: DOT may share application information within the DOT or with other Federal agencies if the DOT determines that sharing is relevant to the respective program’s objectives.

NOTE: For the purposes of [Section D.2](#) “project” can refer to a single project under an unbundled application or multiple projects within an application that are bundled as described in [Section C.3.a](#).

The application package must consist of the following:

Required Forms for Non-Construction Project Applications:	Required Forms for Construction Project Applications:
Standard Form 424 (Application for Federal Assistance)	Standard Form 424 (Application for Federal Assistance)
Grants.gov Lobbying Form (Certification Regarding Lobbying)	Grants.gov Lobbying Form (Certification Regarding Lobbying)
Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form (SFLLL)	Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form (SFLLL)
Standard Form 424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs)	Standard Form 424C (Budget Information for Construction Programs)

DOT strongly suggests also including the template provided in **Error! Reference source not found.** as part of the application.

NOTE: All mandatory Standard Forms (SF) of the 424 family are available for download at the <https://www.grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family>.

(i) **Standard Form 424**

NOTE: Applicants may leave fields 5a, 5b, 6, 7, and 13 blank on the form.

NOTE: A number of separate PDF flat files must be attached in Item 15 to provide required project information that is not included in the body of the SF-424.

Instructions for adding Item 15 Attachments:

- Click on “Add Attachments” in Item 15 to open the first pop-up window. Click “Add Attachment” and a second pop-up File Explorer/Directory window will appear, from which you can choose files to attach. Attachments can be added one at a time or all at once by holding down the CTRL key and selecting multiple files. Select “Open” to add the selected files as attachments.

- Click “Done” to finalize the attachments.
- Click “View Attachments” to see a list of files that have been added as attachments.

Required attachment(s) to the SF 424: The Project Narrative (see [Section D.2.b](#)) must be added as an attachment to Item 15 of the SF-424. The Culvert AOP Program strongly recommends using the Application Template (see Attachment 1) to develop the Project Narrative.

- (ii) Grants.gov Lobbying Form**
- (iii) Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form (SF-LLL)**
- (iv) Required Forms for Non-Construction Projects**

Applicants proposing non-construction-related projects must submit the following forms:

1. Standard Form 424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs); and

NOTE: The Standard Form 424A should be supported by a budget narrative explaining each element of cost.

- (v) Required Forms for Construction Projects**

Applicants proposing construction-related projects must submit the following forms:

1. Standard Form 424C (Budget Information Construction Programs); and

NOTE: The Standard Form 424C should be supported by a budget narrative explaining each element of cost.

b) Project Narrative

The project narrative should provide information necessary for DOT to determine that the project satisfies the eligibility requirements described in [Section C](#) and to evaluate the selection criteria specified in [Section E.1](#). All project narratives should follow the outline below which will also assist evaluators in locating relevant information. DOT also recommends applicants use the Application Template located in Attachment 1 to assist in structuring the project narrative and to ensure all appropriate information is included in the project narrative.

I.	Basic Project Information – Description, Location, and Parties	See D.2.b.i
II.	Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of all Project Funding	See D.2.b.ii
III.	Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities	See D.2.b.iii
IV.	Project Selection Criteria	See D.2.b.iv
V.	Project Readiness and Environmental Risk	See D.2.b.v

To the extent practicable, applicants should provide supporting data and documentation in a form that is directly verifiable by DOT. DOT may request additional information, including additional data, to clarify supporting data and documentation submitted in an application. DOT also encourages applicants, to the extent practicable, to provide data in a form that is publicly available or otherwise verifiable. To ensure a fair and unbiased evaluation of applications submitted under this NOFO, DOT will not request additional information to complete incomplete applications.

As a part of the Project Narrative, applicants should include a detailed statement of work, project schedule, and project budget. As appropriate, the Project Narrative should include a table of contents, maps, and graphics, to make the information easier to review.

DOT specifies that the project narrative be prepared with standard formatting preferences (i.e., a single-spaced document, using a standard 12-point font such as Times New Roman, with 1-inch margins). The project narrative must not exceed 25 pages in length. Appendices may only include documents supporting assertions or conclusions made in the 25-page project narrative and do not count towards the 25-page limit.

If possible, Website links to supporting documentation should be provided rather than copies of these supporting materials. If supporting documents are submitted, applicants should clearly identify within the project narrative the relevant portion of the project narrative that each supporting document supports. DOT recommends using appropriately descriptive final names (e.g., “Project Narrative,” “Maps,” “Memoranda of Understanding” and “Letters of Support,” etc.) for the naming and titling of all attachments. DOT recommends project narratives include the following sections:

(i) Basic Project Information – Project Description, Location, and Parties

(aa) Project Description

The applicant should provide a concise description of the project including a discussion of the project’s history and a description of any previously incurred costs. The applicant should use this section to place the project into a broader conservation context, including identification of anadromous fish species and other important species that the project will benefit, existing conservation designations or plans for the watershed or project area, ecosystem restoration initiatives in the watershed or project area, and benefits of the project to ecosystem processes and functions, such as increasing ecological connectivity. The applicant may also use this section to place the project into the broader context of other infrastructure or fish passage investments being pursued or implemented by the project sponsor or other entities in the watershed, including other conservation and restoration grant programs administered by the NMFS, USFWS, and other Federal Agencies.

(bb) Project Location

The applicant should provide a concise description of the project location, including a detailed geographical description of the proposed project, a map of the project’s location and connections to existing transportation infrastructure, and geospatial data (e.g., latitude and longitude) describing the project location (DOT will accept GIS shapefiles under 200 MB file size).

(cc) Other Public and Private Parties

Where appropriate, the applicant should describe in detail all of the other public and private parties who are involved in delivering the application, including a specific description of the role of each entity in delivering the project.

(ii) Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of all Project Funding

The applicant should describe the budget for the entire application package, including listing each project separately, in detail and the plans for covering the full cost of the project from all sources (including the Federal share and non-Federal/matching share, if applicable).

(aa) Detailed Budget

Project budgets should show how different funding sources will share in each activity and present the data in dollars and percentages. The budget should identify other Federal funds the applicant is applying for, has been awarded, or intends to use. Funding sources should be grouped into three categories: non-Federal, current application *Culvert AOP Program*, and other Federal with specific amounts for each funding source.

The application budget should identify all Federal funds (either Culvert AOP Program funds or other Federal funds) that are to be used for future eligible costs of the project, including other Federal grants that have been awarded to the project or for which the project intends to apply in the future. For each category of Federal funds to be used for future eligible project costs, the budget should include the amount, nature, and source of any required non-Federal match for those Federal funds.

If the application contains multiple components or bundled projects, the budget should separate the costs of each component or bundled project. If the application contains projects that will be completed in phases, the budget should separate the costs of each phase. The budget should be detailed enough to demonstrate that the project satisfies the Culvert AOP Program statutory cost-sharing or matching requirements described in [Section C.2](#), if applicable, and those associated with each category of Federal funding.

The application should include information showing that the applicant has budgeted sufficient contingency amounts to cover unanticipated cost increases. In addition to the information enumerated above, this section should provide complete information on how all project funds may be used, availability, and funding commitments. FHWA reserves the right, after an application is selected for award, to request additional supporting information and or documentation for purposes of confirming costs proposed are allowable (2 CFR 200.403) Reasonable (2 CFR 200.404) and Allocable (2 CFR.405).

(iii) Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities

The applicant should describe how the proposal meets the Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities listed at the start of [Section E](#).

(iv) Project Selection Criteria

The applicant should describe how the proposal meets the Project Selection Criteria listed in **Section E.1.a.**

Applicants should note that merit reviewers will focus on the project narrative section of the application and will not be required to reference other sections in the application package; therefore, all relevant information to demonstrate alignment with the project selection criteria described in **Section E.1.a** should be included in this section of the application. Applicants should describe the merit criteria in the order in which they are described in the NOFO, and address each criterion separately.

To respond to Selection Criterion #4 the application should provide in sufficient detail:

- A description of the current condition and severity of the fish passage **barrier** (culvert or weir; partial or full barrier) and assessment of habitat conditions and extent upstream and downstream.
- A clear identification of design standards, guidelines, or methodology to be used for fish passage improvement, along with any relevant designs or plan sets as applicable to the specific project.
- An evaluation of site characteristics supporting the proposed fish passage approach, considering biological and engineering feasibility.
- Evidence that the applicant has chosen, or has a plan to select, a design standard or specification, applicable to the affected mode(s) of transportation, such that any project infrastructure constructed or affected by the proposed project ensures the safety of the traveling public over the anticipated service life of such infrastructure.
- In addressing the safety of the traveling public over the anticipated service life of the infrastructure, the applicant should also address maintenance responsibility over the life of the asset.
- A description of any data collection and monitoring needs or requirements, along with available data (qualitative or quantitative) or evidence supporting the proposed monitoring and evaluation approach and detail on whether these needs or requirements are proposed for pre- or post-project implementation (or both), or, if no pre- or post-project implementation monitoring will be developed or performed by the applicant, an explanation of existing or future efforts to support monitoring.

(v) Project Readiness and Environmental Risk

The application should include information that, when considered with the project budget information, is sufficient for DOT to evaluate whether the project is reasonably expected to begin in a timely manner. To assist DOT's project readiness assessment, the applicant should provide the information requested on **technical feasibility**, **project schedule**, **project approvals**, and **project risks**, each of which is described in greater detail in the following sections. Applicants are not required to follow the specific format described here, but this organization, which addresses each relevant aspect of project readiness, promotes a clear discussion that assists application evaluators.

(aa) Technical Feasibility

The applicant should describe the technical feasibility of the project with engineering and [design studies](#) and activities; the development of design criteria and/or a basis of design; the basis for the cost estimate presented in the application, including the identification of contingency levels appropriate to its level of design; and any scope, schedule, and budget risk-mitigation measures. Applicants should include a detailed statement of work that focuses on the technical and engineering aspects of the project and describes in detail the project to be constructed. The applicant must demonstrate compliance with Title VI/Civil Rights requirements, to ensure that no person is excluded from participation, denied benefits, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

(bb) Project Schedule

The applicant should include a detailed project schedule that identifies all major project milestones. Examples of such milestones include:

- State and local pre-construction approvals (e.g., planning, environmental permits, other requirements), if applicable to the proposed project;
- Start and completion of NEPA and other Federal environmental reviews and approvals, including permitting;
- Design completion;
- Right-of-way acquisition;
- Approval of plans, specifications, and estimates (PS&E);
- Procurement;
- Scheduled State and local approvals for construction;
- Project partnership and implementation agreements including agreements with railroads or private property owners; and
- Construction.

The project schedule should be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate that:

- All necessary activities will be complete to allow Culvert AOP Program funds to be obligated¹ timely and that any unexpected delays will not put the funds at risk of expiring before they are obligated; and
- All real property and right-of-way acquisition necessary for the project will be completed in a timely manner in accordance with [49 CFR Part 24](#), [2 CFR Part 200](#), and other applicable legal requirements or a statement that no acquisition is necessary. A plan for

¹ Obligation for a Culvert AOP Program grant occurs when a selected applicant enters a project agreement with the DOT Operating Administration and the DOT Operating Administration authorizes the project to proceed. For construction, this is generally after the applicant has satisfied applicable administrative requirements, including transportation planning and environmental review requirements.

securing any required right-of-way agreements should be included. If applicable, this section should describe a right-of-way acquisition plan that minimally disrupts communities and maintains community cohesion.

(cc) Required Approvals

Environmental Permits and Reviews. The application should provide documentation of receipt (or the schedule for anticipated receipt) of all environmental approvals and permits necessary for the project to meet the project delivery timeline specified in the project schedule, and necessary to meet the statutory obligation deadline if applicable, including satisfaction of all Federal, State, and local requirements and completion of the NEPA process. Specifically, in this section the applicant may elaborate on the NEPA evaluation process. If the final Agency action with respect to NEPA occurred more than 3 years before the application date, the applicant should describe a proposed approach for updating this material in accordance with applicable NEPA reevaluation or supplementation requirements. As applicable, this section should also provide:

- Any information or documentation on reviews, approvals, and permits by other Federal, State, or Tribal agencies. An application should indicate whether the proposed project requires reviews or approval actions by other agencies, indicate the status of such actions, and provide detailed information about the status of those reviews or approvals and the timeline for such approvals.
- Environmental studies or other documents that describe in detail known project impacts, and possible mitigation for those impacts.
- A description of public engagement about the project that has occurred, including details on the degree to which public comments and commitments have been integrated into project development and design.
- A description of the environmental review and permitting process for the proposed fish passage efforts, including the following, as applicable:
 - Discussions with DOT regarding the project's compliance with NEPA and other applicable Federal environmental reviews and approvals,
 - A realistic timeline that includes key milestones to be achieved, and the status of permitting and environmental compliance.
- A description of components of the project that could prevent the project from obtaining needed environmental approvals, or significantly extend the timeline for approvals. For example, any known concerns associated with the project which could affect timely delivery should be declared. This information should include whether the project requires right-of-way acquisitions or approvals that could adversely impact the project timeline.
- Information on whether the approach for the project allows for use of streamlined environmental approvals or programmatic consultations.

State and Local Approvals. The applicant should demonstrate receipt (or the schedule for anticipated receipt) of State and local approvals on which the project depends, such as State and local environmental and planning approvals, and Statewide Transportation

Improvement Program (STIP) or Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding, if applicable to the proposed project. Additional support from relevant State and local officials is not required; however, an applicant should demonstrate that the project has broad public support.

c) Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies.

Project risks, such as procurement delays, environmental uncertainties, increases in real estate acquisition costs, uncommitted local match, concerns expressed by stakeholders or impacted communities or residents or businesses who would be relocated for the project, or lack of legislative approval, affect the likelihood of successful project start and completion. The applicant should identify and assess all material risks to the project and the strategies that the lead applicant and any project partners have undertaken or will undertake to mitigate those risks.² To the extent an applicant is unfamiliar with grant programs from DOT or its Operating Administrations, the applicant should contact the Division or Regional Offices of the Operating Administration supporting the type of transportation infrastructure with a nexus to the proposed grant. For example, the FHWA Division Office in their State may be found at [Field Offices | Federal Highway Administration \(dot.gov\)](#) for information on what steps are prerequisite to the obligation of Federal funds to ensure that their project schedule is reasonable and that there are no risks of delays in satisfying Federal requirements.

d) Lead Applicant Evaluation

This section of the application should provide details about the lead applicant who must be an Eligible Applicant as described in [Section C.1](#). The details should include the education and experience the applicant has in stakeholder collaboration, planning, design, engineering, construction, and/or monitoring efforts, as applicable to the proposed project; and whether the application demonstrates that the applicant has the capacity to complete the proposed project, even in the face of adverse conditions. The details should also include the lead applicant's demonstrated experience with receipt and expenditure of DOT grant funds or other Federal funding sources such as program funds from DOT Operating Administrations, USFWS, or NMFS and state the applicant's ability to manage the requested amount of funds, maintain financial and administrative records, and fulfill reporting requirements. DOT will consider the degree of experience as part of the project readiness evaluation. If an application is rated highly under other criteria, but the applicant has no or limited experience with the receipt and expenditure of grant funds from DOT or its Operating Administrations, DOT may contact the applicant prior to final selection of annual awards to discuss resources that may be available to assist the applicant in obtaining the capacity and expertise to ensure compliance with all applicable Federal requirements and timely delivery of the project.

² DOT considers an applicant's lack of experience with receipt and expenditure of Federal funds from DOT or its Operating Administrations a material risk.

3) Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

The Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS), required for entities doing business with the Federal government, was replaced by the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) in the System for Award Management (SAM). Applicants must now use their UEI, issued during the SAM.gov registration process, to do business with DOT. If your entity was actively registered, then your UEI was automatically assigned and it is currently viewable in SAM.gov; there is no action for registered entities to take at this time to obtain your SAM UEI. If you are a new entity or your registration has expired, you must register your entity in SAM.gov and you will be assigned a UEI.

Each applicant is required to:

- Be registered in SAM before submitting their application;
- Provide a valid UEI in their application; and
- Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which the applicant has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding Agency.

Please see <https://grants.gov/applicants/applicant-faqs#uei> for more information on the transition from DUNS to SAM UEI, including what UEI to enter into the UEI field on Grants.gov and on application package forms.

DOT may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Federal awarding Agency is ready to make a Federal award, the Federal awarding Agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

NOTE: SAM.gov requires the registrant to provide a UEI number to complete the registration. These processes can take several weeks to complete so should be started well before the application deadline.

4) Submission Dates and Times

For funding available each FY, applications for that funding must be submitted electronically through [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov) no later than 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time by the NOFO Close date shown below:

Activity	Fund Year (Fiscal Year)			
	Year Two (FY23)	Year Three (FY24)	Year Four (FY25)	Year Five (FY26)
NOFO Release	6/25/2024	6/23/2025	6/22/2026	6/21/2027
NOFO Close	9/23/2024	8/25/2025	8/24/2026	8/23/2027

5) Intergovernmental Review

An application under this NOFO is not subject to the State review under E.O. 12372.

6) Funding Restrictions

Unless authorized by DOT in writing after DOT’s announcement of the corresponding fiscal year Culvert AOP Program awards, any costs incurred prior to DOT’s obligation of funds for a project (“pre-award costs”) are ineligible for reimbursement.

Grant funds may not be used to support or oppose union organizing, whether directly or as an offset for other funds.

7) Other Submission Requirements

a) Scalable Project Options

Applicants are encouraged to identify scaled funding options in case insufficient funding is available to fund a project or a bundled project at the full requested amount. If an applicant advises that a project is scalable, the applicant must provide an appropriate minimum funding amount that will fund an eligible project that achieves the objectives of the program and meets all relevant program requirements. The applicant must provide a clear explanation of how the project budget would be affected by a reduced award. DOT may award a lesser amount whether or not a scalable option is provided.

b) Submission Location

Applications must be submitted to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

c) Consideration of Applications

Only applicants who comply with all submission deadlines described in this NOFO and electronically submit valid applications through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) will be eligible for award. Applicants are strongly encouraged to make submissions in advance of the deadline.

d) Late Applications

Applicants experiencing technical issues with [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) that are beyond the applicant’s control must contact CulvertAOP@dot.gov prior to the application deadline with the username of the registrant and details of the technical issue experienced. The applicant must provide:

1. Details of the technical issue experienced;
2. Screen capture(s) of the technical issues experienced along with corresponding Grants.gov “Grant tracking number;”
3. The “Legal Business Name” for the applicant that was provided in the Standard Form 424;
4. The Point of Contact name submitted in the Standard Form 424;

5. The UEI associated with the application; and
6. The Grants.gov Help Desk Tracking Number.

To ensure a fair competition of limited discretionary funds, the following conditions are not valid reasons to permit late submissions: (1) failure to complete the registration process before the deadline; (2) failure to follow Grants.gov instructions on how to register and apply as posted on its Website; (3) failure to follow all instructions in this NOFO of funding opportunity; and (4) technical issues experienced with the applicant's computer or information technology environment.

After DOT reviews all information submitted and contacts [Applicant Support](#) via Grants.gov to validate reported technical issues, DOT staff will contact late applicants to approve or deny a request to submit a late application through Grants.gov. DOT will not accept appeals of DOT decision to approve or deny a request for a late application. If the reported technical issues cannot be validated, late applications will be rejected as untimely.

e) Compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

DOT encourages applicants to submit documents that are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 508 guidelines are available at <https://www.access-board.gov/ict/>.

SECTION E - APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

DOT will award Culvert AOP Program funds based on an evaluation of the project selection criteria, project readiness factors, and responsiveness to the Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities as described in this section. [Section E.1.a](#) describes the project selection criteria. DOT will score applications against the project selection criteria based on the data and information provided in the application. DOT will conduct a project readiness analysis as described in [Section E.1.b](#) for a subset of projects based on the project selection criteria. [Section E.2](#) describes the review and selection process.

DOT will award funds based on an evaluation of the project selection criteria, project readiness analysis, and responsiveness to the Statutory Required Project Selection Priorities described below, as provided in further detail in the Review and Selection process described in [Section E.2](#).

Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities. Per 49 U.S.C. 6703(e), in making grants under the Culvert AOP Program, DOT shall prioritize awarding grants under the Culvert AOP Program based on the statutorily required priorities (Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities). The Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities include the following project types:

1. Projects that improve fish passage for one or more of the following:
 - (a) Anadromous fish stocks listed as an endangered species or a threatened species under Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1533);
 - (b) Anadromous fish stocks identified by NMFS or USFWS that could reasonably become listed as an endangered species or a threatened species under that Section;
 - (c) Anadromous fish stocks identified by NMFS or USFWS as prey for endangered species, threatened species, or protected species, including Southern resident orcas (*Orcinus orca*); or
 - (d) Anadromous fish stocks identified by NFMS or USFWS as climate resilient stocks; and
2. Projects that open up more than 200 meters of upstream habitat for anadromous fish before the end of the natural habitat.

1) Criteria

a) Project Selection Criteria

DOT will evaluate Culvert AOP Program grant applications using the following six project selection criteria. DOT will also 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.

Criterion #1: Conservation Benefits to Anadromous Fish. DOT will evaluate the extent to which the project will benefit anadromous fish. The application should include information on:

(1) the anadromous species the project will benefit; (2) how the proposed project contributes to the recovery or sustainability of federally protected or at-risk anadromous species and habitats, anadromous species that represent an important resource for other federally protected species, or contributes to ecological resilience for species that are vulnerable to climate change or extreme weather events; (3) how the proposed project conforms with a written recovery, management, or State or Tribal planning or prioritization document; (4) the magnitude of the potential benefit of the proposed project to anadromous fish; and (5) the significance of the expected impact on the project's target species, including length of spawning, rearing, and migratory habitats to be made accessible to anadromous fish, and the quality of accessible habitat.

DOT will determine the significance of conservation benefits based on the scope and magnitude (or extent) of the expected benefits to species and habitats (this may include considerations of the number of anadromous species to be benefitted, the degree of endangerment of targeted species, severity of the barrier and extent of upstream habitat).

The applicant should also provide available data (qualitative or quantitative) or evidence supporting the proposed project's conservation benefits. In the case of a bundle of projects, the applicant should explain the conservation benefits of executing the projects as a bundle compared to individual unbundled projects:

High: The application clearly demonstrates significant conservation benefits to anadromous fish species and surrounding habitat. Data and evidence supporting the proposed project are based on the best available information and science.

Medium: The application demonstrates moderate conservation benefits to anadromous fish and surrounding habitat. Data and evidence supporting the proposed project are based on the best available information and science.

Low: Either: (1) The application demonstrates minor conservation benefits to anadromous fish and surrounding habitats; or (2) data and evidence supporting the proposed project are not provided or are based on questionable methods or sources.

Non-Responsive: The application does not demonstrate conservation benefits to anadromous fish species.

Criterion #2: Regional and Watershed Context. DOT will evaluate the extent to which the project will support anadromous fish populations in the regional and watershed context. The application should include information on: (1) how the proposal contributes to a holistic watershed strategy; (2) any regional or watershed plan or prioritization established by a Federal, State, local or Tribal fish and wildlife agency; and (3) if applicable, the proposed project's priority within the watershed or plan.

While evidence of inclusion of the proposed project in existing prioritization lists or plans will help an applicant demonstrate that the project will support anadromous fish populations in the regional and watershed context, projects are not required to be in an existing plan to demonstrate this support. The applicant should also provide available data (qualitative or quantitative) or evidence supporting the proposed project's value in a regional or watershed context or plan.

High: The application clearly demonstrates the project has significant value in a regional or watershed context or plan by providing substantial contextual evidence of a holistic strategy, describing existing relevant plans referenced by name, or providing information on any linkages between the proposed project and other efforts. Any data or evidence supporting the project's value in a regional or watershed context is based on the best available science or information.

Medium: The application demonstrates the project has moderate value in a regional or watershed context or plan by providing contextual evidence of a holistic strategy, describing existing relevant plans referenced by name, or providing linkages between the proposed project and other efforts. Any data or evidence supporting the project's value in a regional or watershed context is based on the best available science or information.

Low: Either: (1) The application demonstrates the project has modest or low value in a regional or watershed context or plan, such as by incorporating inadequate contextual evidence of a holistic strategy, failing to describe existing relevant plans referenced by name, or providing tenuous linkages between the proposed project and other efforts, even though the project may still be consistent with such efforts; or (2) data and evidence supporting the project's value in a regional or watershed context are not provided or are based on questionable methods or sources.

Non-Responsive: The application does not make a connection between the project and any broader regional or watershed context or plan, or it is inconsistent with regional or watershed strategies.

Criterion #3: Ecosystem Benefits. DOT will evaluate the extent to which the project will benefit the ecosystem. The application should include information on: (1) the extent the proposed project would support biodiversity (e.g., increased habitat complexity, invasive species management, and revegetation with native riparian plants); (2) how the project would benefit the physical, chemical, and biological processes that sustain river and floodplain ecosystems (examples of the processes to consider may include erosion and sediment transport; woody debris transport; floodplain connectivity; plant growth and successional processes; movement of nutrients and thermal energy; and nutrient cycling in the aquatic food web); and (3) how the project may benefit other native aquatic and terrestrial species, in addition to Anadromous fish, and enhance ecosystem resilience. The applicant should also provide available data (qualitative or quantitative) or evidence supporting the proposed project's ecosystem benefits.

High: The application clearly demonstrates significant ecosystem benefits. In demonstrating significant benefits, the discussion of ecosystem benefits describes each of the expected benefits using sourced material, past surveys or efforts, or other information sources. Data and evidence supporting the ecosystem benefits are based on the best available information and science.

Medium: The application demonstrates moderate ecosystem benefits. The discussion may discuss aspects of expected benefits, but the evidence does not amount to a clear

description of the holistic benefits provided by the project. Data and evidence supporting the ecosystem benefits are based on the best available information and science.

Low: Either: (1) The application demonstrates modest or minor ecosystem benefits; or (2) data and evidence supporting the ecosystem benefits are not provided or are based on questionable methods or sources.

Non-Responsive: The application indicates that the project will not benefit or may harm the broader ecosystem.

Criterion #4: Project Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation. DOT will evaluate the extent to which the proposed project design, monitoring, and evaluation will successfully meet the goals of improving fish passage while maintaining safety of the traveling public. This criterion assesses whether the application: (1) clearly describes its goals and objectives; (2) applies appropriate methodologies, including relevant design standards where applicable, that will provide significant and lasting benefits to fish passage; (3) is technically sound; and (4) ensures the safety of the traveling public¹ over any infrastructure constructed or affected by the proposed project, including showing that appropriate design standards will be used, any such infrastructure will perform satisfactorily over its anticipated service-life, and addressing any maintenance responsibility.²

In addition, this criterion assesses the applicant's approach to monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the proposed project: (5) provides an adequate plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented project; and (6) includes clear goals and objectives to be monitored and evaluated. For projects that are not going to construction, applications will be evaluated on the proposed monitoring and evaluation approach commensurate with the proposed project delivery phase.

For all elements of this criterion, the applicant should provide supporting available data (qualitative or quantitative) or evidence.

High: The application (1) describes clear goals and objectives, applies appropriate methodologies, and is technically sound and safe for the traveling public while enabling AOP; and, if applicable, (2) includes a technically adequate proposed monitoring and evaluation approach.

Medium: The application (1) describes goals and objectives well enough, though it may include some technical or methodological weaknesses; and the proposed design is

¹ As indicated in descriptions of ratings for this Criterion below, any application that fails to adequately ensure the safety of the traveling public over affected infrastructure will receive a rating of "non-responsive" regardless of how the other elements are addressed. Section E.1.c, titled "Overall Application Rating," explains that a rating of "non-responsive" on this or any other of the project selection criteria will result in an overall application rating of "Not Recommended."

² Maintenance responsibilities include both ensuring the safety of the traveling public and ensuring that the structure continues to function consistently with the intent of the Culvert AOP Program.

technically adequate and safe for the traveling public while enabling AOP, and its methods are acceptable; and, if applicable, (2) the proposed monitoring and evaluation approach has some technical or methodological weaknesses but is technically adequate, its methods are acceptable, and it generally describes goals and objectives.

Low: The application either (1) does not clearly describe its goals and objectives, or has methodological or technical weaknesses, but is safe for the traveling public, and, if applicable, (2) the proposed monitoring and evaluation approach is technically inadequate, has significant weaknesses which preclude assessment of whether it is technically adequate and whether it applies acceptable methods, or there is an inadequate rationale for not providing post-project implementation monitoring.

Non-Responsive: The application (1) fails to include clear goals and objectives, its methods are inappropriate, it is technically flawed, or it does not apply accepted standards and specifications to ensure safe travel by public on the transportation infrastructure; (2) if applicable, the application does not include a monitoring and evaluation plan; or (3) the data and information provided in the application indicates that the project is inconsistent with this criterion, or no data or information related to this criterion is included in the application.

Criterion #5: Climate Change, Sustainability, and Resilience. DOT will evaluate the extent to which the project will consider climate change, extreme weather events, and resilience. The application should include information, as appropriate, on: (1) how the project incorporates climate resilience measures or features, and (2) how the project's proposed methodology, if applicable, (a) bolsters adaptation and (b) builds resilience to potential climate change or extreme weather events projected at the project site. The applicant should also provide available data (qualitative or quantitative) or evidence supporting the extent to which the proposed project satisfies this criterion. FHWA will evaluate this criterion based upon and relative to the project delivery phases proposed in the application.

High: The application clearly describes substantial climate change, sustainability, and resiliency improvements.

Medium: The application generally describes climate change, sustainability, and resilience improvements or identifies moderate structural resilience improvements.

Low: The application does not clearly describe how the project incorporates considerations of climate change, sustainability, and resilience, or such improvements are minor.

Non-Responsive: The application is inconsistent with considerations of climate change, sustainability, and resilience or does not discuss considerations of climate change, sustainability, and resilience.

Criterion #6: Equity and Barriers to Opportunity. DOT will evaluate the extent to which the project will improve equity and address barriers to opportunities. Applicants may demonstrate improvement to equity and address barriers to opportunities by demonstrating whether the

project: (1) Occurs on Tribal land or within the boundaries of an underserved community;³ (2) benefits fish species that are culturally important to Tribes or underserved communities; (3) contributes to the physical sustenance of or economic benefits to Tribes or underserved communities; (4) benefits anadromous fish species that are important to the exercise of Tribal treaty rights; (5) demonstrates a commitment to promote investments in high-quality workforce development programs⁴ with supportive services to help train, place, and retain people in good-paying jobs or registered apprenticeships; or (6) demonstrates a commitment to create good-paying, safe jobs with free and fair choice to join a union including through the use of a project labor agreement; (7) adopt local and economic hiring preferences for the project workforce or include other changes to hiring policies and workplace cultures to promote the entry and retention of underrepresented populations; or (8) promote local inclusive economic development and entrepreneurship, such as the utilization of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, Minority-owned Businesses, Women-owned Businesses, or 8(a) firms.

Applications will be rated higher on this criterion if they clearly demonstrate that the proposed project will create positive outcomes to reduce, mitigate, or reverse how a community is experiencing disadvantage particularly for communities that have experienced transportation-related barriers impacting historic fish passage.

High: The application clearly describes how the applicant and proposed project demonstrate a commitment to improve equity and address barriers of opportunities for Tribes or underserved communities.

Medium: The application generally describes how the applicant and proposed project demonstrate a commitment to improve equity and address barriers of opportunities for Tribes or underserved communities.

Low: The application does not generally describe how the applicant and proposed project demonstrate a commitment to improve equity and address barriers of opportunity or how the project will be used to improve equity and address barriers of opportunities for Tribes or underserved communities.

Non-Responsive: The project described in the application would create, increase, or perpetuate inequity or barriers to opportunity in Tribal areas or underserved communities.

b) Project Readiness

DOT will consider project readiness to assess the likelihood of a successful project. To assess project readiness, DOT will evaluate three criteria: Environmental Review and Permitting Risk,

³ To identify underserved areas, applicants are strongly encouraged to use the DOT Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer tool (<https://www.transportation.gov/priorities/equity/justice40/transportation-insecurity-analysis-tool>) to understand how their project area is experiencing disadvantage in any of five areas that transportation projects have a direct relationship with.

⁴ These programs should have a focus on women, people of color, and others that are underrepresented in infrastructure jobs (people with disabilities, people with convictions, etc.).

Technical Assessment, and Financial Completeness Assessment. The application should contain a section that explicitly addresses Environmental Review and Permitting Risk and Technical Qualification Assessment, but the Financial Completeness Assessment will be based on information contained throughout the application.

Environmental Review and Permitting Risk: The environmental review and permitting risk assessment analyzes the project’s environmental approvals and likelihood of the necessary approvals affecting project obligation, and results in a rating of “high risk,” “moderate risk,” or “low risk.” The environmental review and permitting risk will be reviewed for all eligible applications and will assess whether the project can be delivered in compliance with applicable Federal, State, and local requirements including environmental laws. See [Section D.2.b.v](#) for a description of information that should be included in the application to address this Readiness criteria.

Technical Qualifications: This criterion assesses whether the applicant and its project management team possess or have a plan to acquire the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to support the proposed award. For this assessment, applications will be evaluated based on the following: (1) Infrastructure and Fish Passage Background. Does the project team (staff or partners) demonstrate the necessary education and experience in stakeholder collaboration, planning, design, engineering, construction, or monitoring efforts, in order to successfully carry out the scale and scope of the project? Does the proposal demonstrate that the project team has the capacity to complete the proposed project, even in the face of adverse conditions? (2) Management Capacity. Does the applicant describe the necessary experience or the ability to acquire assistance related to qualifications, facilities, equipment, and administrative resources available to successfully fulfill the responsibilities associated with managing a Federal grant award? Does the applicant demonstrate an ability to manage the requested amount of funds, maintain financial and administrative records, and fulfill reporting requirements?

Financial Completeness: This criterion reviews the availability of matching funds and whether the applicant presented a complete funding package, and will receive a rating of “complete,” “partially complete,” or “incomplete.” For projects that receive a rating of “complete” and include funding estimates that are based on early stages of design (e.g., less than 30 percent design) or outdated cost estimates, without specified contingency, evaluators may add a comment to note the potential for uncertainty in the estimated project costs. All applicants should describe a plan to address potential cost overruns (i.e., contingency costs) and future maintenance and preservation costs and how those costs will be funded.

The Project Readiness Ratings described above will be translated to a *High, Medium-High, -Medium, Medium-Low, or Low* rating, using the table below:

Rating	1	2	3
Environmental Review and Permitting Risk	High Risk: There are known environmental concerns associated with the project that would preclude implementation.	Moderate Risk: There are potential environmental review, or permitting concerns, but these can be likely addressed by the project without significant delays.	Low Risk: The Project has completed NEPA, or it is highly likely that they will be able to complete NEPA and other environmental reviews in the time necessary to meet their project schedule.
Technical Qualification	Low: The application does not demonstrate the applicant's capacity or ability to acquire the capacity to deliver this project in a manner that satisfies Federal requirements.	Moderate: The project may need buttressing of staff or approaches to ensure timely delivery without undue DOT oversight.	High: The project has staffing and technical teams sufficiently qualified to ensure meeting project schedule and delivery in a timely and thorough manner.
Financial Completeness	Incomplete Funding: The project lacks full funding, or one or more Federal or non-Federal match sources are still uncertain as to whether they will be secured in time to meet the project's schedule.	Partially Complete: Project funding is not fully committed but appears highly likely to be secured in time to meet the project's schedule.	Complete: The project's Federal and non-Federal sources are fully committed and there is demonstrated funding available to cover contingency/cost increases.

Project Readiness Rating	Description
High	All 3s
Medium-high	Two 3s, one 2
Medium	One 3, two 2s
Medium-low	All 2s
Low	Any 1s

c) Overall Application Rating

DOT will assign each eligible application an overall rating of “Highly Recommended,” “Recommended,” or “Not Recommended.” The rating will be assigned by DOT on the following basis:

Highly Recommended

A rating of “Highly Recommended” will be assigned to a project that meets all of the eligibility requirements; and

Received at least two High ratings and no ratings below Medium for criteria 1-3, at least a Medium rating for criterion 4, and at least one High rating for criteria 5-6.; and

Received not less than a Medium project readiness.

Recommended

A rating of “Recommended” will be assigned to a project that meets all of the eligibility requirements; and

Received at least one High rating and no ratings below Medium for criteria 1-3, at least a Medium rating for criterion 4, and at least one Medium or better rating for criteria 5-6; and

Received not less than a Medium project readiness.

Not Recommended

A rating of “Not Recommended” will be assigned to a project that meets all of the eligibility requirements;

Received two or more low ratings for criterion 1-3 and received a Non-Responsive on any of the criteria; and

Is not otherwise assigned a “Highly Recommended” or “Recommended” rating.

d) Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities

After completing the initial merit review, DOT will prioritize projects that meet one or more of the Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities listed at the beginning of [Section E](#).

2) Review and Selection Process

DOT will conduct an application intake and eligibility review by providing an initial eligibility screening based on the criteria in [Section C](#). Only eligible projects will be evaluated against the merit criteria in [Section E.1](#).

The Culvert AOP Program review and selection process consists of an Analysis Phase, Second-Level Review, FHWA Senior-Level Review, and Project Selections.

a) Analysis Phase

In the Analysis Phase, interagency analysis teams of Federal staff will review all eligible applications received by the deadline against the project selection criteria in [Section E.1.a](#) and assign a criterion rating of High, Medium, Low, or Non-Responsive for each criterion.

For projects that (1) receive at least one High rating and no Low ratings for criteria 1-3, and (2) receive no Non-Responsive ratings for any project selection criteria, the analysis teams will also evaluate such projects against the project readiness criteria as described in [Section E.1.b](#).

The analysis teams will send all applications to the Second Level Review Team.

b) Second Level Review

The Second Level Review Team will be comprised of DOT and interagency staff. This team will review the Project Selection Criteria and Project Readiness Ratings to determine an overall project rating, as well as evaluate applications against the Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities.

The Second Level Review Team will determine which projects with a rating of “Highly Recommended” will proceed to a FHWA Senior Review Team (SRT). The Second Level Review Team may also advance for consideration “Recommended” projects that meet one or more of the Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities. When advancing a “Recommended” project over a “Highly Recommended” project, the Second Level Review Team will select “Recommended” projects by considering how well the project addressed the project selection criteria and number of criteria rated High as well as the project’s ratings under project readiness.

To support the program goal of achieving high ecological value, the Second Level Review Team may prioritize for advancement applications that meet regional and National conservation objectives and involve interagency efforts to achieve greater ecological returns within a watershed or region. The Second Level Review Team may also confer and include consultation with DOT Field Offices and interagency Federal Departmental partners in determining which applications to advance to the SRT.

c) FHWA Senior Review Team

The composition of the FHWA SRT is senior leadership who have been requested to serve by the FHWA Administrator. The FHWA SRT will present the FHWA Administrator with a list of Highly Recommended and Recommended Applications for consideration. In addition, the SRT may advise the Administrator on options for reduced awards, or awards under a different funding category than identified in the application.

When identifying applications to recommend to the FHWA Administrator, the FHWA SRT may consider geographic diversity including, as applicable, balancing the needs of rural and urban communities. The FHWA SRT may also consider an application's responsiveness to the Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities.

d) Project Selections

The FHWA Administrator makes final project selections and will select among the projects advanced by the FHWA SRT. The review process gives the Administrator the discretion to determine which applications best address program requirements, including the Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities, advance the Administration's Priorities and Departmental Plan Strategic Goals, and should be selected. When selecting projects, the Administrator may also consider the Culvert AOP Program goals, geographic diversity, as well as regional and national conservation considerations, and the need to ensure the effective use of Federal funding.

There is no obligation for DOT to make any award as a result of this NOFO.

3) Additional Information

DOT may, during the selection process, enter discussions with an applicant that may include mutually agreeing upon a lesser amount of a potential award than originally requested in the application if necessary due to the quantity, size, and scope of the applications received in response to this NOFO and the results of the application review process. Discussions may include scalable project options as described in [Section D.7.a](#) of this NOFO.

Prior to award, each selected applicant will be subject to a risk assessment as required by [2 CFR § 200.206](#). DOT must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM. An applicant may review information in FAPIIS and comment on any information about itself previously entered by a Federal awarding Agency and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM. DOT will consider comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants.

SECTION F - FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1) Federal Award Notice

Following the evaluation outlined in [Section E](#), DOT will announce awarded projects by posting a list of selected projects on the [Culvert AOP Program Website \(FHWA\)](#). Notice of selection is not authorization to begin performance or to incur costs for the proposed project. Following that announcement, DOT will contact the point of contact listed in the Standard Form 424 to initiate negotiation of the project agreement for authorization. Unless alternative arrangements are made consistent with [Section C](#), recipients of Culvert AOP Program awards will not receive lump-sum cash disbursements at the time of award announcement or obligation of funds. Instead, DOT will reimburse Culvert AOP Program grant funds to recipients only after a project agreement has been executed, allowable expenses are incurred, and valid requests for reimbursement are submitted.

Unless authorized by DOT in writing after DOT's announcement of Culvert AOP Program awards for the applicable fiscal year, any costs that a recipient incurs before DOT executes a project agreement for that recipient's project are ineligible for reimbursement and are ineligible match for cost share requirements.

2) Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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](#).

In connection with any program or activity conducted with or benefiting from funds awarded under this NOFO, recipients of funds must comply with all applicable requirements of Federal law, including, without limitation, the Constitution of the United States; the conditions of performance, non-discrimination requirements, and other assurances made applicable to the award of funds in accordance with regulations of DOT; and applicable Federal financial assistance and contracting principles promulgated by OMB. In complying with these requirements, recipients, in particular, must ensure that no concession agreements are denied, or other contracting decisions made on the basis of speech or other activities protected by the First Amendment. If DOT determines that a recipient has failed to comply with applicable Federal requirements, DOT may terminate the award of funds and disallow previously incurred costs, requiring the recipient to reimburse any expended award funds.

In particular, E.O.14005 directs the executive branch departments and agencies to maximize the use of goods, products, and materials produced in, and services offered in, the United States through the terms and conditions of Federal financial assistance awards. If selected for an award, grant recipients must be prepared to demonstrate how they will maximize the use of domestic goods, products, and materials in constructing their project. Any grant projects involving vehicle acquisition must involve only vehicles that comply with applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and Federal Motor Carriers Safety Regulations, or vehicles that are exempt from Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards or Federal Motor Carrier Safety

Regulations in a manner that allows for the legal acquisition and deployment of the vehicle or vehicles.

3) Program Requirements

a) Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience

It is the policy of the United States to strengthen the security and resilience of its critical infrastructure against all hazards, including all hazards, including physical and cyber risks, consistent with [Presidential Policy Directive 21 – Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience](#), and the [National Security Memorandum on Improving Cybersecurity for Critical Infrastructure Control Systems](#). Each applicant selected for Federal funding must demonstrate, prior to the signing of the grant agreement, efforts to consider and address physical and cyber security risks relevant to the transportation mode and type and scale of the project. Projects that have not appropriately considered and addressed physical and cyber security and resilience in their planning, design, and project oversight, as determined by DOT and the Department of Homeland Security, will be required to do so before receiving funds.

b) Domestic Preference Requirements

As expressed in E.O. 14005, *Ensuring the Future Is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers* ([86 FR 7475](#)), the executive branch should maximize, consistent with law, the use of goods, products, and materials produced in, and services offered in, the United States. Funds made available under this NOFO are subject to the domestic preference requirement for steel, iron, manufactured products, and construction materials in the Build America, Buy America Act (Pub. L. No 117-58, div. G 70901–70927), as implemented by [2 CFR Part 184](#). DOT expects all applicants to comply with those requirements.

c) Civil Rights and Title VI

As a condition of a grant award, grant recipients should demonstrate that the recipient has a plan for compliance with civil rights obligations and nondiscrimination laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and implementing regulations ([49 CFR § 21](#)), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, all other civil rights requirements, and accompanying regulations. This should include a current Title VI plan, completed Community Participation Plan, and a plan to address any legacy infrastructure or facilities that are not compliant with ADA standards. DOT's and the applicable Operating Administrations' Office of Civil Rights may work with awarded grant recipients to ensure full compliance with Federal civil rights requirements.

d) Federal Contract Compliance

As a condition of the grant award and consistent with E.O. 11246, Equal Employment Opportunity ([30 FR 12319](#), and as amended), all federally-assisted contractors are required to make good faith efforts to meet the goals of 6.9 percent of construction project hours being performed by women, in addition to goals that vary based on geography for construction work hours and for work being performed by people of color. Under Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act and its implementing regulations, affirmative action obligations for certain contractors

include an aspirational employment goal of 7 percent workers with disabilities. The U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) is charged with enforcing E.O. 11246, Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Vietnam Era Veterans’ Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974. OFCCP has a Mega Construction Project Program through which it engages with project sponsors as early as the design phase to help promote compliance with non-discrimination and affirmative action obligations. OFCCP will identify projects that receive an award under this NOFO and are required to participate in OFCCP’s Mega Construction Project Program from a wide range of federally- assisted projects over which OFCCP has jurisdiction and that have a project cost above \$35 million. DOT will require project sponsors with costs above \$35 million that receive awards under this funding opportunity to partner with OFCCP, if selected by OFCCP, as a condition of their DOT award.

4) Reporting

a) Progress Reporting on Grant Activities

Each applicant selected for Culvert AOP Program grant funding must submit quarterly progress reports and Federal Financial Reports (Standard Form 425) to monitor project progress and ensure accountability and financial transparency in the Culvert AOP Program.

b) 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 (e.g., considering pre-project baselines or post-project outcomes). 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 (e.g., geomorphic, and biological) (See Definition in [Section H.4](#)) and the constructed “as-built” plans including documented post-construction conditions specific to fish passage that will establish baseline conditions for future monitoring.

c) Reporting of Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance

If the total value of a selected applicant’s currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds \$10 million for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, then the applicant during that period of time must maintain the currency of information reported in SAM that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system (currently the FAPIIS) about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings described in paragraph 2 of this award term and condition. This is a statutory requirement under Section 872 of Pub. L. No.110-417, as amended (41 U.S.C. 2313). As required by Section 3010 of Pub. L. No. 111-212, all information posted in the designated integrity and performance system on or after April 15, 2011, except past performance reviews required for Federal procurement contracts, will be publicly available.

d) Performance and Program Evaluation

As a condition of grant award, Culvert AOP grant recipients may be required to participate in an evaluation undertaken by DOT, or another agency or partner. The evaluation may take different forms such as an implementation assessment across grant recipients, an impact and/or outcomes analysis of all or selected sites within or across grant recipients, or a benefit/cost analysis or assessment of return on investment. DOT may require applicants to collect data elements to aid the evaluation. As a part of the evaluation, as a condition of award, grant recipients must agree to: (1) make records available to the evaluation contractor; (2) provide access to program records, and any other relevant documents to calculate costs and benefits; (3) in the case of an impact analysis, facilitate the access to relevant information as requested; and (4) follow evaluation procedures as specified by the evaluation contractor or DOT staff.

Recipients and sub-recipients are also encouraged to incorporate program evaluation including associated data collection activities from the outset of their program design and implementation to meaningfully document and measure the effectiveness of their projects and strategies. Title I of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act), Pub. L. No. 115–435 (2019) urges Federal awarding agencies and Federal assistance recipients and sub-recipients to use program evaluation as a critical tool to learn, to improve equitable delivery, and to elevate program service and delivery across the program lifecycle. Evaluation means “an assessment using systematic data collection and analysis of one or more programs, policies, and organizations intended to assess their effectiveness and efficiency” (codified at 5 U.S.C. 311). Credible program evaluation activities are implemented with relevance and utility, rigor, independence and objectivity, transparency, and ethics (OMB Circular A-11, Part 6 Section 290).

For grant recipients, evaluation expenses are allowable costs (either as direct or indirect), unless prohibited by statute or regulation, and such expenses may include the personnel and equipment needed for data infrastructure and expertise in data analysis, performance, and evaluation ([2 CFR Part 200](#)).

e) Other

DOT reserves the right to request additional information, if deemed needed, to better understand the status of the project. The successful applicant will provide additional financial reporting

beyond the semi-annual reporting if such statements are necessary to address DOT's Stewardship and Oversight responsibility of the funds. The successful applicant also agrees to allow periodic project inspections and DOT will provide notice for such inspections.

5) Project Signage and Public Acknowledgements

DOT encourages recipients of construction and non-construction projects to post project signage and to include public acknowledgments in published and other collateral materials (e.g., press releases, marketing materials, Website, etc.) satisfactory in form and substance to DOT, that identifies the nature of the project and indicates that "the project is funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law". In addition, recipients employing project signage are required to use the official Investing in America emblem in accordance with the Official Investing in America Emblem Style Guide. Costs associated with signage and public acknowledgments must be reasonable and limited. Signs or public acknowledgments should not be produced, displayed, or published if doing so results in unreasonable cost, expense, or recipient burden. DOT encourages the Recipient to use recycled or recovered materials when procuring signs.

SECTION G - FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

For contact information, please refer to [Section D.1](#).

SECTION H - OTHER INFORMATION

1) Protection of Confidential Business Information

All information submitted as part of or in support of any application shall use publicly available data or data that can be made public and methodologies that are accepted by industry practice and standards, to the extent possible.

If the applicant submits information that the applicant considers to be a trade secret or confidential commercial or financial information, the applicant must provide that information in a separate document, which the applicant may cross-reference from the application narrative or other portions of the application. For the separate document containing confidential information, the applicant must do the following: (1) state on the cover of that document that it “Contains Confidential Business Information (CBI)”; (2) mark each page that contains confidential information with “CBI”; (3) highlight or otherwise denote the confidential content on each page; and (4) at the end of the document, explain how disclosure of the confidential information would cause substantial competitive harm.

DOT will protect confidential information complying with these requirements to the extent required under applicable law. If DOT receives a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for the information that the applicant has marked in accordance with this section, DOT will follow the procedures described in its FOIA regulations at [49 CFR 7.29](#). Only information that is in the separate document, marked in accordance with this section, and ultimately determined to be confidential under [49 CFR § 7.29](#) will be exempt from disclosure under FOIA.

2) Publication of Application Information

Following the completion of the selection process and announcement of awards, DOT intends to publish a list of all applications received along with the names of the applicant organizations and funding amounts requested. Except for information properly marked as described in [Section H.1](#), DOT may make application narratives publicly available or share application information as described in D.2.a.

3) DOT Feedback on Applications

Debriefs by DOT are available to applicants selected and not selected for award to receive information about the evaluation of their application.

4) **Definitions**

Term	Definition
Anadromous	<p>Anadromous is the term that describes fish born in freshwater who spend most of their lives in saltwater and return to freshwater to spawn, such as salmon and some species of sturgeon. [Source: NMFS https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/node/8071]</p> <p>Target fish species under this funding opportunity are those native species that spend a portion of their lives in the ocean or estuaries, and migrate to their freshwater spawning habitats to reproduce. Species of anadromous fish include salmon, steelhead trout, shad, river herring, lamprey, and sturgeon, among others. These species may also be referred to as sea-run.</p>
Anadromous Fish Stocks	<p>(See anadromous). The living resources in the community or population from which catches are taken in a fishery. Use of the term fish stock usually implies that the particular population is more or less isolated from other stocks of the same species and hence self-sustaining. In a particular fishery, the fish stock may be one or several species of fish but here is also intended to include commercial invertebrates and plants. [http://www.fao.org/fi/glossary/default.asp]</p>
Bridge [for projects with a transportation nexus]	<p>A structure including supports erected over a depression or an obstruction, such as water, highway, or railway, and having a track or passageway for carrying traffic or other moving loads, and having an opening measured along the center of the roadway of more than 20 feet between under copings of abutments or spring lines of arches, or extreme ends of openings for multiple boxes; it may also include multiple pipes, where the clear distance between openings is less than half of the smaller contiguous opening. [See 23 CFR 650 subpart C, at 23 CFR 650.305.]</p> <p>Structures under this definition are subject to the National Bridge Inspection Standards (NBIS) [See 23 CFR 650.303].</p> <p>A bridge may have a span of 20 feet or less, but those structures are not subject to the NBIS. However, bridges with a span of 20 feet or less are subject to applicable design standards to ensure the safety of the traveling public [See 23 CFR Part 625].</p>
Climate Resilient Stocks	<p>Fish stocks that are capable of resisting, recovering, and adapting to climate change such as increases in stream temperature or changes in flow. This funding opportunity will consider fish barrier removal projects that improve the climate resilience (reduce climate vulnerability) of anadromous fish stocks and their ecosystems.</p>

Term	Definition
Culvert [for projects with a nexus to a highway]	<p>A structure comprised of one or more barrels, beneath a (transportation) embankment and designed structurally to account for soil-structure interaction. These structures are hydraulically and structurally designed to convey water, sediment, debris, and, in many cases, aquatic and terrestrial organisms through roadway embankments. Culvert barrels have many sizes and shapes and have inverts that are either integral or open, i.e., supported by spread or pile-supported footings.</p> <p>A culvert structure that is less than 20 feet in centerline span width between extreme ends of openings for multiple boxes is called a roadway culvert. If this width is more than 20 feet, the structure is called a bridge culvert (see Bridge). [Source: AASHTO Drainage Manual, 1st edition, Volume 1 (Policy), Chapter 11 “Culverts,” Section 11.1 (Introduction), page 11-1, 2014].</p>
Design Studies [for projects with a transportation nexus]	<p>Detail of studies shall be commensurate with the risk associated with the encroachment and with other economic, engineering, social or environmental concerns. [See 23 CFR 650.117].</p> <p>Studies should also contain hydrologic and hydraulic data and design computations and project plans including the magnitude, approximate probability of exceedance and, at appropriate locations, the water surface elevations associated with the base flood and overtopping flood or the flood of record.</p>
Ecosystem Resilience	<p>This term refers to the capacity of an ecosystem to absorb, withstand, respond to, or recover rapidly from disturbances linked to extreme weather events and climate hazards. Resilient ecosystems can resist damage from extreme weather events or climate hazards, while retaining or having the ability to recover their inherent structure and ecological function.</p>
Eligible Applicant	<p>For the purpose of the program, Eligible Applicants are a:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A State, 2. A unit of local government, or 3. An Indian Tribe [49 U.S.C. 6703(c)].

Term	Definition
Endangered Species	<p>For the purpose of the program and as defined on Section 3(6) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1532(6), any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range other than a species of the Class Insecta determined by the Secretary [of the Interior or the Secretary of Commerce] to constitute a pest whose protection under the provisions of this chapter would present an overwhelming and overriding risk to man.</p> <p>For the purpose of the program, endangered species are those listed as endangered species under Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1533. [See 50 CFR § 17.11].</p>
Equity	<p>The consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality. See https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2022-04/Equity_Action_Plan.pdf.</p>
Fish Passage	<p>The ability of fish to move freely between habitats they rely on for food, growth, reproduction, and other needs. Fish passage projects improve the movement of fish within and between their spawning, rearing, and adult habitats by modifying or removing dams, culverts, and other barriers that restrict their migration. For this opportunity, fish passage means anadromous fish can move through the barrier site under their own power, at multiple life stages, without delay (also known as “volitional passage”). Fish passage projects include dam removal and/or modification; culvert removal and/or replacement; nature-like fishways or bypass channels; and technical fish ladders.</p>
Indian Tribe/Tribe	<p>For the purpose of this program and as defined in Section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304), Indian Tribe means any Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (85 Stat. 688) [43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.], which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians [49 U.S.C. 6703(a)].</p>

Term	Definition
In Stream Barrier	<p>A barrier to aquatic connectivity is an obstruction that prevents or alters the natural flow of water within or between waterbodies, potentially impacting water quality, sediment movement, type of habitat, and fish passage. A barrier to fish passage is anything that prevents or reduces the ability of fish or other aquatic species to move where needed to survive and complete their life cycle within an aquatic system. The extent to which a barrier may reduce or prohibit the movement of fish or other aquatic species may vary by species and life stage. Barriers may be the result of structural impediments, such as a dam, levee, undersized culvert, or other manmade structures, or of environmental conditions, such as, waterfalls, bedrock, sediment, water quality, temperature, or flow.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A <i>partial barrier</i> to fish passage reduces movement of some individuals of one or more fish or other aquatic species some or all of the time. 2. A <i>complete barrier</i> to fish passage prohibits movement of all individuals of one or more fish or other aquatic species all of the time.
Could reasonably become listed	Species that are proposed for listing under Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act or are a Candidate for listing under Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act.
Protected Species	A protected species under Federal statute or regulation.
State	This NOFO uses the definition of “State” at 2 CFR § 200.1 .
Threatened Species	<p>For the purpose of the program and as defined on Section 3(20) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1532(20), any species which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.</p> <p>For the purpose of the program, threatened species are those listed as threaten species under Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1533 [50 CFR § 17.11].</p>
Transportation Nexus	A project involves, is related to, or is situated in close proximity to a road/rail crossing, pipeline, highway, or other transportation infrastructure (see NOFO Section C.3.b). Generally, the transportation nexus should be a part of a public or Tribal transportation network.
Underserved Communities	Populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life, as exemplified by the list in the preceding definition of “equity” [See DOT Equity Action Plan,

Term	Definition
	<p>January 2022, available at: https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2022-04/Equity_Action_Plan.pdf].</p> <p>To identify underserved areas, applicants are strongly encouraged to use the DOT Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer tool (https://www.transportation.gov/priorities/equity/justice40/transportation-insecurity-analysis-tool) to understand how their project area is experiencing disadvantage in any of five areas that transportation projects have a direct relationship with.</p>
Unit of Local Government	This NOFO uses the definition of “unit of local government” at 2 CFR § 200.1 .
Weir	A constructed barrier on a stream channel designed to provide hydraulic control without completely stopping flow or creating a large storage impoundment. A dam is not a weir for the purposes of this program.

5) Useful Links

- [Culvert AOP Program Website \(FHWA\)](#)
- [Interagency Fish Passage Portal](#)

6) Other Funding Opportunities

The Culvert AOP Program is a new grant program created under the BIL. For additional culvert or fish passage Federal assistance you may refer to other programs including, but not limited to the following:

- [FHWA Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding](#);
 - [FHWA’s Bridge Investment Program](#);
 - [FHWA’s PROTECT Program](#);
 - [FHWA’s Tribal Transportation Program](#)
 - [NOAA’s Office of Habitat Conservation’s Restoration Center fish passage initiatives](#);
- and
- [USFWS’ National Fish Passage Program](#).

National Culvert Removal Replacement and Restoration Grant Program

FY 2023 – FY 2026 National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program (Culvert AOP Program)

ATTACHMENT 1 – Application Template

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) provides this National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program (Culvert Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) Program) Application Template to assist project sponsors who intend to apply for a Culvert AOP Program grant. Interested eligible applicants should read the FY 2023 – FY 2026 Culvert AOP Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) in its entirety, and especially where noted in this application template, to submit eligible and competitive applications.

Submission of this Application Template alone is not sufficient to constitute a complete application. Applicants should review [Section D](#) of the NOFO to determine which documents must and should be submitted.

I. Basic Project Information

Description - Provide a narrative for the below items on basic details pertinent to the overall application and any individual projects, including the application name, description of all projects, location(s), involved parties, etc. Items in this section will be used to determine grant program eligibility as detailed in Section C of the NOFO.		
1	Application Name	
Eligibility Criteria		
2	Project Description: Provide a concise description of the project(s) based on the directions in provided in D.2.a.I	
3	Which anadromous species does your project propose to benefit by meaningfully improving or restoring fish passage?	<i>(Provide common name(s) and scientific name(s), if available)</i>

4	Briefly describe how the proposed project benefits the anadromous species in item 4 above?	<i>(Provide description)</i>
5	Culvert AOP Program Request amount	Exact Amount in year-of-expenditure dollars: \$ _____
6	Total Cost of all Proposed Projects	Estimate in year-of-expenditure dollars: \$ _____
7	Who is the Application Sponsor?	<i>(Name and identify which Eligible Applicant category applies. Select from the below statutory Eligible Applicants)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Unit of local government <input type="checkbox"/> Indian Tribe
8	If Application Sponsor is a State or a unit of local government, indicate the percentage, type, and source of non-Federal match	
9	Eligible Facility Type.	<i>(Identify which eligible structure does the proposed project addresses. Select from the below statutory eligible applicants)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Culvert <input type="checkbox"/> Weir
Additional Project Information		
10	State(s) and/or Tribal land in which the project is located	
11	Identify the Lead Applicant (who will	

	be also the applicant responsible for administration of Culvert AOP Program funds if application is selected and point of contact for the application.)	
12	Location Information	
A	Location of eligible facility and project area (<i>Provide State and County, name of the city, town, or jurisdiction</i>)	
B	Provide name and description of the waterway and watershed. (<i>Provide waterway name and description</i>)	
C	Provide geographic coordinates for the project (<i>Provide Latitude/Longitude; bundled projects should provide the coordinates of each eligible facility in the bundle</i>)	
D	Is any part of the proposed project area(s) located on a	(<i>Please select one</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

	federally recognized Indian Tribe land?	
<i>Other Public and Private Parties</i>		
13	Please provide organizational names of sub-recipients that will receive funds and other key partners.	

II. Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of all Project Funding

<p>Project Costs – Provide information detailing the costs associated with the project. These costs will be used to determine eligible award amount, how the project supports financial goals of the program, and other factors. More information on this section can be found in Section D.2.ii of the NOFO.</p>		
1	Culvert AOP Program Request Amount	Exact Amount in year-of-expenditure dollars: \$ _____
2	Estimated Total of Other Federal funding (excluding Culvert AOP Program Request)	Estimate in year-of-expenditure dollars: \$ _____
3	Estimated Other Federal funding (excluding Culvert AOP Program) further detail	<i>(List each Federal Program and identify Formula or Discretionary and the amount for each Federal Program, e.g. Program: _____ Amount: _____, and repeat for each source)</i>
4	Estimated non- Federal funding	<i>(Identify each source of non-Federal funding and estimated amount, e.g. Source: _____ Amount: _____, and repeat for each source)</i>
5	Future Eligible Project Cost (Sum of Culvert AOP Program request, Other	Estimate in year-of-expenditure dollars: \$ _____

	Federal funds, and non-Federal funds, above.)	
6	Previously incurred project costs (<i>if applicable</i>)	Estimate in year-of-expenditure dollars: \$ _____
7	Total Project Cost (Sum of ‘previous incurred’ and ‘future eligible’)	Estimate in year-of-expenditure dollars: \$ _____
8	Include a detailed statement of work or attach separately	<input type="checkbox"/> This is attached separately. The file is named:
9	Include a detailed budget or attach separately	<p><i>Repeat or modify as needed.</i></p> <p>Expenditure: Cost:</p> <p>Expenditure: Cost:</p> <p>Expenditure: Cost:</p> <p>Expenditure: Cost:</p> <p>Expenditure: Cost:</p> <p>Expenditure: Cost:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A detailed budget is attached separately. The file is named:</p>
10	If more than one culvert or weir, will project bundling be used to deliver the project?	<p><i>(Please select one)</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If Yes, explain the intended benefits of project bundling, and detail here or in a detailed budget attachment the cost (in year of</p>

		expenditure dollars) for each project if bundled and if not bundled. <input type="checkbox"/> A detailed budget is attached separately. The file is named:
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III. Statutorily Required Project Selection Priorities

Project Selection Priorities—Please check which of the project selection priorities listed below, and at Section E of the NOFO, apply to the project(s) in your application.		
1	Which of the following selection priorities does your project meet?	<i>(Check all that apply)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Anadromous fish listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. <input type="checkbox"/> Anadromous fish identified by NMFS or USFWS that could reasonably become listed as a federally endangered species or a threatened species. <input type="checkbox"/> Anadromous fish identified by NMFS or USFWS as prey for endangered species, threatened species, or protected species. <input type="checkbox"/> Anadromous fish identified by NMFS or USFWS as climate resilient stock. See Section H . <input type="checkbox"/> Project that opens up more than 200 meters of upstream habitat for anadromous fish before the end of the natural habitat.
2	Briefly describe how your project meets the selection priorities checked above.	

IV. Project Selection Criteria

<p>Project Selection Criteria – Provide narrative response on how the project responds to the selection criteria in Section E.1.a of the NOFO. In responding to Project Selection Criteria, refer to statutory selection priorities included in Section E of the NOFO and address them in the appropriate Project Selection Criteria.</p>	
<p>Criterion #1: Conservation Benefits to Anadromous Fish</p>	
1	<p>This project contributes to the Conservation Benefits to Anadromous Fish criterion by...</p>
<p>Criterion #2: Regional and Watershed Context</p>	
2	<p>This project contributes to the Regional Watershed Context criterion by...</p>
<p>Criterion #3: Ecosystem Benefits</p>	
3	<p>This project contributes to the Ecosystem Benefits criterion by...</p>
<p>Criterion #4: Project Design, Monitoring and Evaluation</p>	
4	<p>This project contributes to the Project Design, Monitoring and Evaluation criterion by...</p>
	<p>What are the proposed design standards and specifications for ensuring resulting infrastructure provides for the safety of the traveling public over the service life of that infrastructure?</p>
<p>Criterion #5: Climate Change, Sustainability, and Resilience</p>	
5	<p>This project contributes to the Climate Change, Sustainability, and Resilience criterion by...</p>
<p>Criterion #6: Equity and Barriers of Opportunity</p>	
6	<p>This project contributes to the Equity and Barriers of Opportunity criterion by...</p>

V. Project Readiness and Environmental Risk

<p>Submit the requested information in Section D.2.b.v. This information will be used to evaluate the application on Project Readiness as described in E.1.b. for DOT to conduct a review of the project readiness and environmental review and permitting risk criteria for the project and provide a summary. If project includes multiple culverts or weirs, indicate the information for each structure included in the application and what impact would occur on the timeframes if the project were unbundled.</p>		
Technical Feasibility		
1	Describe the technical feasibility of the project as described in Section D.2.b.v	
Project Schedule		
2	Include a detailed project schedule, adding additional milestone rows as needed, or attach separately	<p><i>Repeat or modify as needed.</i></p> <p>Date: Project Milestone:</p> <p>Date: Project Milestone:</p> <p>Date: Project Milestone:</p> <p>Date: Project Milestone:</p> <p>Date: Project Milestone:</p> <p>....</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is attached separately. The file is named:</p>
3	Design Status <i>(If applicable)</i>	<p>Planned or Actual Start of Preliminary Design Date: _____</p> <p>Planned or Actual Completion of Preliminary Design Date: _____</p> <p>Planned or Actual Start of Final Design Date: _____</p> <p>Planned or Actual Completion of Final Design Date: _____</p>
4	Anticipated Construction Start Date <i>(If applicable)</i> :	Date: _____

5	Anticipated Project Completion Date (<i>If applicable</i>):	Date: _____
Required Approvals		
6	NEPA Status – Indicate if the determination will likely be the result of a Categorical Exclusion (CE), Environmental Assessment (EA), or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)	Planned or Actual Start of NEPA Date: _____ Planned or Actual Completion of NEPA Date: _____ Final NEPA Determination or current status of NEPA process:
7	Will all necessary environmental approvals and permits meet the project delivery timeline specified in the project schedule?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (<i>Please provide documentation</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> No
8	Are there any prepared environmental studies or documents describing known project impacts and possible mitigation for those impacts?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (<i>Please provide documentation preferably through a Website link</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies		
9	Indicate potential project risks and strategies undertaken or that might be taken to mitigate those risks.	
10	Is right-of-way acquisition necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

		<p>If Yes, Planned or Actual Start of Right-of-Way Acquisition Date: _____</p> <p>Planned or Actual Completion of Right-of-Way Acquisition Date: _____</p>
11	<p>Right-of-way acquisition considerations (<i>If applicable</i>)</p>	<p>If right-of-way must be acquired for the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would right-of-way acquisition require relocation of any people or businesses? <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If Yes, are people or businesses being relocated members of traditionally underserved and underrepresented populations (underserved communities)? • If Yes, please describe the required relocation of any people or businesses.
Lead Applicant Evaluation		
12	<p>Describe the Lead Applicant's experience with receipt and expenditure of DOT grant funds or other Federal funding sources as described in Section D.2.b.V.</p>	