

Program Project Approval

May 13, 2013

Eastern Federal Lands (EFL) approach to administering the Access Program.

As a result of the recent MAP-21 legislation which established the Federal Aid Access Program (Access Program) and with the receipt of initial program implementation guidance from Federal Lands Highway Headquarters staff (FHWA, HQ), the EFL staff will contact our new partners and establish the appropriate Points of Contact (POCs) for each partner. Our program network will include both internal and external staff resources.

The internal staff resources will consist of, but not be limited to, EFLHD, HQ FLH, and the Federal Aid Division Office (DO) for each of the states within the EFLHD geographic area of responsibility. The external staff partners will come from the various Federal Land Management Agencies (FLMAs), State DOTs (SDOTs), local public agencies and/or local government agencies (LPAs and/or LGAs), and possibly the metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) within each of our states. The FLMA partners in each state will consist of the five legislatively defined principal partner agencies, i.e., the US Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE), the National Park Service (NPS), and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) who own and maintain at least one federal land parcel in that state. The FLMA partners will also include, as appropriate, any other FLMA who owns and maintains a federal land parcel in that state where access to that parcel is provided via any travel mode deemed eligible for the receipt of funds under the Access Program requirements.

The program project approval process will commence at the close of the call for projects phase for the respective state. EFLHD will notify the FLMA's and FHWA Division office of the selection ranking. EFLHD will notify the first ranked FLMA Access Program proposed project and either gain acceptance from the FLMA, or reject the proposal. If the proposal is rejected by the FLMA, EFLHD will proceed with the next ranked project until all program funding obligations are identified for the 2-year MAP-21 Access Program. During this process, EFL staff will notify and coordinate with the respective FHWA DOs, SDOTs, and LPA's. This will be accomplished by the conduct of the following activities:

1. Establish list of ranked projects
 - a. PDC establishes final selections and rankings.
 - b. The EFL Access Program Manager will notify FLMA's, FHWA DO, StateDOT and LPA of project ranking via email,
 - c. The EFL Access Program Manager will coordinate the project acceptance from the appropriate FLMA, or FLMA's.
 - d. The EFL Access Program Manager will provide the list of ranked projects to the FHWA Access website manager for posting on the website.
2. After the initial phone calls, EFL will send a letter to the SDOT commissioner/director notifying that the Access program projects have been selected and posted on the FHWA website. The following links will be included in the email:

Minnesota- Federal Lands Access Program

- a. Access Program Legislation: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-112hr4348enr/pdf/BILLS-112hr4348enr.pdf>
 - b. Access Program Guidance: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guideflap.cfm>
 - c. FHWA-EFLHD Access Program Website: <http://www.efl.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/federal-lands-access.aspx>
3. EFLHD will draft a project agreement and distribute to the project owner, State DOT (if not owner of roadway), and LPA for their review, comment and final approval.
4. EFLHD will coordinate a draft funding agreement that can be executed prior to a final project agreement between the FHWA, State DOT, and LPA.
5. The PDC's programming decisions will enable the PDC to build a multi-year program that maximizes and strategically makes the best use of Access funds.
6. After a multi-year program of projects is developed, it becomes the Access Program Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and must be approved by FHWA and included in the overall Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). If public transportation projects are proposed in the Access Program TIP, FHWA will consult with the appropriate Federal Transit Administration regional office prior to the final approval of the TIP.