

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Transportation Environmental Stewardship Excellence Award
Evaluation Considerations**

The Environmental Stewardship Excellence Award celebrates Service employees or offices that use partnership-based approaches to promote ecosystem sustainability while meeting the increasing transportation needs of the nation.

The Fish and Wildlife Service encourages nominations from any person, including any of our many partners within the transportation planning community such as the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA); a state Department of Transportation or natural resource agency; regional or local government; or non-governmental organization.

Nominations from within the Fish and Wildlife Service are also encouraged to promote peer to peer information exchanges that identify innovative approaches to protecting multiple natural resources (e.g., Strategic Conservation Planning Using a Green Infrastructure Approach). Coordinating the protection of multiple resources and providing conservation guidance earlier in the process helps serve the transportation planning community by increasing the likelihood of successful implementation while decreasing the overall cost of environmental protection.

Selection Criteria

The criteria for evaluating nominations will include consideration of one or more of the three essential elements for environmental stewardship and streamlining of transportation project planning:

1. Strategic Environmental Stewardship

- ◆ Common vision and commitment to stewardship.
- ◆ Identify species and habitats of significant value.
- ◆ Address the values and concerns of local stakeholders and agencies.
- ◆ Promote partnerships of environmental stewardship.
- ◆ Facilitate long-range transportation and land-use planning.
- ◆ Highlights opportunities to protect multiple resources and critical ecosystem services.

2. Streamlining (Cross-Program/Agency Planning and Coordination)

- ◆ Include a broad range of stakeholders and address multiple project proponents.
- ◆ Address a broad range of environmental concerns or significant resource issue.
- ◆ Early engagement in the regional or state-wide transportation planning process.
- ◆ Coordinate environmental reviews (NEPA, ESA section 7, CWA section 404, 4(f) MBTA, and BGEPA) to reduce duplication of efforts and facilitate an ecologically appropriate approach.

3. Accountability/Adaptive Management (Application of Ecosystem Performance Measures)

- ◆ Include review and adaptive management to address unforeseen future circumstances.
- ◆ Define metrics to evaluate successful implementation and adaptive management.
- ◆ Metrics developed cooperatively with partners and knowledgeable resource experts.
- ◆ Metrics easy to monitor over time to track the environmental status overtime.
- ◆ Facilitate effects analysis of transportation projects and related indirect and cumulative effects.