

CTIP STUDY PROBLEM STATEMENT
Request for Funding
FY 2003

FHWA Strategic Goal Area: Productivity, Environment

Project Title: Revegetation Effectiveness Monitoring Program

Background:

The topic of this study is 1) the adaptation of a concise and effective protocol to monitor the effectiveness of revegetation efforts on highway construction projects (turf establishment, shrub plantings, and biotechnical stabilization), and 2) the employment of these protocols to a set number of projects over two growing seasons, in terms of what did/did not work. The results of this effort would be summarized in a report, and incorporated into future procedures. Note that the use of native species requires evaluation of effectiveness over multiple growing-seasons; two years has been selected as the minimum time-frame for this effort.

Currently there is no systematic method known within FHWA to track the success or failure of revegetation efforts on highway projects. While there are monitoring protocols within other agencies, none are known to be geared toward the unique conditions found along highways, or to the wide diversity of habitats found across the six northwestern states where Western Federal Lands operates. With a wide range of environmental complexity, and a relatively high rate of turnover in personnel, there is a need to document and store information on effective erosion control and revegetation measures (“what works, and where”), so that this information can be made available for future workers.

Objectives:

Initially, to modify existing revegetation protocols for the unique conditions along highway construction projects. Second, to actually accomplish the monitoring on a finite number of projects so that we have some tangible data upon which to base our recommendations for further improvements in the future. To improve conditions on the ground, support mandates, and support the existing direction to facilitate native plants and reduce spread of noxious plants wherever practicable. This proposal is a substantive contribution to the goals of the Federal Native Plant Conservation Committee (currently Plant Conservation Alliance), of which FHWA is a co-signer. When finalized, these protocols and results can also be shared with Division offices, State DOT’s, and other agencies also involved in revegetation of roads and highways.

Status:

There is currently no formal program or protocol to evaluate the effectiveness of revegetation efforts on highway construction jobs within the Federal Lands Highway program. Apparently there are protocols for revegetation monitoring within some Land Management agencies, but these are more directly geared toward fire and mine rehabilitation projects. I currently have copies of the protocols from several agencies (FS, BLM, NPS), but none that I

