

Chapter Trans 280

ROADSIDE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

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Trans 280.01 Purpose and scope. As authorized by s. 84.01 (29), Stats., the purpose of this chapter is to establish uniform procedures for increasing the number of hardy and aesthetically-pleasing trees planted on highway rights-of-way, while maintaining highway safety.

History: Cr. Register, December, 1994, No. 468, eff. 1-1-95.

Trans 280.02 Definitions. In this chapter:

(1) “AASHTO” means the American association of state highway and transportation officials.

(2) “Clear zone” means a roadside area that is required to be free of woody plant growth over 4 inch caliper or that would impair highway safety.

(3) “Department” means the Wisconsin department of transportation.

(4) “Forb” means an herb other than grass.

(5) “Native vegetation” means plants and plant communities that were found in a given area of Wisconsin before 1840.

(6) “Rights-of-way” means lands used for highway purposes.

(7) “Roadsides” means all state highway rights-of-way, excluding the area required for roadways and bridge structures.

(8) “Roadways” means the highway pavement and shoulder structure.

(9) “Vegetation” means a plant or group of plants, including trees, present in any given area or region.

History: Cr. Register, December, 1994, No. 468, eff. 1-1-95.

Trans 280.03 Goals. The goals of roadside vegetation management include the following:

(1) Plant trees to enhance roadside aesthetics, maximize oxygen production and improve air quality.

(2) Promote the ecological integrity of the state’s natural heritage through the planting of native trees on state highway roadsides.

(3) Tree planting should be consistent with a vegetation management plan to:

(a) Preserve and encourage the regeneration of native vegetation on roadsides.

(b) Promote highway safety by establishing and maintaining clear zones that are appropriate to any given highway location.

(c) Avoid interference with the visibility of legal adjacent land use.

History: Cr. Register, December, 1994, No. 468, eff. 1-1-95.

Trans 280.04 General features and roadside vegetation inventory. (1) The department shall conduct an inventory to identify and classify roadside vegetation, including trees, and other roadside and related features, as follows:

(a) Observed plants such as trees, shrubs, vines, grasses and forbs, and plant communities.

(b) Sites for potential enhancements, including reforestation, aesthetic improvement opportunities, erosion control improvement, and native vegetation opportunities.

(c) Adjacent land uses, including agriculture, natural areas, residential, business and cultural development.

(d) Other features necessary to effectively plan for increasing the number of trees.

(2) The department shall create a vegetation management plan consistent with the goals in this chapter.

History: Cr. Register, December, 1994, No. 468, eff. 1-1-95.

Trans 280.05 Roadside tree planting. (1) The department shall develop roadside tree planting plans based on the principles of landscape architecture as applied to highway design in accordance with AASHTO guidelines, the department’s facilities development manual, and highway maintenance manual. All plantings should be consistent with the vegetation management plan.

(2) The department shall tabulate and record the number of trees planted in each transportation region annually.

History: Cr. Register, December, 1994, No. 468, eff. 1-1-95; correction in (2) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 6., Stats., Register February 2013 No. 686.